A close-up photograph of a woman's hands and torso. She is wearing a vibrant red, ribbed top. Her left hand is holding a small, round, red pin cushion with a white and red patterned border. Several colorful pins (blue, red, and silver) are stuck into the cushion. Her right hand is also visible, holding a pin. On her left wrist, she wears a blue, ruffled fabric cuff. The background is a plain, light blue wall.

# The Sewing Bible

a modern manual of practical and decorative sewing techniques

RUTH SINGER

# Stripy apron

This pretty yet practical design has a simple shape with bodice and waist darts for a flattering fit. Two different striped fabrics are used, both recycled from men's shirts. However, you could make the apron all in one fabric if you prefer.

## You will need

Two men's long-sleeved striped shirts, in a large size to get the most fabric.

Choose shirts that are in good condition and made from washable fabrics.

Scissors

Iron

Bodice and pocket patterns on page 294

Sewing machine

Sewing threads to match the shirts

70cm of 2.5-cm wide bias binding to match one shirt

Hand-sewing needle

## Techniques

Pressing and steaming, page 23

Pattern markings, page 246

Double hems, page 52

Darts, page 48

Folded fabric tubes, page 83

Double-fold bias binding, page 73

Shaping bias binding, page 73

Sewing a seam, page 36

Top stitch, page 38

Zigzagging allowances together, page 37

## Cutting list

Cut the shirts up by cutting along the side seams, removing the sleeves and cutting off the yoke (the shoulder and collar area, which is usually a double thickness). Slit open the sleeves along the seam. Iron all the fabric pieces.

**Apron skirt:** from the largest shirt back, cut a piece 50 x 50cm with the stripes running vertically. Leave the curved bottom hem of the shirt in place to become the bottom hem of the apron.

**Apron bodice:** fold the second shirt back in half, the stripes running vertically. Place the pattern on the fold (page 246) as shown on the pattern and cut out the bodice.

**Pockets:** using the pattern piece, cut two pockets from the second shirt, with the stripes running vertically. If the fabric has a right and a wrong side, make sure you flip over the pattern piece so you get a right and a left pocket. You should be able to cut both pieces from a single shirt sleeve. Turn to pages 244–245 for more about cutting pattern pieces.

**Waistband:** cut a 45 x 10cm strip from the remaining sleeve of the second shirt.

**Ties and strap:** cut strips from the sleeves or fronts of the first shirt and join them to make two 75 x 5cm strips for the waist ties and one 50 x 9cm strip for the neck strap.

**1** Turn under and machine-sew a narrow double hem along each side edge of the apron skirt.

**2** Fold the top (un-hemmed) edge of the skirt in half widthways to establish the centre point and mark this point with a pin. Measure out 7cm on either side of the pin and at that point make a dart that is 2cm wide and 10cm long.

**3** For the waist ties, make flat tubes from the 75cm strips and sew across one end of each. Turn right side out and press both ties. Place the raw end of a tie on one short edge of the right side of the waistband piece.





**4** Fold both pieces over to the back by 1cm and then another 1cm, so the raw edges are enclosed in the fold.

**5** Sew along the inner and outer folds, stitching over the tie. Repeat on the other end of the waistband with the other tie.

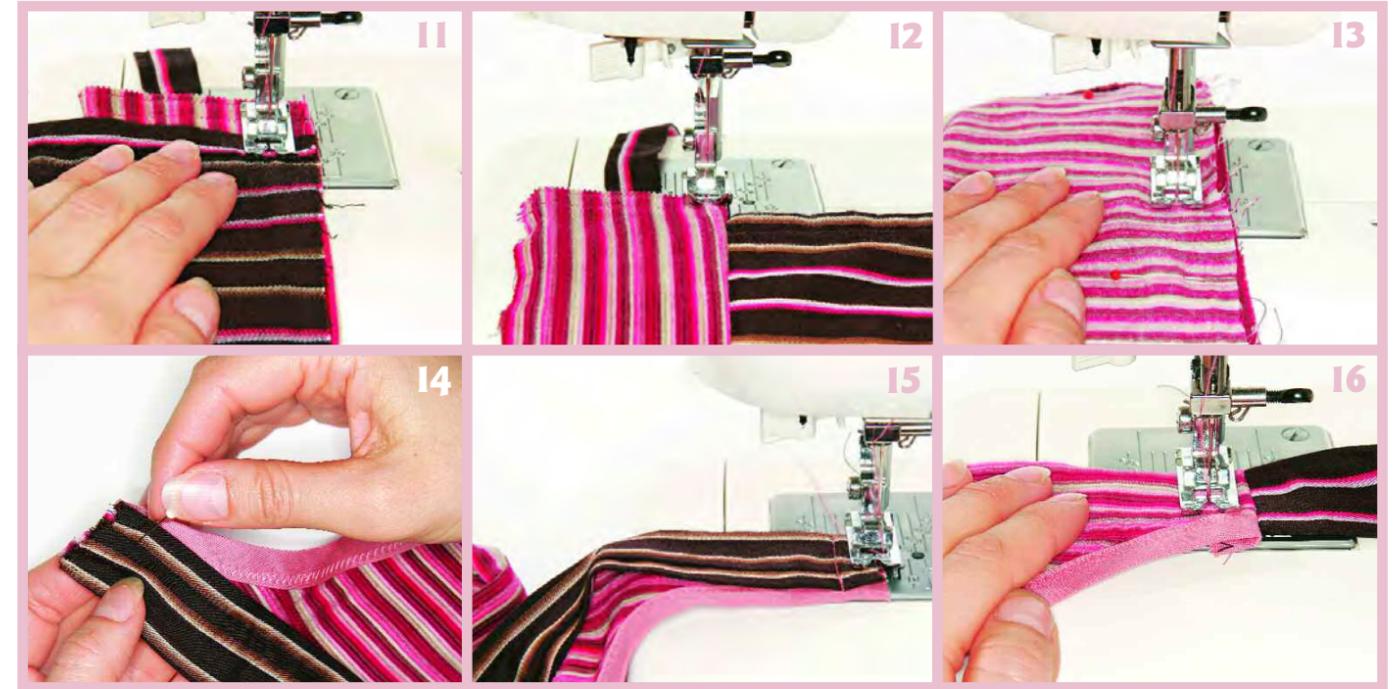
**6** Cut 15cm of bias binding and shape it to fit the top curve of a pocket. Place the shaped binding over the curved edge, and pin in position. Sew through all layers slowly and carefully using a machine or by hand. Trim off any excess bias binding.

**7** Fold the seam allowances under and press in place. Repeat Steps 6–7 for the other pocket, making sure you have a left and a right pocket!

**8** Place the pockets on to the skirt piece covering the darts, as shown. The top point of the pocket should be about 5cm from the top of the skirt and the side should be about 4cm from the skirt edge. Top stitch the pockets in place around the sides, but not along the bound edge! Reinforce the corners with zigzag stitching.

**9** Transfer the dart markings on the bodice pattern onto the fabric. Sew the darts and then hem the side edges of the bodice with a narrow double hem.

**10** Cut 40cm of bias binding and press it to match the curve of the bodice neckline. Apply the binding to the top curve of the bodice in the same way as for the pockets (Step 6).



**11** With the right-sides together, pin the skirt to the waistband, matching the centre points. Using a 1.5cm seam allowance, sew the pieces together. Zigzag the raw edges.

**12** Press the seam allowances up to the back of the waistband, then top stitch along the whole length of the waistband.

**13** Repeat Steps 11–12 to join the bodice to the waistband.

**14** Make the neck strap in the same way as the waist ties (see Step 3), but don't sew across one short end. With the bodice face up, place one end of the neck strap on the raw edge at the shoulder.

**15** Using a 1.5cm seam allowance, join the pieces. Zigzag the raw edges together.

**16** Fold the seam allowance to the back and top stitch across the front of the shoulder, 1cm from the fold.

### Sew different

There is no reason why aprons shouldn't be pretty as well as practical, as long as the fabrics are washable. A beautiful apron is great for parties when you need to serve food but still want to look fabulous! Make one to match your favourite party frock.

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