**Sidesaddle Apron directions**

I have done the Suitability pattern dozens of times. Here are the direction on how I do it. You may find other ways that work better for you. Many ladies find the pattern too full for hunt seat. You can play with it a bit to take some of the fullness out.

1. Throw away directions
2. Throw away waistband pattern piece
3. Open fabric and lay RIGHT side up (60” fabric works best)
4. Open lining and lay WRONG side up on top of fabric
5. Line up pattern so that long seam where buttons are marked is even with selvage. You will likely have to piece your lining if it is 45” fabric
6. Cut out all pieces, mark darts
7. Sew darts and press. On large piece, sew longest dart first
8. Sew back pieces together and then to largest piece and press
9. Pin fabric and lining RIGHT sides together. Sew all but the long edge where the buttons go. Turn right side out and press
10. Turn seams inside on long side. Lining should be a little shorter so that it doesn’t show. Press and stitch.
11. Saddle the horse and mount up. Pin hem length where you want it. Turn hem up in 3 or 4 inch sections to where you want it, don’t cut off the excess. You want the weight to hold the hem down. No curtain weights! Press and hand or machine stitch. Add Velcro and/or buttons.

**Tips:**

Make sure your fabric and your pattern pieces are both RIGHT SIDE UP, otherwise, you will make an offside apron!

Add 4-6” to bottom hem when cutting out. You’ll need the extra fabric for weight so the apron will hang well. I don’t like using curtain weights because the more you iron your apron, you’ll get shiny places over the weights. Also, if it is windy, the hem can act as a whip against your horse’s side.

Line with cotton or other non-slippery fabric. I like to use a subtle print fabric so that my apron doesn’t get mixed up with someone else’s.

Sew a two inch long piece of Velcro that it is fuzzy on one side and sticky on the other. Sew this piece to the pointy part under the right knee. This will tuck into the long Velcro at the hip when walking. You can also sew a piece of Velcro to your breeches to keep the apron in place while trotting and cantering.

If you are … um… pear shaped, add a couple of inches to the bottom of the smaller pieces so that there is enough to tuck under your backside. Make size adjustments using the darts. Make them bigger or smaller or leave one or two out entirely to fit your shape.

To make a western apron, leave off the back piece that would have Velcro or buttons. Replace with a chap-style strap. You can decorate with fringe and conchos, leather or suede. Resist the urge to put fringe along the bottom hem. It can accentuate a rough trot. You can also put a small strap and buckle at the front, like chaps have.

For saddle seat aprons, line with a contrasting fabric that matches your coat or vest. You can leave a bit more length and flowyness (is that a word?) to a saddle seat apron.

If you have enough fabric, you can put both small pattern pieces together and cut your fabric as one piece. (thank you Sam Peterson for this tip!)

While sitting on the horse, see if part of the apron hangs down behind the right foot. You may need to shorten this part. The apron will hang differently depending on how your saddle is made, as well as your body.

Good luck!!