

MODERN

LOG

CABIN

QUILTING

25 SIMPLE QUILTS AND  
PATCHWORK PROJECTS



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Block Pocket Apron  
From Modern Log Cabin Quilting,  
by Susan Beal

[modernlogcabinquilting.com](http://modernlogcabinquilting.com)

# BLOCK POCKET APRON

**Difficulty:** 

**Type of block:** Picture Frame

**Techniques used:** spotlighting centers (page 28), binding (modern version only) (page 38), double-fold hem (page 40), patch pocket (page 41)

Make yourself (or a friend) a pretty apron with a self-lined quilt block pocket. The secret to this project is converting an already-hemmed pillowcase into the body of the apron. Then use purchased 2"-wide bias tape (sometimes labeled "hem facing" or "quilt binding") for the sash. You can make a streamlined, modern version or a sweetly detailed and gathered vintage version; it's up to you (and your pillowcase!).



**Finished center:** 4" x 3"

**Finished logs:** 1" wide

**Finished block:** 8" x 7½" (Modern); 8" x 7" (Vintage)

**Number of blocks:** 1

**Binding:** about 9" (¼ yard) of ¾" binding, handmade or purchased (Modern only)

**Finished pocket:** 8" x 7½" (Modern) or 8" x 7" (Vintage)

## You'll need:

- \* 1 standard pillowcase
- \* Scraps of 2 coordinating fabrics for the block pocket, (A) and (B)
- \* 2½ yards purchased 2"-wide binding tape
- \* 4½" x 3½" piece of pattern paper
- \* Thread that matches your pillowcase, binding, and fabric (B)

For the Modern version only:

- \* 9" x 1½" strip of fabric for binding and ¾" finished binding-tape maker, if making your own (B)

Cutting Key		
	A	B
<b>Apron Body, choose 1 (see project instructions)</b>		
MODERN: 20" x 30", cut from pillowcase (1)		
OR		
VINTAGE: 17" x 32", cut from pillowcase (1)		
<b>Pocket</b>		
<b>Center Square</b>		
4½" x 3½"	1	-
<b>Logs</b>		
1½" x 21"	-	1
1½" x 30"	1	-
<b>To make your own ¾" binding (Modern version only):</b>		
Cut a 9"-long, 1½"-wide strip of fabric (B).		

## Cutting

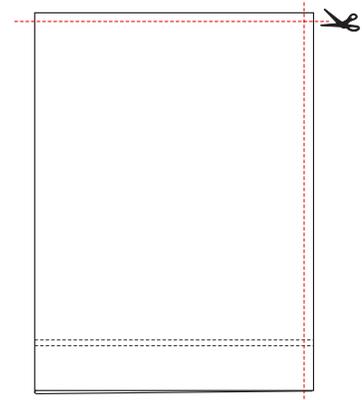
1. Choose a pillowcase to turn into your apron, and then select 2 fabrics for the pocket. For my Modern Apron I chose a plain light green case and 2 bright prints; for my Vintage Apron I chose a white case embellished with cross-stitch to complement a vintage tea-towel calendar and cheerful floral print.
2. Using the Cutting Key for the Modern or the Vintage version, cut the fabric for the apron. Use the pattern paper and the spotlighting centers technique to cut out the center square.

## Building the Block

3. Build the 2-tier block according to the Block Assembly Diagram, beginning with log 1. Press the block neatly.

## Make the Apron

4. Press your pillowcase and cut the top (folded) seam away, as shown on the diagram. Note any design you'd like to feature (like the cross-stitch on my vintage pillowcase) and fold the case lengthwise to center. This will become the front of your apron. Mark the back side of the case exactly opposite the center front design. Make a neat cut all the way up the back, to yield a large, flat piece of fabric. If there is no design to center, as in the Modern pillowcase, simply cut along a seam.



Cutting the pillow case

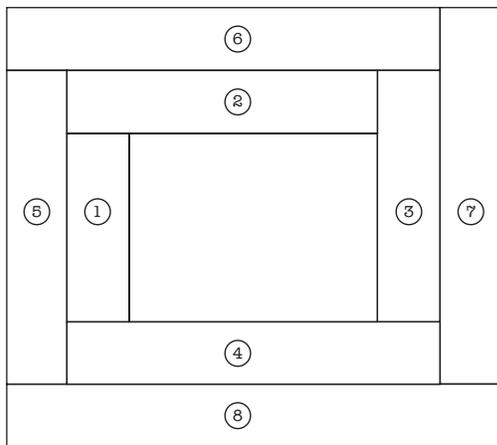
- Measure and mark the following distance from the bottom (hemmed) edge of the pillowcase: 20" for the Modern Apron and 17" for the Vintage Apron, or the apron length as desired. Cut away any excess fabric above that line and set aside. This will be your waistband edge. Then cut away any extra width, as you like. I also cut off 4" on each side of the case to make a more compact apron shape, as described in the Cutting Key.
- Using the double-fold hem technique on page 40, hem each side edge of the apron  $\frac{1}{2}$ " and press. Leave the top, waistband edge unfinished. For reference, my Modern Apron measured 28" x 20", and my Vintage Apron measured 30" x 17".

### Assembling the Block Pocket

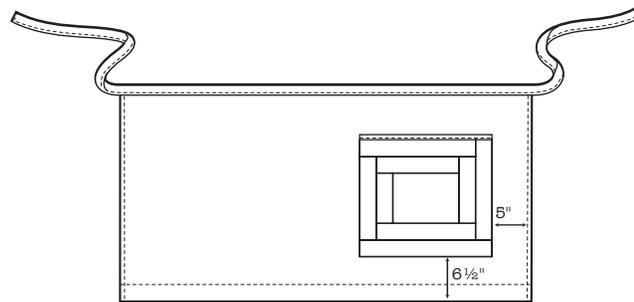
- Using the fabric set aside in step 5, cut a piece of backing fabric the same size as your pieced block. Using a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance, pin and stitch together the backing and block, right sides together, on 3 sides, leaving the top edge of your pocket open. Clip the corners and turn right side out. This is the lined pocket.
- Finish the pocket edges: For the Modern block pocket use the binding technique on page 38 to make and attach your finished binding to the top edge of the pocket so that 1" of binding extends past each side. Press the binding ends under, trimming the fold if bulky. Stitch the binding down, back-stitching at each end to hold the seam securely. For the Vintage block pocket, fold in and press the top, unfinished edges  $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Pin and sew using a scant  $\frac{1}{8}$ " from the edge.

### Finishing the Apron

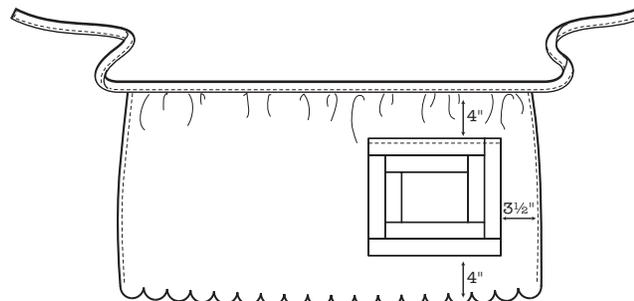
#### Assembly Diagrams



Block Assembly Diagram



Modern Apron



Vintage Apron

9. Neatly press the pocket and its corners. Pin the pocket to the apron as desired. I centered my Modern pocket vertically, 5" from the left side of the apron; and I placed my Vintage pocket 3½" from the left and 4" from the bottom sides of the apron, 4" from the waistband edge.
10. Using the patch pockets technique on page 41, stitch your pocket onto the apron. You are ready to add the sash to the waistband!
11. Cut both ends of the binding at a slight angle. Fold under and press the unfinished edges. Edgestitch from one angled end along the fold to the other angled end. This will add stability to your apron's sash. Do not stitch the open edge of the binding closed.
12. Attach the sash: For the Modern version, mark the center of your binding sash and the center of your apron waist. Pin the open bottom of your binding sash over the unfinished edge of the apron top, aligning the centers. Edgestitch the entire length of the binding, catching the apron in the waistband.

For the Vintage version, use a long basting stitch to baste ¼" in along the waistband edge of the apron. Leave long thread tails at the beginning and the end. Gently pull the thread tails to gather the edge for a soft ruffled effect. (After gathering, my apron measured about 22" wide at the waistband edge and 30" at the bottom.) Reset your machine stitch length to its normal setting, then pin and stitch the sash to the apron as for the Modern version.

### MAKING IT PERSONAL

If you have a favorite pillowcase that's missing its mate, this is a lovely way to give it new life. Choose a special fabric for the pocket's center square if you like. (I cut my birthday month out of a vintage Vera tea towel calendar for my Vintage version of the apron.) And if it's a gift, choose a pillowcase and pocket fabrics that remind you of the recipient! You could also use the oversized center square as an embroidery or printing palette, or add buttons or trims to embellish the pocket. You could even coordinate your fabric choices with a set of matching Cheerful Pot Holders (page 107) for a thoughtful holiday gift or housewarming present.

## SPOTLIGHTING CENTERS

My designs often use oversized centers, and I like to make simple templates from cardboard in the sizes I need and then cut around the template as I would the edge of a quilting ruler.

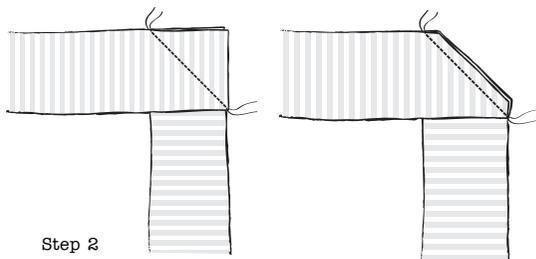
I also like to use a simple **spotlighting centers** technique for certain projects, when I want to highlight a section of a fabric's pattern, like the design on a T-shirt, for example (this is called fussy-cutting in traditional quilting). For these pieces, I use a template made of semitransparent pattern paper. I just move the template over the fabric until I find the motif or section of the fabric I want to use, keeping the seam allowance in mind. Then I pin the paper to the fabric and cut around it with shears. (Be careful if using a rotary cutter since the pattern paper will cut if you veer into it, unlike sturdy cardboard or a quilting ruler.)

## MAKING YOUR OWN BINDING TAPE

I prefer to use a binding-tape maker to make the binding for my projects. This tool folds strips of fabric into perfect halves and is fast and easy to use. Refer to the package instructions to determine the width to cut your strips. Then measure the perimeter of your quilt and add about 12" inches to determine the length you'll need for your project. You may need to piece multiple strips to achieve the total length needed—here's how to get started with that.

### To piece a length of binding:

1. Cut strips of fabric twice as wide as your finished binding will be. For 1" binding, I cut 2"-wide strips. (If using a binding-tape maker to fold your binding, refer to the specs provided; a few call for a slightly narrower cut, like 1 $\frac{7}{8}$ " to yield 1" tape.) For projects with straight edges, there is no need to cut the fabric on the bias. Cutting straight on the grain, just as you would for logs or sashing, is just fine and a lot more economical than cutting fabric at a 45-degree angle.
2. Place 2 strips of fabric perpendicular, with right sides together, as shown. Pin the strips at an angle. Stitch a diagonal line to join the strips and trim away the excess fabric, leaving a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance.



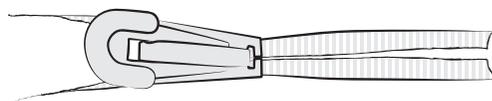
3. Now press the seam open, and continue to join as many strips of fabric needed for your project. Once you have sewn the strips of binding together to obtain the length you need, you can fold the strips into binding.



**Tip:** For a patchwork or pieced binding with many seams, you can piece your fabric strips together with a straight seam instead of an angled one. That way you have a neat, straight line, especially between high-contrast strips of fabric.

### To make the binding:

1. Cut one end of your strip at a 45-degree angle and use a straight pin to coax it through the binding-tape maker.



Step 1

2. Pull the fabric strip through the binding-tape maker, using an iron to press it neat and flat, with the raw edges to the middle, as you go. Every foot or two, I pause to press the 2 halves of the new tape together, creating a nice, sharp crease in the center and hiding the raw edges deep within the tape's fold.
3. As your binding tape lengthens, roll it onto an index card or empty toilet-paper roll and store it in a large plastic bag so it doesn't tangle. When the seams reach the binding-tape maker, you may need to carefully ease them through. Then press them the same way as the rest of the fabric, folding the two halves of the binding together.
4. Continue guiding, pressing, and folding your strip until you reach the end.

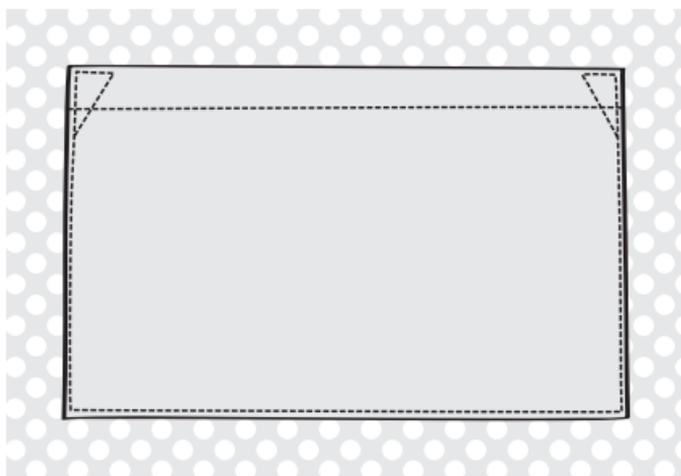
## ☀ **Double-Fold Hem** ☀

This is a simple and versatile sewing technique you can use for everything from pockets to pillow backs. Simply fold the raw edge of your fabric to the wrong side and press. Then fold it once again, press, and pin it all along the fold. Stitch along the folded edge with a straight or zigzag stitch to finish the hem.

## ☀ Patch Pocket ☀

To make and attach a basic patch pocket with reinforced corners (which is included in all the bag projects in Chapter 5):

1. Cut a rectangle of fabric. Make a double-fold hem along the edge that will become the top. Then press the remaining 3 edges  $\frac{1}{4}$ " to the wrong side, clipping the corners if necessary, and pin the pocket in place on the lining or other foundation material.
2. To sew a triangular reinforced corner at the top edge of the pocket for reinforcement, start sewing  $\frac{1}{4}$ " below the double-fold hem on one side edge. Stitch up at an angle to the top edge of the pocket,  $\frac{1}{2}$ " in from the side, backstitching at the start of the line of stitching.
3. Rotate your project and sew until you reach the top corner of the pocket. Then rotate your project again and continue sewing around the perimeter of the pocket, down, across, and then up, until you reach the opposite top corner.
4. Rotate your pocket and sew  $\frac{1}{2}$ " toward the center and stop. Rotate one last time to angle down and stitch toward the edge,  $\frac{1}{4}$ " below the double-fold hem as for the first corner. Backstitch to hold the stitching.



Step 4

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