



An Animated Hat

The Sorting Hat that we see placed on the students' heads in the films was partially a real hat and partially a form of motion-capture technology. The flaps that hung down from it were real, and the brim, Judianna Makovsky describes, was "basically a ring around their heads." This was topped by a framework and pieces to be used as registration points to line up the real and animated versions. The Sorting Hat that Harry talks to in Dumbledore's office in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* was a completely digital construction.

A Real Hat

Seven Sorting Hats were made for practical uses, based on the "master hat" seen in the first film. As costume fabricator Steve Kill explains, first a leather material was fashioned into a cone form and soaked in hot water for ten minutes. Then Steve "squashed it down within itself" and left it overnight atop a heating unit. After the hat was dry and solid, wire was inserted to keep its shape. Some hats had a horsehair canvas lining for more stability. The hats were then dyed, aged, and imprinted with Celtic symbols. "The wrinkles were different on each one," Steve admits, "but you never see two of them next to each other!"

