

# How to make an Aussie Hero laundry bag

Before you start, please remember that these need to last as most of the guys and girls talk about using them for a long time.

Additionally, if you are making “random” (ie not personalised bags) please make them gender neutral or masculine. We do have women in the military, but not all girls want girly, pink and pretty bags.

Suitable fabrics to make a laundry bag include patchwork fabric, unlined curtaining and twill.

Heavy fabrics like denim can be so thick they are hard to gather up with the draw string so please consider this when choosing your fabrics.

Also, and most importantly – all fabrics – particularly those pesky reds need to be pre-washed. Soldiers, sailors and aviators tend not to like wearing PINK uniforms!

Lining can be a light poly cotton, patchwork fabric, calico or anything similar. Also, and most importantly – all fabrics – particularly reds need to be pre-washed.

The military issue bags are usually white, cream or mesh. The most important feature of our bags is that they be **DISTINCTIVE** so they can be easily picked out from a pile of hundreds! Please do not make two identical bags.

The fabrics don't have to be pretty – just serviceable. But they can also be fun and cheerful.

Bright colours, checks, stripes dots, novelties, anything – just bear in mind you are making laundry bags mostly for men.

Requirements are based on fabric 112cm (44in) wide. ½ inch seam allowance used throughout is included in the cutting measurements.

## YOU WILL NEED

- 80cm (32in) main bag fabric, for front and bag, or 2 rectangles (22in x 32in)
- 80cm (32in) lining fabric, for front and back, 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 white cord 5 – 7mm (approx. ¼ in – just under to just over!)
- Heat n Bond lite or some other sort of double-sided fusible
- Matching machine-piecing thread
- Matching machine-applique thread
- Rotary cutter, ruler and mat
- Sewing machine

- General sewing supplies

### **APPROXIMATE FINISHED SIZE**

53cm x 80cm (22in x 32in)



If you know the name of the recipient then please put their initials on the bag. Otherwise please add a patch of plain pale fabric between 4.5 – 6 inches on one side of the bag so that the recipient can write their own details on it.

You can see examples of both options in the photo below.

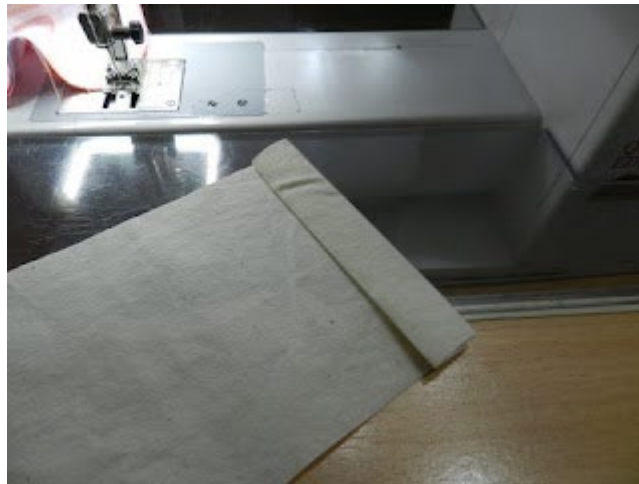


Our patches are fused on and then stitched down. I use a close zigzag stitch because it stands up to wear and tear. Make sure you attach your patch or initials before you sew up your bag – so much easier!



## Draw-String Cord Channel

Take your four-inch strip. Turn over half an inch along one short end and then turn over again. Stitch this down. 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 – you might like to experiment using a sturdier fabric but anything you use must be able to be drawn up so fabric like denim is not practical. Twill works well.



Next take both outer pieces and sew right sides together, sewing sides and bottom (or take your WOF piece and sew across the bottom and up the side). Repeat with the lining fabric except (and after making loads of these bags I still forget this step!!!) **LEAVE AN OPENING IN THE BOTTOM OF THE LINING** so you can turn the bag right side out at the end! Do not snip across the corners of the bottom – this just make the bag corners weaker – these are just laundry bags. They don't need nice sharp corners but I find most of them turn out ok anyway.

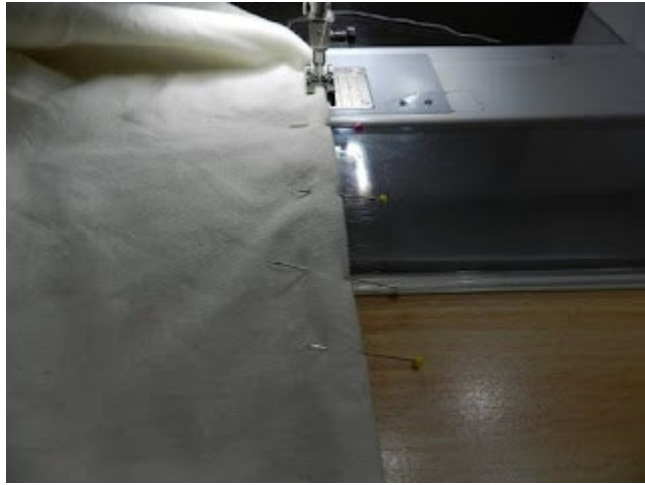
Next sandwich the outer (main) fabric and the lining, one inside the other, right sides together. I like to turn the outside of the bag right sides out and place it inside the lining. I start by pinning the centre of the cord channel to the seam of both the inner and the outer. The outer (main) bag is inside the lining and the cord channel is placed between the two, with raw edges matching. Continue to pin the strip between the out and lining all the way around. It will not go all the way around, It isn't supposed to. Stitch all the way around the top of the bag through all three pieces.



Once you have stitched all around the bag 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. Don't bother hand stitching – no one is going to see it and you need it to be strong.



Tuck the lining back inside the outer. Finally top stitch just under the cord channel making sure you stitch through all the layers for strength.



Now you have your finished bag and you only need thread the cord through the channel.

