

## DRIVING APRONS

- the what, the why and the how

One of the biggest "mysteries" that competitive drivers face is the driving apron! According to ADS Rules, "the driver shall wear a hat, an apron or knee rug and gloves." Just what does this mean, where do we get one, and how do we wear it?

Nothing defines the size, style or construction of the apron according to the ADS Rulebook. According to the German National Equestrian Federation Handbook, the apron protects the whip's legs down to just below the knee from being soiled by the reins. It also prevents the ends of the reins from falling between the driver's legs. In sporting driving and competition, the color should tone in with that of the vehicle and seat cushions.

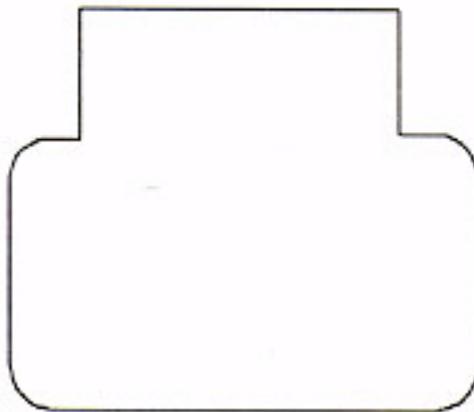
An older book (Frances Underhill) says that the apron should "strap around the waist and come to about the ankle when standing". "Driving The Horse In Harness" by Kellogg says that the apron is made to buckle around the waist and cut long enough to almost reach the feet and wide enough to tuck in well when seated. The CAA (Carriage Association of America) says that there are two types:

the summer apron fits from a little below the waist to just above the ankles the winter apron fits higher on the body.

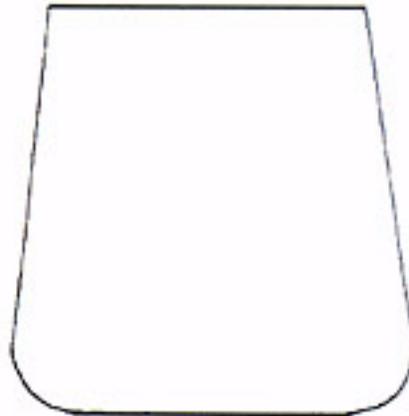
Following are some ideas for making an apron of your own, inexpensively, at home. There are three styles:

The first, a size of 44 inches at the waist by 36 inches long in a rectangular shape. Edges may be hemmed or bound.

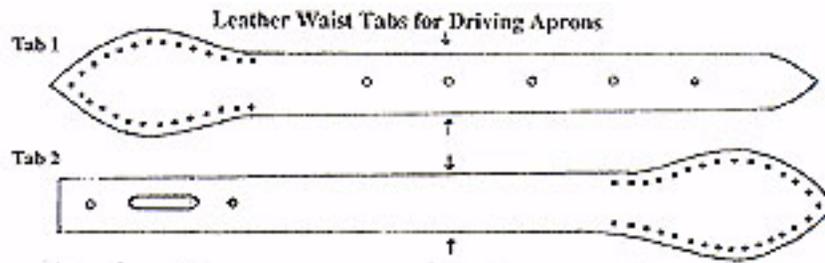
The second style (shown below) - top edge should be waist measurement. Length is between mid-calf and top of ankle. Use sufficient material at the sides to "tuck under"



Style #3 (shown below); made as above without the "flared" sides



The top closure can be velcro, tie strings to match the apron or binding, or as shown below, a leather waist tab. Cut the tab from lightweight leather, punch holes for ease of sewing and add a chosen buckle.



Now that you have your pattern - what fabric and in what color??? Washable wool blends drape nicely, and some upholstery fabrics are suitable. If using a lightweight fabric, they can be lined to give them more body. The best way to pick a color is to enlist a friend to photograph you with your turnout and go shopping at the fabric store with the resulting picture!

Solid colors to coordinate with your turnout are appropriate, as are small patterns such as checks, etc.

Colors and patterns should not overpower your suit or dress. Fawn is always traditional. Monograms may be applied to the solid colored apron at about knee level on the right side or center of the apron if desired.

paraphrased from an article in "The Whip" by Kirsten Breyer