

## LAUNDRY BAGS

By Jan-Maree Ball

Aussie Hero Quilts and Laundry Bags

Suitable fabrics to make a laundry bag include patchwork fabric, unlined curtaining, doona covers and twill. Just remember that these need to last as most of the guys and girls talk about using them for a long time. Lining can be poly cotton, patchwork fabric, calico or anything similar. Also, and most important - all fabrics - particularly **reds** need to be pre-washed. The military issue bags can be white, plain blue, plain green. The most important feature of our bags is that they be **DISTINCTIVE** so they can be easily picked out from a pile of hundreds! The fabrics don't have to be pretty - just serviceable. Bright colours, checks, strips dots, novelties, anything - just bear in mind you are making laundry bags mostly for men.

Requirements are based on fabric 112cm (44in) wide. 1/2in seam allowance used throughout is included in the cutting measurements.

### YOU WILL NEED

- 80cm (32in) main bag fabric or 2 rectangles (22in x 32in)
- 80cm (32in) lining Fabric or 2 rectangles (22in x 32in)
- 10cm (4in) Coordinating Cord Channel fabric
- Scraps for Initials or square of calico for patch
- 1.3m (50in) thick cord 5 - 7mm (approx 1/4in - just under to just over!): white
- Vliesofix / double-sided fusible webbing
- Matching machine-piecing thread
- Matching machine-appliqué thread
- Rotary cutter, ruler and mat
- Sewing machine
- General sewing supplies

### APPROXIMATE FINISHED SIZE

53cm x 80cm (21in x 31in)

### INITIALS OR PATCH

If you know the name of the recipient you can appliqué initials on the bag. The other option is to have a plain patch 4in square for the member to write their own initials on. You could put a colourful border on the plain patch to make the bag more interesting.

Our patches are fused on and then stitched down. Use a loose satin stitch or you can stitch however you like but stitch well so that it stands up to wear and tear. Make sure you attach your patch before you sew up your bag.

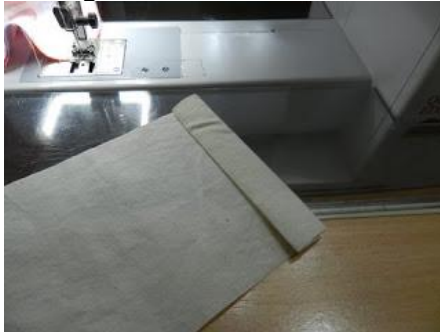


## CONSTRUCTION

After attaching your label or initials, trim the selvages from your main fabric and lining if using from the width of fabric.

Take your 32in x 42in rectangles of both the main fabric and your lining fabric and fold them in half right sides together. Sew a seam along the open side and across the lower edge of both the main bag and the lining, remembering to leave a 5in opening for turning in the lining. If you are using two x 32in x 22in rectangles you will need to sew seams on both sides and along the bottom, also remembering to leave the 5in opening for turning in the lining. Do not snip across the corners of the bottom - this just makes the bag corners weaker.

Take your four inch strip, turn a 1/2in hem along one short end and then turn 1/2in again. Stitch this down with two or three rows of stitching. Repeat with the other end of the strip. Press the strip in half lengthwise with the right sides out. This part of the bag gets lots of wear and tear as this is the draw string channel.



Sandwich the main bag and the lining, one inside the other with right sides together. Place one pin in each side seam just to hold them together. Take your cord channel and fold it in half end to end to find the half-way point. Align this half-way point with one side seam and slip it in between the two bag pieces with raw edges matching. Continue to pin the strip between the main bag and lining all the way around. The two ends will not meet and there should be a small gap. Stitch all the way around the top of the bag through all three layers.



Pull the bag right side out through the hole you remembered to leave in the bottom of the lining! Fold the raw edges of the lining in and stitch the hole closed. No need to hand stitch we need it to be strong. I like to use a triple stitch or stitch it twice.



Tuck the lining back inside the outer and press. Finally top stitch just under the cord channel. Again use a triple stitch or a sew a couple of rows of stitching.



Using a safety-pin thread your length of cord through the cord channel and tie the ends together in a knot. That's it your laundry bag is now complete and ready to send off.



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