Unisex Belted Half Aprons

Dritz
Aprons can be frilly and fun, almost as pretty as clothing. Or, they can be a utilitarian, get-down-to-business style that works well for women, men, even kids. This unisex half-apron pulls from the second category, featuring tough riveted canvas and a cool Dritz Slide Buckle to cinch it in place at waist or hip level. We love the combination of the bright Dritz Belting against a neutral washed canvas.
The new **Dritz 1" Belting** is 100% polypropylene and comes in 20 colors. We picked a hot Raspberry Pink and rich Royal Blue, coordinating the zipper on the small pocket as well as the pocket’s lining to match.
A classic Dritz Slide Buckle is what holds the belt in place. This is a no-sew hardware set that allows a fast, easy, professional finish. All you need is pair of needle nose pliers to gently crimp the end caps closed. And the shiny nickel finish is a perfect match to the rivets.
With a heavy canvas as the main fabric, we didn’t need any additional interfacing and only the pocket is lined. **Dritz Double Cap Rivets** reinforce five points along the pocket so you can be sure it will hold up to splashes, spills, and lots of laundering.

Liz’s Top Tip

“With stiff fabrics like canvas, pre-washing and ironing prior to cutting out the pieces softens the surface for better needle penetration, which means better topstitching and edgestitching.”

The zippered pocket is a handy little addition to the two standard panel pockets that stretch across the front of the apron (there’s a little pencil pocket there too). We’ve come up with an easy way to layer it all together so the zipper makes a full stripe of color across the pocket. Keep your cuts and seam allowances consistent and use a **Walking or Even Feed foot** or your machine’s built-in fabric feeding system, such as the great **AcuFeed™ Flex system** we use on our Janome models. This will allow you to stitch right up to but not on the zipper stops at both ends.
The apron itself is a flat panel sized to finish at approximately 20” wide x 18” high. This is a great standard size for many body types, but to be sure it’s right for you, try cutting out a 20” x 18” panel from tissue or scrap fabric and testing it to make sure the width and length are right for you. We designed our panel so the width would wrap just around your sides (it doesn’t need to meet in the back), and the length would hit about mid-thigh.
The Dritz Belting should be cut to best fit the wearer of the apron as well as the position at which the apron will sit (either at the waist or the hip). The rule of thumb is waist measurement + 14”. We cut our belting to 43”, which worked well on our thin models at either waist or hip height. If the eventual wearer of your apron is not available during construction, you could cut the Belting long and not adhere an end cap to the loose end. Then, when the wearer is available, have him/her try on the apron and cinch the belt for their best fit. Trim away the excess Belting and apply the end cap to finish.
Our thanks to Dritz for providing us with access to their great new products and sponsoring these project instructions so they are free to you! Dritz always has wonderful ways to keep your sewing easier and more creative. To find out more, we invite you to visit their website or blog; or follow them on Pinterest, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube.

Sewing Tools You Need
Sewing machine and standard presser foot
Walking or Even Feed foot; or use your machine’s built-in fabric feeding system, such as the great AcuFeed™ Flex system we use on our Janome models
Topstitch needle; best for the thick layers of canvas

Fabric and Other Supplies

NOTE: Supplies shown are for ONE apron.

- 1½ – 2 yards (one package) of Dritz 1” Belting; we used hot pink and bright blue
- ONE Dritz Slide Buckle Set
- FIVE (one package) Dritz Double Cap Rivets; we used nickel
- ONE set of Dritz Double Cap Rivet Setting Tools
- Dritz Fray Check seam sealant
- ¾ yard of 45”+ wide mid-weight canvas or similar; we used 8.85 oz cotton duck canvas in steel gray and warm khaki
- Scrap or layer cake pre-cut of quilting weight cotton for the small pocket lining; we used a layer cake in a bright color to match the Dritz Belting
- ONE 7” standard zipper in a color to match the Dritz Belting
- ONE decorative zipper pull; optional
- All-purpose thread to match fabric
- See-through ruler
- Fabric pen or pencil
- Iron and ironing board
- Scissors
- Rotary cutter and mat
- Seam gauge
- Seam ripper
- Straight pins
- Needle nose pliers to gently crimp the Belting end caps and to apply the optional zipper pull
• Small hammer to set rivets; we suggest a ball peen hammer or leather mallet
• Heavy metal, stone or wooden block to use as a cutting and hammering surface; we like to use a small granite block

Getting Started

1. The Dritz Belting should be cut to best fit the wearer as well as the position at which the apron will sit (either at the waist or the hip). The rule of thumb is waist measurement + 14”. We cut our belting to 43”, which worked well on our thin models at either waist or hip height.
2. From the main fabric, cut the following:
   ONE 22” wide x 20” high rectangle for the main panel
   ONE 22” wide x 10” high rectangle for the large pocket
   ONE 8½” wide x 7” rectangle for the small zippered pocket
   ONE 2” x 11” strip for the belt loops
3. From the lining fabric, cut ONE 8½” wide x 7” high rectangle

At Your Sewing Machine & Ironing Board

Create the small zipper pocket

1. Find the 8½” x 7” zipper pocket exterior panel.
2. Slice 2” off the top. Remember, the pocket is wider than it is high, make sure you are slicing off the top. You should end up with two pieces that are 8½” x 5” and 8½” x 2”.
3. The zipper will sit in between these two pieces. Along the bottom edge of the upper 2” section and the top edge of the lower 4” section, fold back the raw edge ⅜” and press well.
4. Set the zipper between the folded edges, centering it to achieve a reveal of ½” – ¾”. You want as much of the colorful zipper to show as possible.

5. Pin one side in place.
6. Remember, because you want a wide reveal, the zipper will likely be just barely behind the fold. Make sure it is far enough behind to be caught with the topstitching and that it is even all the way across.

7. Thread the machine with thread to best match the fabric in the top and bobbin. Slightly lengthen the stitch. As listed above, we also recommend a topstitching needle and a Walking or Even Feed foot; or use your machine’s built-in fabric feeding system, such as Janome’s AcuFeed™ Flex system.

8. Edgestitch along the fold across the width of the pocket panel.
9. As with all zipper installations, you’ll need to stop, with the needle in the down position, and open and close the zipper as needed in order to evenly stitch past the zipper pull.

10. Repeat to pin and edgestitch the smaller upper panel to the remaining raw edge of the zipper.
11. Find the zipper lining panel. Place it WRONG side down against the right side of the exterior zipper panel. All raw edges of both layers should be flush.

12. Pin along the top and bottom. Then, open the zipper about half way and pin along both sides.
13. Using a ½” seam allowance, stitch across the top and bottom.

14. Using an approximate ¾” seam allowance, stitch along both sides. The seam allowance should be set to run right along the zipper stops, which on the standard zipper we used was indeed ¾”.
To make sure the pocket turns and presses nice and flat with super sharp edges, you will trim and grade the seam allowances rather close. Since aprons are meant to be laundered often, this could lead to a fraying that can open a hole in your seam. To help prevent this, add a drop of Fray Check Seam Sealant to all four corners...

**Deb Says**
Team Member, Debbie used the built-in AcuFeed™ Flex fabric feeding system throughout construction. “AcuFeed™ Flex makes all the difference when sewing over thick seams and right along the edge. It’s what helps make our topstitching and edgestitching look so great!”
16. ... and across both ends of the zipper.

17. **Clip all the corners**, keep your slice very close to the pivot point, about \( \frac{1}{8} \)”.

18. Trim back the seam allowance to about \( \frac{3}{4} \)” all around.
19. Then, further grade the seam allowance at either end of the zipper, trimming back to about \(\frac{1}{8}\)”.

20. Press open the seam allowance.
21. Carefully turn the pocket right side out through the open zipper. Gently push out all the corners with a long, blunt tool, such as a chopstick, knitting needle or point turner. Press flat.

**Create the large pocket**

1. Find the 22” x 10” pocket panel.
2. If desired, place your own label in the bottom right corner of the pocket, positioning it to best match your label’s size and shape. Our label was stitched 2” in from the right raw edge and 1½” up from the bottom raw edge.

3. Along the top of the panel, make a simple double turn 1½” hem. To do this, fold back the raw edge ½” and press, then fold back an additional 1” and press again.
4. Along the bottom edge of the pocket panel, fold back the raw edge ½” and press well.
5. The machine should still be threaded with thread to best match the fabric in the top and bobbin and the stitch length should still be slightly lengthened.
6. Edgestitch along the top folded edge all the way across, and then topstitch 1” down along the inner fold to secure the hem and add upper stitching detail to the pocket.

7. The bottom edge of the pocket remains un-sewn at this point – just folded and pressed.
8. Place the large pocket panel right side up and flat on your work surface.
9. Place the zippered pocket right side up on the large pocket. The small pocket should sit 2” in from the left raw edge of the large pocket panel and 1” down the top hemmed edge. Pin the pocket in place.
10. Open up the zipper a little bit so the pull is out of the way of the seam.
11. Edgestitch all the way around the small pocket through both layers, pivoting at the corners.

12. As mentioned above, a Walking or Even Feed foot or a built-in fabric feeding system will help you stitch very close to the edge of the small pocket with a smooth, precise seam.
Secure the pockets to the main panel and hem the main panel

1. Find the 22” x 20” main apron panel. Place it right side up and flat on your work surface.
2. Place the large pocket panel, which has the zipper pocket stitched in place, right side up on top of the main panel. The top of the pocket panel should sit 7” down from the top raw edge of the main panel.
3. Pin the pocket panel in place.
4. Edgestitch the pocket in place across the bottom edge only, through all the layers.

5. Topstitch ½” below the bottom of the pocket across the panel. This second line of stitching goes just through the main panel and is for decorative purposes.
6. Baste through all the layers along the sides of the pocket.
7. The four raw edges of the main panel are finished with a simple double turn 1” hem with diagonal point corners.
8. To do this, first fold back the raw edge 1” all around. Press well to set a crease.

9. Open up the folds so the crease lines are visible. Bring in the point of the corner so the creases align. Press this diagonal fold.
10. Trim away the point flush with the crease lines.

11. Re-fold the raw edge to align with the original crease line and then fold again along the original crease line, hiding the raw edges and bringing the corners together at a pretty diagonal. Pin in place.
NOTE: This type of hem is a great one to use on all kinds of flat panels, like placemats, napkins, and runners. We have a full step-by-step tutorial you can review prior to starting this project if you are brand new to the technique.

12. Edgestitch across the top and bottom, staying close to the inner fold.

13. Then edgestitch along each side with the same seam allowance.
14. Stitching each edge individually is done on purpose for our design to create a “box” in each corner, which we felt was a better, more industrial finish for the corners rather than a simple pivot.

15. Find the exact center of the large pocket and draw in a vertical line from the top to the bottom of the pocket panel at this point with your fabric pen or pencil. Then draw in a parallel line 1” to the right from the center line.

NOTE: As we recommend any time you are working on the right side of your fabric, test to be sure your marking tool will easily wipe away or will vanish with exposure to the air or the heat of an iron.

16. Stitch along both drawn lines through all the layers. For the best finish, use a lock stitch to start and end your topstitching. If you do not have this feature, leave the thread tails long, pull through to the back, and knot to secure.
Create and place the belt loops

1. Find the 2” x 11” fabric strip.
2. Fold the strip in half (1” x 11”) and press to set a center crease. Fold in each long raw edge to meet at the center crease.

3. Fold in half along the original crease, concealing the raw edges within the fold.
4. Edgestitch along the folded edges to secure.
5. Trim the stitched strips into four 2¾” pieces.

6. Find the main apron panel.

7. Starting at one corner, measure 1½” down from the top finished edge of the apron panel and 1” in from the finished side edge. Mark this intersection point.
8. Fold under one raw end of a loop ½" and pin this folded end at the marked point.

9. Stitch across, close to the fold, to secure. For the strongest seam, we recommend stitching across twice or stitching across and then backstitching all the way to the start.
10. Lift up the loop, trim away excess close to the seam, and apply a line of Dritz Fray Check.

11. Fold under the remaining bottom raw end of the loop \( \frac{1}{2}" \).
12. Pin in place, making sure the loop is perfectly vertical - parallel with the side edge.

13. Stitch the bottom end in place in the same manner as the top end.
14. Gently twist the sewn loop to expose the underside so you can trim the excess fabric and seal with Fray Check as above.

15. Repeat to place the remaining three loops. We recommend placing the opposite outer edge loop next, which should sit 1” in from that side. The two inner loops are 5½” from each outer loop, leaving a center open space of 5”.

Add the rivets

1. We added one Dritz Double Cap Rivet to the center top of the main pocket and one in each of the main pocket’s four corners. They help reinforce the pocket’s stress points and add a cool hardware embellishment.


3. First cut a hole with the Dritz Cutting Tool at each of the five points. We started with the center
4. ... and then cut each corner point. In each case, make sure you are centering your hole so it can cut cleanly through all the layers. Don’t get too close to the pocket top or you may not cut a full circle.

5. Set the front cap into position in the hole from front...
6. ... through to the back.

7. Place the back cap onto the stud of the front cap, and use the setting anvil and hammer to seal.
8. You should use a very hard surface to hammer against for the best seal. In our photos, you can see that we like to use a small block of granite.

NOTE: Riveting is easier than you might think (especially with the Dritz tools), and we’ve summarized the steps above. If you’re brand new, check out our Metal Rivets Tutorial prior to starting.

**Make and add the belting and belt buckle**

1. Find the length of Dritz Belting and the Dritz Slide Buckle Set, which includes the buckle itself as well as two end caps.

2. As mentioned above, if possible, thread the Belting onto the apron and measure on the wearer to best determine the final length. This also allows the wearer to determine if he/she prefers the Belting at the waist or the hip. You want the length to go all the way around plus enough to
thread through the buckle and cinch to secure. Our Belting was cut to 43”.

3. The Dritz Belting is polypropylene and so the raw ends can be finished by melting. Simply pass the cut end through a small flame one or two times to melt.

4. Slip each cut end into one of the end caps and squeeze the cap the secure. Make sure the end is slipped all the way in and is straight against the inside of the end cap. We like to finger press the cap closed to start. Then, cover the metal with a scrap of fabric and gently squeeze closed again with needle nose pliers – squeeze in the center first and then along each end.

5. Flip the Dritz Buckle wrong side up. Open up the clamp and slide in one end of the Belting.

6. Make sure the Belting is far enough through so you can get a good “bite” into it; you don’t want the clamp too close to the end cap. Close the clamp and press to secure.

NOTE: As another fitting option if the eventual wearer is not available during construction, you could cut the Belting long and not adhere an end cap to the loose end. Then, when the wearer
is available, have him/her try on the apron and cinch the belt for their best fit. Trim away the excess Belting and apply the end cap to finish.

Optional decorative zipper pull

1. Using needle nose pliers, remove the zipper’s original pull. Open up the hinged hasp of the decorative pull.

2. Insert the hasp through the head of the zipper. Close the hasp, then squeeze all the way closed with the pliers to secure.

We received compensation from Dritz® for this project, and some of the materials featured here or used in this project were provided free of charge by Dritz®. All opinions are our own.