

Rehab Easy Reference Sheet

Version 1 – March 2018

Pattern – Wallaby Rescue Bag

These instructions are for a heavy-duty rescue bag commonly used to restrain wallabies, pademelons and small kangaroos. It is also suitable as an emergency rescue bag for many other species.

Please read the instructions fully carefully before commencing.

Items Needed

1. Heavy-weight fabric – approximately 220cm by 120cm (or two pieces 110cm x 120cm)
2. Approximately 50cm of bright coloured ribbon or tape
3. Usual sewing notions
4. Sewing machine

Note:

- Chose a heavyweight natural cotton fabric.
- Upholstery fabrics are great but they **MUST** be 100% cotton. Do NOT use rubber-backed curtain fabric.
- Once an animal is contained in the bag, it will be secured tightly closed so it is **imperative** that the fabric can 'breathe' so that the animal does not overheat and die.
- After making and using these bags for 15+ years and trialling many different fabrics, I have found heavyweight denim stocked by Spotlight that works well. It is 100% cotton and is reasonably priced. It is more rigid/firm than most clothing denim. Refer to the photo on the right for details. Note however that it is not available for purchase online at Spotlight (only in store).
- I find it easier to sew the fabric before washing but you should wash the bag before using.
- In the photos I have used a contrasting thread to aid in explanation but use a matching thread for your fabric.



1 – Prepare and cut your fabric

- Cut your fabric to the correct size.
- If you are using the denim from Spotlight cut about 25-30cm off one selvedge edge and leave the other selvedge edge in tact.
- Fold your fabric in half with the fold on one side.
- Square your fabric up now and make sure that all edges meet neatly. Trim if needed.



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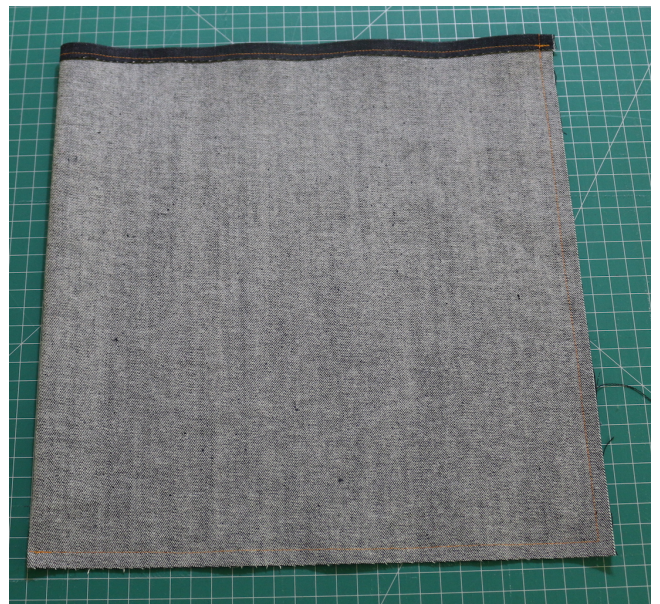
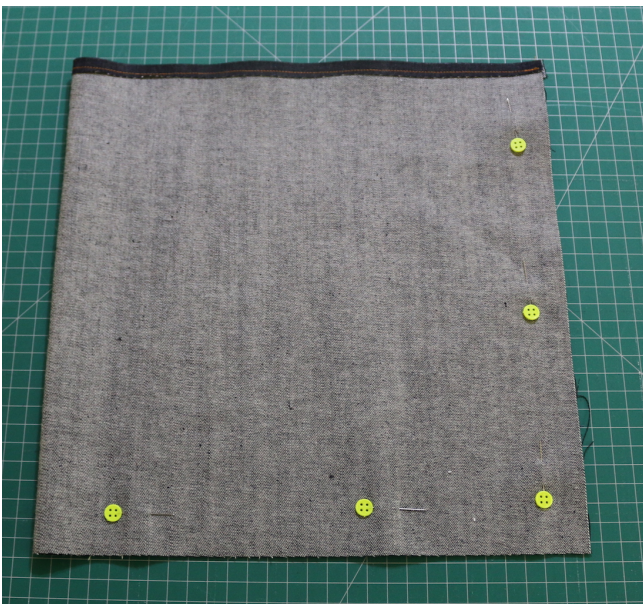
2 – Hem the top edge

- You need to hem one of the long lengths for the top of the bag.
- Fold the fabric under about $\frac{1}{2}$ " and then fold again another $\frac{1}{2}$ ".
- Iron and pin in place.
- Stitch in place.



3 – Sew the side seams

- Fold your fabric back into place with the fold on one side.
- Match up your top, side and bottom seams and pin into place. The fabric is quite heavy and large so pinning will make sure that you achieve a neat finish.
- Sew along the side and bottom using a $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam allowance.



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4 – Trim your seam allowance

- You need to trim your side and bottom to achieve a neat French seam.
- If you have a rotary cutter, mat and ruler you can do this easily. Otherwise use scissors.
- Trim the seam allowance to ensure that you have a constant $\frac{1}{4}$ " between your stitching line and the edge of the fabric.
- Note: You can sew Step 3 with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance to start with but the fabric is quite heavy so I have found it easier to sew a wider seam and then trim down. This seems to achieve a neater finish.



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5 – Press and prepare the French seam

- Turn the bag in the correct way and iron.
- Use a chopstick or similar to poke the corners out.
- You need to press the side and bottom seams well so that the seam sits at the very edge of the fabric. Make sure that it isn't tucked in otherwise your French seam won't work.
- It helps to pin the side and bottom seam in place.



Make sure that your seam is nice and flush like the photo above!

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6 – Sew the French Seam

- Sew along the side and bottom of the front of the bag using a ½" inch seam allowance.
- By sewing a ½" seam you are encasing the ¼" seam allowance that you left on the inside.
- Once finished your inside should not have any of your inside seam showing.



7 – Taper the corners

- In each bottom corner, measure approximately 4" up each side seam and along the bottom and draw a diagonal line.
- Sew along this line making sure that you backstitch at the start and end.
- Sewing the corners closed prevents macropods from pushing their nose into the corner, which can prohibit their breathing which they commonly do once bagged.



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8 – Identify the top

- It is useful to sew a bright coloured piece of tape or ribbon along part of the top edge to identify the opening. As the bag is quite large it can be difficult, particularly at night, to find the opening easily and this will help.
- Sew the tap on both sides and ensure that it is well secured.



You are finished!

Keep a bungee cord or cable clamp with the bag to secure closed once the animal is contained.

For safety reasons, do not transport adult or sub-adult macropods in your vehicle unless they are appropriately contained or sedated.

Wash the bag well before using to remove excess fabric dye and chemicals.



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