

TREADLE & SPOOL

The Grandma & Me Cross-Back Apron Set

one big, one little, zero apron strings to untie

from the sewing room at Granny Plants

What's inside:

- Cutting measurements for two sizes — Grandma (fits most adults) and Little Helper (about ages 4-8)
- No pattern paper and no yardage math — every piece is a rectangle plus one gentle curve
- Cross-back straps, so nothing ties, nothing chokes, and it goes on like a vest
- A big double pocket on each, sized for garden gloves, clothespins, or snacks
- Fitting tips so the straps sit right on both of you

Beginner-friendly. If your machine can sew a straight line and you can cut one curve, you can make these. Sturdy cotton, linen, or even a repurposed tablecloth all work beautifully.

Materials & cutting

Grandma size (fits most adults):

- 1 1/2 yards of 44-45" wide cotton or linen
- Body: cut one rectangle 28" wide x 33" long
- Straps: cut two strips, each 32" long x 4" wide
- Pocket: cut one rectangle 16" wide x 9" tall

Little Helper size (about ages 4-8):

- 3/4 yard of 44-45" wide cotton or linen
- Body: cut one rectangle 19" wide x 22" long
- Straps: cut two strips, each 22" long x 3" wide
- Pocket: cut one rectangle 10" wide x 6" tall

Cutting the armhole curves:

Lay the body flat. On the TOP edge, measure in from each corner: 6" (Grandma) or 4" (Little Helper) and mark. On each SIDE edge, measure down from the top corner: 10" (Grandma) or 6" (Little Helper) and mark. Connect each pair of marks with a gentle inward curve (trace a dinner plate for a perfect arc). Cut both curves. What remains: a narrow panel at the top (the bib) and a wide panel below (the skirt), all one piece.



body panel after cutting both armhole curves

Putting it together

1. Hem everything.

Press and stitch a narrow double hem (fold 1/4", then 1/4" again) around the entire body: top, both armhole curves, sides, and bottom. Curves like a little steam and patience.

2. Make the straps.

Fold each strap in half lengthwise, right sides together. Sew the long edge, turn right side out (a safety pin helps), and press flat. Topstitch both long edges if you like a crisp look.

3. Attach the front ends.

Pin one end of each strap to the back of the bib's top corners, right beside each armhole curve. Sew a small square with an X through it — that's the strongest anchor and takes ten seconds.

4. Cross and fit.

Put the apron on. Cross the straps behind your back — right strap to left side, left strap to right side — and pin each end to the side hem about 1" below where the armhole curve ends. Adjust until the bib sits flat, then take it off and sew both ends the same way as step 3.

5. Add the pocket.

Hem the pocket's top edge, press the other three edges under 1/2", and topstitch it centered on the skirt, about 3-4" below the bib. Sew one line straight down the middle to divide it — two pockets, twice the treasures.

6. Label it.

If you've got a woven label, tuck it into the pocket's side seam before topstitching. Every proper make deserves its maker's mark.

Granny's notes:

Matching fabric is adorable; coordinating fabric is forgiving. Let the little helper pick their own pocket print. Wash and dry your fabric before cutting so the finished aprons never shrink out of true.

The cross-back means no ties — little ones can put it on themselves, which they will insist on doing.