

**Back tack** This stitch is used to reinforce the beginning and ending of a line of stitching. Put the machine into reverse, and stitch three or four stitches over the existing stitches. The project instructions will mention when it is really important to back tack.

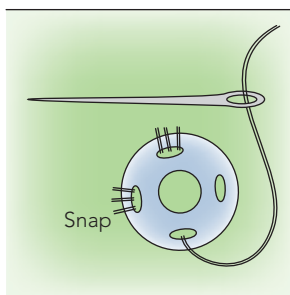
**Machine baste** This stitch is used when making piping and when gathering fabric. Machine basting uses the longest stitch length on the machine.

## Sewing Techniques

### Stitching on Snaps

Be sure to use a double strand of thread; this will make stronger stitches that will last longer.

1. Thread a needle, double the strand, and knot the end.
2. Working from the back of the fabric, bring the needle up through one of the holes of the snap. Carry the thread over the metal edge, and stitch through the fabric to the back. Repeat 3 times, through the same hole.
3. Move to the next hole, and repeat Step 2 for the remaining holes.



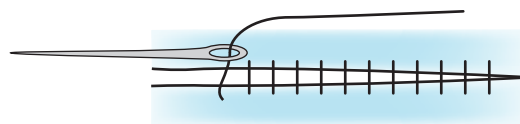
Stitch snaps through holes.

### Whipstitch

Use a whipstitch to hand stitch openings closed.

1. Choose a high-quality thread in a color close to that of the fabrics you are using.
2. Use a single strand of thread, and make a knot at one end.

3. Stitch over the edges of the fabrics, securing them together.
4. When you reach the end of the opening that you are stitching closed, secure the thread by taking a few small stitches on top of each other. Trim off the excess thread.



Whipstitch

### Topstitch

When you stitch a seam, the stitching is hidden between the layers of fabric. Topstitching, however, is done on top of the fabric and is visible. It can be purely decorative, or it can help hold layers together. You can topstitch by hand or machine.

### Satin Stitch

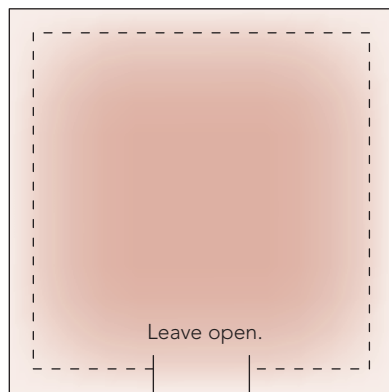
A satin stitch is made with wide zigzag stitches that are very close together. It is best to first test satin stitching on a piece of scrap fabric. Once you have it down, you can satin stitch your projects.

1. Refer to your sewing machine manual to find out what presser foot and what stitch length the manufacturer recommends for satin stitch; adjust your machine accordingly. You will need to adjust both the stitch length and the stitch width.

#### Tip

We set the stitch width at the widest setting that our machine allows and the stitch length to about 0.5 or 0.6. This creates more flexibility for the edges when making the organizers (pages 18–24). Test the stitch length and width to see what looks best for your project. When you test the stitch on a scrap of fabric, make sure that the stitching covers the edge of the fabric. If it doesn't, then you may need to make the stitches closer together (shorten the stitch length). The closer the stitches, the more the stitching will look like satin.

2. Use a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance to stitch around the square, pivoting at the corners. To pivot, stop stitching  $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the fabric edge with the needle in the down position. Lift the presser foot, and rotate the fabric a quarter turn. Lower the foot, and continue stitching the adjacent edge. Leave an opening in one edge (follow the specific project instructions to determine the size of the opening).

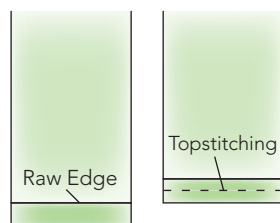


Envelope-Style Construction

## Clean Finished-Edge Hem

Use a Clean Finished-Edge Hem when making aprons, totes, and more.

1. Unless a different hem width is specified, fold the edge  $\frac{1}{4}$ " to the wrong side of the fabric.
2. Fold under  $\frac{1}{4}$ " again and press. The raw edge will now be hidden.
3. Topstitch the center of the hem in place.

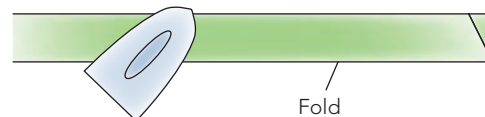


Clean Finished-Edge Hem

## Clean Edge Band

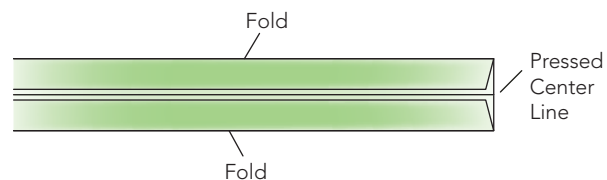
This technique is used for the apron waistbands and bag handles.

1. Fold the fabric strip in half lengthwise with the right side out. Press. This pressed line will be your guide.



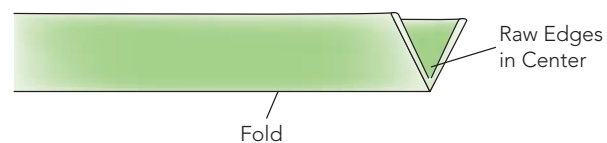
Press fabric in half.

2. Open the fabric strip, and place it wrong side up. Using the pressed center line as a guide, fold each edge almost to the center. Press.



Fold edges to center.

3. Fold the band in half again and press. All raw edges are now hidden.



Finished Clean Edge Band

# sassy aprons

Aprons were created for a purpose—to keep your clothes clean while cooking. Well, that was then, and this is now. We've seen how aprons have become more of an accessory. Stores have them in a variety of colors and styles, with some beaded and others more practical—and we want them all.

So here's the perfect balance. These sassy aprons can be made as gifts or for yourself. They can be perfectly practical in every way or as sassy as sassy gets. Plan a cocktail party, put on your favorite little black dress, and complete your outfit with a cocktail apron. You'll be the hit of the night!

## Basic Sewing Techniques

- Clean Edge Band
- Whipstitch
- Topstitch
- Clean Finished-Edge Hem



FINISHED SIZES:

KITCHEN APRON: 28" long

COCKTAIL APRON: 23" long

## Materials

MATERIALS	YARDAGE	FOR
Cotton print 1	¾ yard	Main body
Cotton print 2	¼ yard	Top band and pockets
Cotton print 3	½ yard	Waistband
Thread		Topstitching
Buttons, rickrack, ribbon, or beads		Accents
Stitching and knitting gauge (optional)		

## Cutting

MATERIALS	CUTTING	FOR
Cotton print 1	1 @ 30½" × 20½"	Main body (kitchen apron)
	1 @ 30½" × 15½"	Main body (cocktail apron)
Cotton print 2	1 @ 5½" × 18½"	Top band
	4 @ 5½" × 5½"	Pockets
Cotton print 3	2 @ 6" × width of fabric	Waistband

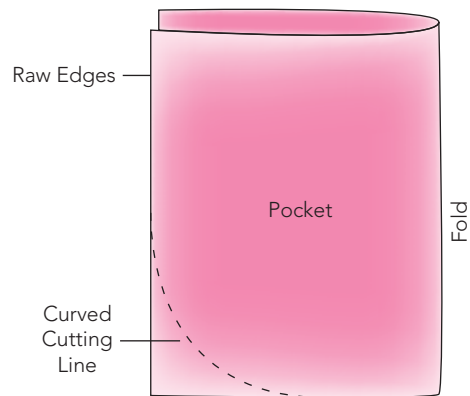
# Assembly

## Waist Band

1. Cut off the selvage edges from the 2 strips of waistband fabric. Use a 1/2" seam allowance to stitch together the short ends of the waistband strips to make one long strip. Press the seam open.
2. Measure and press under 1/4" on the short edges of the waistband strip. Make the waistband as a Clean Edge Band (page 15).

## Pockets

1. To round the bottom corners of each pocket, place 2 pocket squares right sides together, and fold in half. Use a chalk pencil to draw a quarter circle in the corner of the raw edges. Cut on the chalk line through all layers.

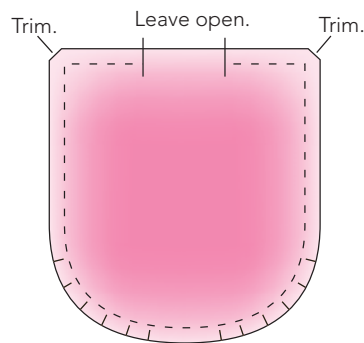


Round the pocket corners.



2. For each pocket, open the fold, and stitch the pieces together, using a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance. Leave a 3" opening in the center of the top edge.

3. Trim the points from each corner. Be sure not to cut so close that you cut the stitching. Make  $\frac{1}{8}$ "-deep clips along the curved edge so the seam will be smooth when the pocket is turned right side out.



Trim corners and clip curve.

4. Turn each pocket right side out and press, pressing under the seam allowance of the opening. Whipstitch (page 11) the opening closed.

## Top Band

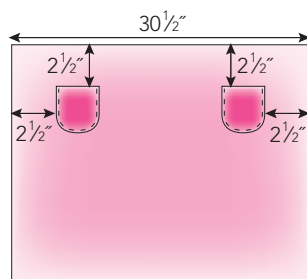
Make a Clean Finished-Edge Hem (page 15) on the short edges of the rectangle.

## Main Body

1. Make a Clean Finished-Edge Hem around the entire main body of the apron.

2. Pin the pockets to the main body  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " from the sides and  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " from the top edge.

3. Topstitch each pocket to the main body, stitching  $\frac{1}{8}$ " from the edges of the pocket. Leave the top edge open.

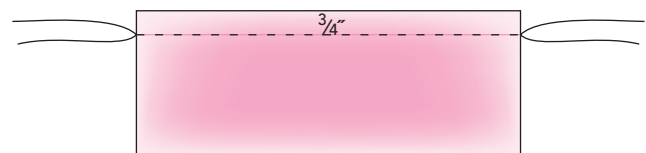


Place and topstitch pockets.

## Tip

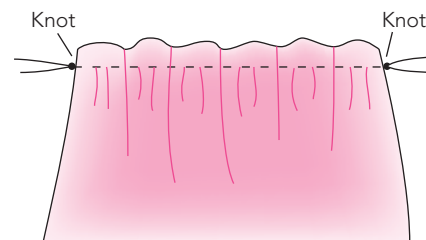
When choosing a thread for the topstitching, you can choose a color that blends perfectly with the fabric or a contrasting color so that the topstitching becomes a decorative touch.

4. To make a gathering stitch, set the machine stitch length to the longest stitch (usually 5). Stitch across the top edge of the main body piece,  $\frac{3}{4}$ " from the edge.



Gathering stitch

5. Remove the fabric from the machine, and cut the threads, leaving long tails. Knot the thread tails together at one end of the stitching. At the opposite end, gently pull the bobbin thread (the bottom thread) to gather the main body until it is the same length as the top band ( $18\frac{1}{2}$ "). Even out the gathers. Knot the thread tails together to secure.



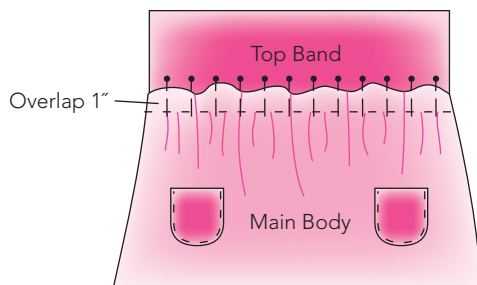
Pull threads to gather edge.

6. Set the sewing machine back to a normal stitch length.

## Put the Apron Together

1. Fold the top band in half crosswise, and mark the bottom edge of the fold with a pin. Fold the top edge of the gathered main body in half, and mark the fold with a pin.

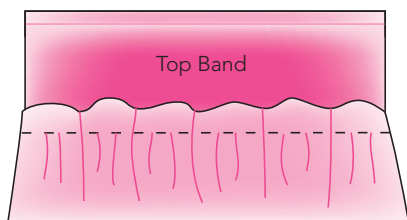
2. Place the top edge of the main body on the bottom edge of the top band, with right sides up. Overlap the edges 1", and match the center pins. Pin the overlapped edges together.



Place main body over bottom edge of top band.

3. Topstitch the main body to the top band along the gathering stitch line.

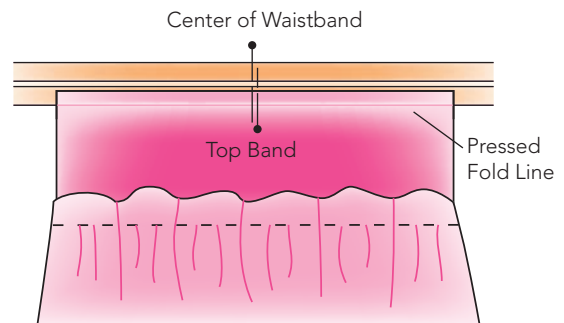
4. Press under 1/2" on the top edge of the top band, and then open the fold. The pressed line will be your guide as you insert the edge into the waistband.



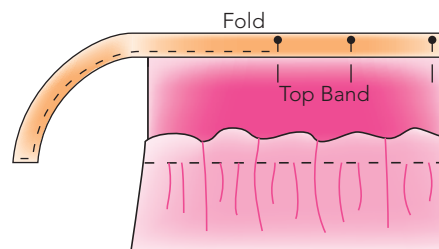
Fold and mark.

5. Fold the top band and the main body in half crosswise and mark the center of the top edge with a pin. Fold the waistband in half crosswise and mark the center of the bottom (open) edge with a pin.

6. Place the top edge of the top band in the open edges of the waistband. Match the center pins, and align the pressed line on the top band with the bottom edges of the waistband. Pin the layers together. Topstitch along the bottom edge of the waistband.



Align centers.



Topstitch around waistband.

7. Add trims and embellishments as desired to match your fabrics.

