

12 Beautiful Tote Purse Patterns

+ How to Make a Clutch for Everyday



12 Beautiful Tote Purse Patterns

Copyright 2014 by Prime Publishing LLC

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, without written permission from the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews.

Trademarks are property of their respective holders. When used, trademarks are for the benefit of the trademark owner only.

Published by Prime Publishing LLC, 3400 Dundee Road, Northbrook, IL 60062 – www.primecp.com

ALLFREESEWING

Free Patterns To Keep You In Stitches
[Free Sewing Projects](#)

ALLFREECROCHET 
"Free Crochet Patterns For Happy Hooking"
[Free Crochet Projects](#)

ALLFREEKNITTING 
Free Knitting Patterns For Happy Stitching
[Free Knitting Projects](#)

FAVEQUILTS 
Quilts, Fabric and More
[Free Quilt Projects](#)

favecrafts   
[Free Craft Projects](#)

ALLFREECROCHETAFGHANPATTERNS
Your #1 Source for Free Crochet Afghan Patterns
[Free Crochet Afghan Patterns](#)

ALLFREECHRISTMASCRAFTS 
Create The Christmas Of Your Dreams
[Free Christmas Crafts](#)

ALLFREEJEWELRYMAKING 
Your Go-To Source for DIY Jewelry Inspiration
[Free Jewelry Projects](#)

AllFreeHolidayCrafts     
Creations and Celebrations for Every Occasion
[Free Holiday Craft Projects](#)

ALLFREEDIYWEDDINGS   
Make Your Own Happily Ever After
[Free DIY Wedding Ideas](#)

ALLFREEKIDSCRAFTS 
Explore. Imagine. Create.
[Free Kids' Crafts](#)

ALLFREEPAPERCRAFTS 
"Nothing Is A Waste Of Paper"
[Free Paper Crafts](#)

Letter from the Editors

Hi Sewists,

It's no secret that our sewing community loves to create unique and useful bags and purses. The wonderful thing about a great handmade bag is that you'll use it daily. Gone are the days of purchasing overpriced handbags. Instead, explore the ideas found in this eBook and create one (or several) yourself! We've rounded up some of our favorite tote and clutch patterns so whether you're looking to transport a lot of belongings or just a few, you're covered. We hope you'll find making these adorable bags as fun and rewarding as we do!

Happy Sewing!

You can find additional home décor ideas and more at www.AllFreeSewing.com.

Our eBooks, like all our sewing projects, are absolutely FREE to members of our sewing community. Please feel free to share with family and friends and ask them to sign up at our website for our [free e-mail newsletter](#).

Happy Sewing,

The Editors of AllFreeSewing

www.AllFreeSewing.com

12 Beautiful Tote Purse Patterns

5 Step Market Tote	5	One Yard Dish Towel Tote Bag	73
Basic Purse Organizer.....	10	Library Tote.....	79
Basic Purse Tutorial.....	13	DIY Fancy Lace Clutch	84
Decorative T-Shirt Tote Bag	22	Pretty Petite Purse.....	87
Mini Chevron Pouch Tutorial	28	Notebook Tote Bag Tutorial	90
Gym Tote Bag Tutorial	32		
It's a Cinch Bag	61		

5 Step Market Tote

By: Cynthia from [The Sewing Dork](#)

The 5 Step Market Tote is really as easy as it seems. You can make this tote in one night to have it ready for your next day of shopping adventures. The use of old pillowcases allows you to clean out that excessive linen closet, making this a thrifty craft.



Materials:

- One sensational pillowcase
- One simple pocket
- Two straps (You can use scraps of other fabrics). Each strap should be approximately 48 inches long
- 44 inches of double fold bias tape

Directions:

1. Make a sensational pocket out of colorful scrap fabrics.

2. Fold your pillowcase in half, bringing the short ends together. The folded edge will be the bottom of your tote. Center your pocket on the folded pillowcase and sew to the "front" of your tote, either inside or outside.



3. Encase each "short" top edge of the pillowcase with bias tape and stitch into place. This will sew closed the open end of the pillowcase too.



4. Make two straps that will be seen on the exterior of your tote. The straps in each tutorial are 48 inches long and about 3 inches wide when finished. Finish the raw edges of each strap any way that you like (i.e. folding the raw edges inward, serging them, etc.) Make sure they are sturdy enough to carry your groceries! Open up your pillowcase and position each strap as shown. The straps meet smack dab in the middle.



Helpful Tip

No old pillowcase available? Try recycling an old fitted sheet, dress, or t-shirt! You'd be surprised at how much fabric is really around the house.



5. Overlap the straps slightly where they meet. Fold under one raw edge as shown below and pin the straps all over to hold them in place. Fold up your pillowcase to make sure that the two protruding handles are the same length and adjust the straps till you get it right. Sew straps to outside of pillowcase.



6. With right sides together, fold pillowcase in half again and sew up two side seams. Finito!



For a fun look, dissect two different pillowcases and "remake" the pillowcase so that your inside and outside fabrics are different.



Basic Purse Organizer

By: Gloria from [Domestic Diva](#)

Create this Basic Purse Organizer to neatly store your things. This purse organizer pattern is easy to make and will show how to sew lining in a bag. It fits perfectly inside a basic purse and you'll always be able to find the things you need. Add as many pockets as you need and keep all of your belongings organized.



Materials:

- 1 yard of muslin fabric
- Thread
- 27" snap tape
- Craft Fuse interfacing

- 2 sheets plastic mesh and yarn (optional)

Note: This layout includes 5 open pockets. Note that the depth of the pocket varies. Each is tailored for the item it will hold. If pockets are too deep, retrieving the item will be difficult. All of the items stick out slightly from their pocket.

1. Cut muslin fabric according to the Basic Purse directions following step #1 and #2. Iron Craft Fuse to the wrong side of the fabric.

2. Lay the fabric flat, right side up. Plan your pockets. You can include as many as you choose, in any size. Here's my pocket design:

- One centered 5"X5" pocket on the bottom side, 6" from the edge.
- Four pockets in varying sizes (approx. 5.5" deep) across the top side. Top edges of all pockets were lined with interfacing to give them more body.

3. When all pockets are attached, follow steps #3 through #8 of the Basic Purse directions. **(Found on pg. 9 of this eBook)**



4. Pin the snap tape to the right side of the organizer aligning the edge of the tape to the edge of the organizer. Place the edge of the tape against the side seam stitching. Use a zipper foot to sew down both edges of the tape.

5. Pin the opposite strip of snap tape to the wrong side of your finished Basic Purse by placing the edge of the tape against the side seam stitching, and aligning the edge of the tape to the edge of the hem. Once in place, the tape will not be visible because it is on the underside of the purse hem.

6. Turn the hem at the crease you made in step #2. Machine stitch around the bag 2" from the top edge.



7. Snap your organizer into your purse.

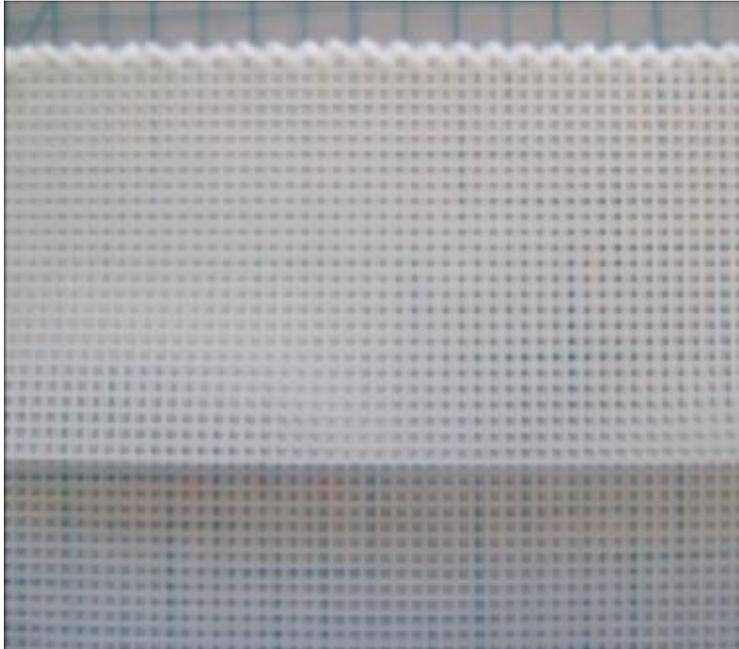
Tip:

I used tape with metal snaps for this project but I recommend the kind of tape used in baby's clothes. The snaps are plastic and have a stronger hold than the metal type and are less bulky.

Optional Structure:

If you prefer a purse with more body, you can achieve it with plastic mesh. Here's how to create a three sided structure that sits between the outer purse and the organizer offering body and flexibility.

- BOTTOM - Cut one piece of plastic mesh 4" X 9.25".
- SIDES - Cut two pieces of mesh 9.25" X 9.75".
- Attach the two side pieces to the bottom piece using yarn and overlapping stitches.



- Place the 3 sided structure into the purse between the organizer and the outer purse fabric. Push the mesh firmly and all the way to the bottom until it is seated properly.



Basic Purse Tutorial

By: Gloria from [Domestic Diva](#)

It's always best practice to start with the basics. The Basic Purse Tutorial is the perfect place to start your bag making adventures. Once you've learned how to sew your own purse, check out the corresponding purse organizer. The basic purse and the basic organizer keep all of your everyday belongings neatly stored away for your hectic life on the go.



Materials:

- 1 yard of heavy canvas fabric
- Thread

Strap Options:

Basic Straps:

If you choose to attach matching fabric straps directly to the top hem of the bag, cut two pieces of fabric 3.75" by 24.25". Sew the long edges



with a 5/8" seam, right sides together. Turn straps right side out. Turn under short edges 5/8". Pin the straps, centering them equally from the side seams with approximately 5.50" between them. Sew each end of the strap to the inside at the hem stitching line. Sew each strap once more securing it at the top edge of the hem. You may also choose to slip the raw edges of the straps into the hem before it is top stitched then finishing by securing them at the top edge of the hem.

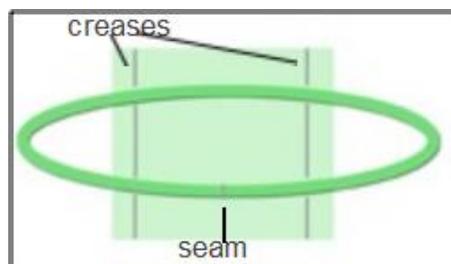
You can also find ready-made straps in various materials that only require finishing on the ends.

Binding Straps:



This style binds the entire bag, going down one side and coming up the other. It's essentially one long continuous strap, looped on both ends and connected with one seam. The strap should be 88" long by 3.75". Sew the strap's long edge with the right sides together. Turn it right side out. Sew the two ends together. Lay the loop onto the right side of the bag fabric with the seam in the center. Position and pin each strap an equal distance from the side seams. The shoulder strap part of the loops should extend 9" beyond the creases in the fabric. Top stitch close to the edges of each strap

stopping one inch from the creases in the fabric. After you've finished the bag and sewn the top hem in place, go back and top stitch the unattached portions of the loop.



Tabs with Rope:

Make tabs to hold any type of purchased straps. You will need 4 pieces of fabric measuring 4.25" by 6.25". Sew each piece with the right sides together. Turn them right side out then turn under the raw edges 5/8". Fold in half, line up the edges, and sew onto the bag. Secure with another line of stitching closer to the top edge of the bag, with enough opening to allow the rope to pass through. Hide raw edges of rope by creating two more tabs and wrapping them snugly around the joined ends.



Knotted Leather and Grommet (eyelet):

Nothing could be easier than attaching four grommets to the top edge of your bag, slipping a leather strap through them and knotting the ends. Grommets are available in sizes from small to large and come in different finishes. Everything you need is in the package except a hammer and a hard surface. We use the garage floor. You'll need two lengths of leather,

each measuring about 22”.



Directions:

1. Cut the fabric to measure 29” X 14.75”.

2. On both short ends, fold under the raw edges, wrong sides together and press to create a .50” hem. Sew down the hem. Turn under again 3” and press but do not sew. If you are making the “binding straps” they should be attached now. See strap options above.

3. Open the 3” hem and align the raw edges with right sides together. Be sure the creases match up.

4. Sew the left and right side edges of the bag with 5/8 seams, from the raw edges to the folded edge. Finish off the seams with a serger or a zigzag stitch to prevent fraying.

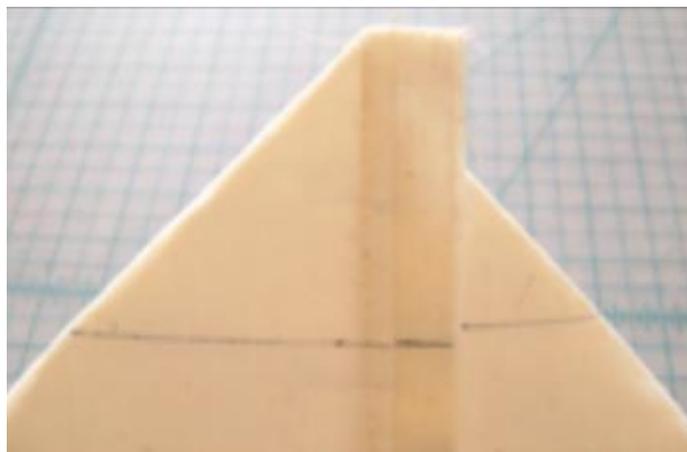
5. Bring together the bottom point of the right and left seams in a pyramid shape. Smooth layers. Press with your hands to create temporary creases on angled edges.



6. Place a ruler across the layers, aligning the 2” mark with the seam stitching. There should be 2” of fabric to the left and right of center.



7. Make a line against the ruler with a pen or tape. Flip the layers over and mark the other side. Machine stitch across the ruled lines.



8. Turn the bag right side out and push into the corners of the line you just sewed. This will create the 4" flat bottom for your bag. If you like a solid bottom, cut heavy card board 4" by 9.25". Sew a simple fabric cover for it and place it in the bottom of the bag. Hand stitch the cover to that bag's side seams to keep the cardboard in position.

9. Turn the hem at the crease you made in step #2. Machine stitch around the bag 2" from the top edge. This will leave you with one free inch to which you can attach a snap tape for the Basic Pure Organizer if you choose. Your bag is finished and you're ready to attach straps using the "Strap Options" above.

How to Dress up the Basic Purse:



Fabric:

Here the fabric resembles canvas in its weave but is soft and very lightweight. So light in fact, that it's lined with Craft Fuse iron-on interfacing to keep it from going limp. The soft color of the fabric gives the purse a very feminine look.

Accents:

Split the purse fabric horizontally about 5" from the top edge of the purse and attach a colorful .75" strip of cotton fabric, the same fabric used in the braided strap. The strip hides a zippered pocket and adds an interesting element to the look of the project. A piece of fancy chain attached to the zipper pull and with red and gold beads pick up the colors in the cotton strip.



Hardware:

Large metal grommets hold the strap and give the purse some attitude. You can also add a magnetic clasp to the center of the top hem before stitching it down, so the purse doesn't stand open.



Focal Point:

The real focus of this purse is undoubtedly the braided strap. You can make a casing for the piping by sewing a 25" strip of fabric with right sides together, then turning it right side out and inserted piping. There are two solid color strips and one of the print. The braided part of the strap is attached to a separate loop of solid fabric after it is threaded through the two grommets. A flat strip of fabric without piping is then wrapped around the connection to hide the raw edges. See how it was done in the photos below.



1. Once your casings are made, an easy way to insert the piping is to sew ribbon or seam binding to one end of the piping. Attach a safety pin to the opposite end of the ribbon. Lead the pin through the casing and pull the piping through.



2. After braiding the three strips, pull back the casings and cut off .50" of the piping from two of the braided strips on each end. This will provide an overall equal thickness when you join it with the connecting loop.



3. Overlap the braid ends and both ends of a 5" long loop that has been inserted through the grommets. Stitch across all thicknesses two or three times.



4. Hide the connection and raw edges by sewing a 3/4" wide by 6" long flat piece of fabric to the loop slightly below the point where it connects to the braid. Wrap around, angling upward until the raw edges are covered. Pin in place.



5. Attach a safety pin to the tail end of the wrap. Lead the pin through the top of the wrap.



6. Pull through the first band of the wrap. Cut off enough of the tail so it will be hidden under the band.



7. Hand stitch under the band to hold the tail securely in place.



Decorative T-Shirt Tote Bag

By: Tamara from [Etceterize](#)

With just a few materials you can create a lovely, casual bag that's great for everyday use. This T-shirt tote bag is easy to make and the tutorial will show you how to sew a purse so you can make several as gifts!



Materials:

- T-Shirt
- Fabric for embellishing
- Fabric interfacing
- Bias Tape
- Thread



Directions:

1. Lay out your T-Shirt and make marks similar to those below:



2. Cut along your lines. You should end up with something that looks like this:



3. Turn your top inside out, pin along the bottom, and stitch closed.



4. Turn back to right sides out. Now, you could just leave it at that and have a cute little tote bag, but if you don't like raw edges you can finish them off. By adding some bias tape to your edges you'll also reinforce everything and the straps won't stretch out to Timbuktu.

Lay your bias tape down, right sides together, along the edge and pin. You can start with the "armhole" edges first. (This took up almost an entire package of bias tape. If you're making a bigger bag, make sure to get enough tape to do all of your edges.)



5. Stitch right in the little ditch of the bias tape, making sure to overlap your ends.

6. Repeat this step on all of your raw edges.



7. This is what your edge will look like with the bias tape on it.



8. Now just fold it to the inside. It should just naturally roll nicely. Give it a good pressing. Pin it down if you have to, and then stitch about a 3/8" hem to secure the tape down.





8. If you'd like you can use your silhouette machine and make a cute little iron on transfer.



[Mini Chevron Pouch Tutorial](#)

By: Ashley for [Cherished Bliss](#)

Here's a cute way to carry all kinds of small items. From toys to coins, little girls and women alike will find the mini chevron pouch useful for carrying things. Free purse patterns like this one will undoubtedly come in handy more than once.

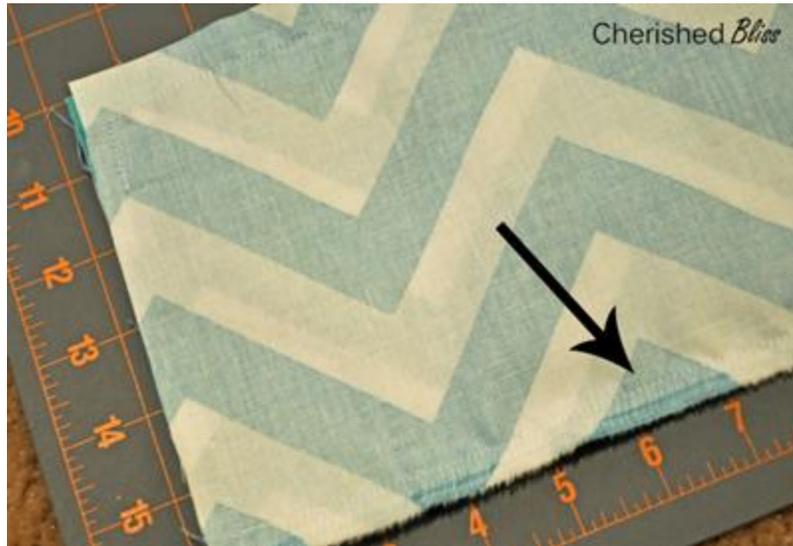


Materials:

- Two pieces of fabric roughly 12.5" x 5.5"
- Button or Velcro
- Your basic sewing materials (thread, sewing machine, scissors)

Directions:

1. Take your two rectangles and sew them right sides together with 1/4" seam allowance. Leave a small space in the bottom for turning.



2. Clip corners and turn fabric right side out. Press down your seam in the space you left open. We will top stitch this later.



3. Tri fold your rectangle and press.



4. Then you are going to leave the “flap” up and top stitch around the two sides and top. You can choose not to top stitch across the bottom. This creates the pouch.



4. Now make a button hole on the flap and sew on your button and you're done!



[Gym Tote Bag Tutorial](#)

By: Melissa from [Sew Like My Mom](#)

Carry all your workout gear in style with this Gym Tote Bag Tutorial. This spacious DIY tote bag has handy zippered pockets and sturdy straps. Also included in this tote bag tutorial are instructions on how to sew a drawstring bag as well.



Materials:

- 2 yards outer fabric
- 2 yards inner fabric
- 1 yard inner fabric (contrast and bag)
- 1.5 yards 70 weight Pelion interfacing
- .5 yards lightweight fusible interfacing
- Ribbon
- 1 9-inch zipper

- 1 magnetic closure
- Elmer's craft bond spray adhesive

Directions:

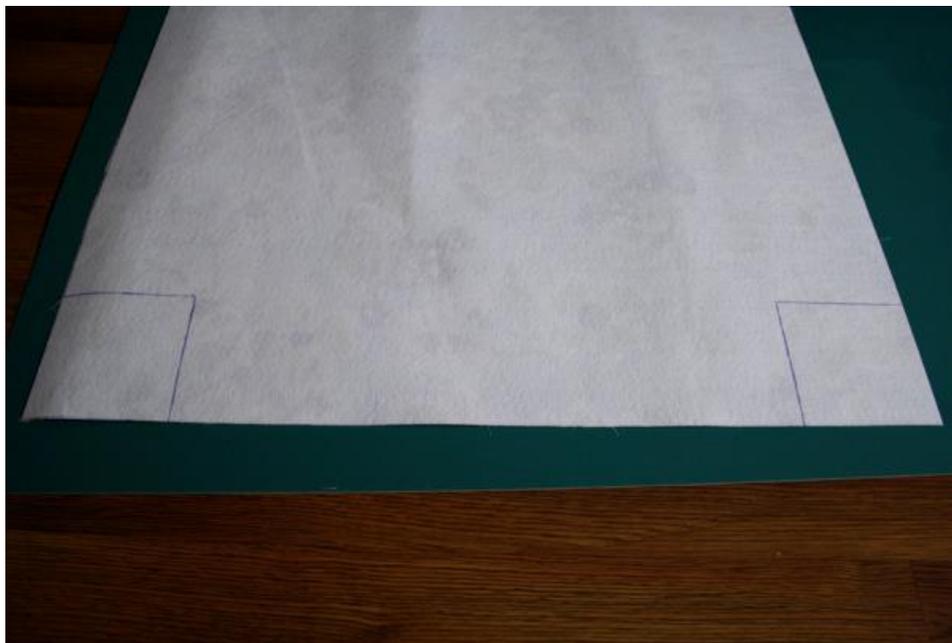
1. Start with the outside first; cut 2 pieces of interfacing 19" x 25" , 2 pieces of fabric to 19" x 25" , 1 piece of fabric 13" x 25" (floral), and another piece of fabric 14" x 25" (blue).



2. Using your spray adhesive, attach fabric to the interfacing. It's best if you do this outside. Not only does it smell, but it gets everywhere.

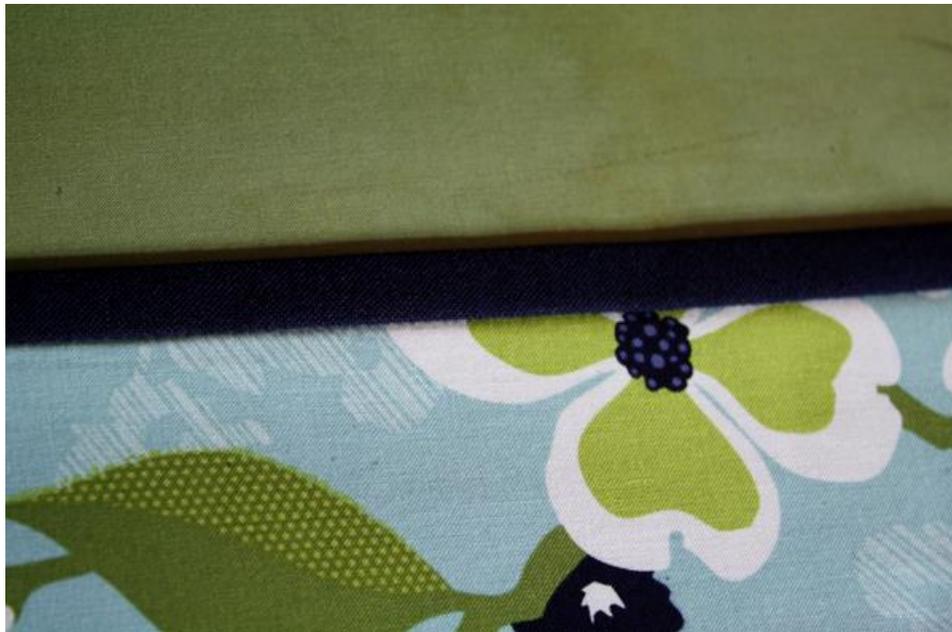


3. Once fabric is attached, flip the pieces over and trace 4" in from the sides and the bottom to give your bag its depth.



4. To make the pocket, place right sides together, line the edges up, and sew at 1/2" seam allowance. Then iron the seam, flip the blue part over the seam, so it shows 1/2" on the floral side, and iron it flat. The bottoms should line up evenly now.





5. Lay the pocket to top of one of the outside pieces and mark where you want your pockets. Here the mark is in the center so there will be 2 big pockets, and 4" in from the side so there will be 2 skinny side pockets.





6. Sew down the lines you marked. Sew a line all the way across, 4" from the bottom so your pockets don't wrap around under the bag.



7. Cut the 4" squares you traced on the back sides, and sew the outside of the bag together.



8. For the lining, cut 2 pieces 20" x 25" (yes, 1 inch taller than the outside pieces), 1 piece 16" x 25," and 1 piece 13" x 25." Then cut 2 pieces 2" x 25" and make them into bias tape for the accents on the top of the pockets. Cut 1 piece 12" x 24" for the lined, zippered pocket.



9. Since the fabric used for the lining here isn't just lightweight quilting cotton like the rest of the fabric, there was only 1 of each cut for the inner pockets. If you think your fabric will be too flimsy with only 1 layer, cut 2 for each pocket.

To accent the pockets, sandwich the fabric between the pseudo-bias tape and stitch it down.



10. Line the pockets up on one side of the lining and mark where you want your pockets. For the taller ones, if you want three pockets, divide the fabric in thirds and draw your lines.



11. For the shorter pocket, if you only want 2, draw a line down the middle.



12. Now, to sew them down, you have to sew the shorter pocket to the taller pocket, then the taller pocket to the lining. If you sew the smaller pocket through all the layers, you'll have a seam down the middle of the middle upper pocket. You want to carefully fold the lining piece back, and sew down your middle seam, attaching the short pocket to the tall one.



13. Fold the short pocket in out of the way, and sew the tall pocket to the lining fabric.



14. Measure 4" up from the bottom and draw a line. Then measure 4" from the sides and draw your lines to make the box bottom.



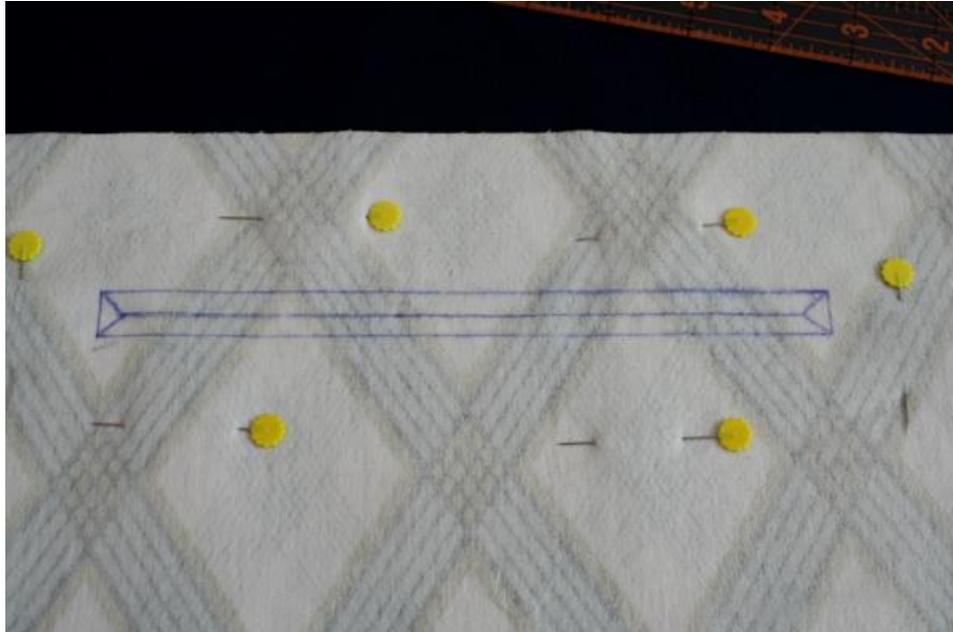
15. Sew from the corner of one square to the other, to seal off the bottom of your pockets just like you did on the outside.



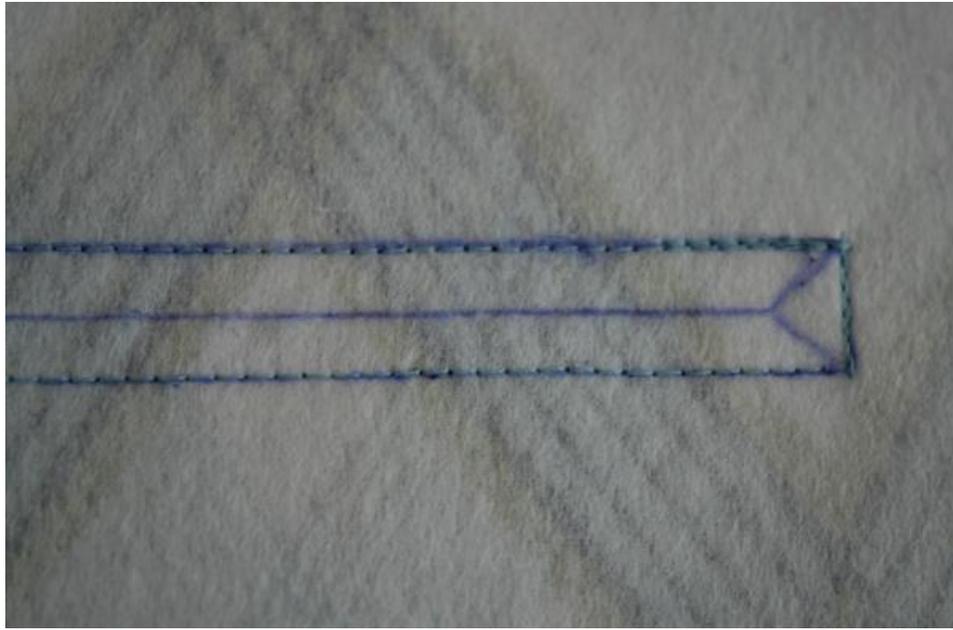
16. Cut out the square corners.



17. Take your 12" by 24" lined pocket piece and iron it to a piece of lightweight fusible interfacing of the same size. Place it right sides together on your other lining piece, about 4 inches from the top. Draw a long, skinny rectangle, 9 inches long and .5" tall. Then draw a line down the middle and make 2 triangle shape marks at the end.



18. Sew around the outer box shape and cut on your inner lines.



19. Put your pocket piece through the hole and pull it to the other side.



20. Iron the opening flat.



21. Grab your zipper and place it in the opening. Holding the zipper in the center, sew around the edge of the opening, staying close to the edge of the fabric.





22. Take the bottom of the pocket and fold it up, matching the top and bottom, making a 12" square.



23. Sew around the 3 open sides, and you've got a cute, lined zippered pocket.



24. After cutting the corners on that side, place lining pieces right sides together, and sew down both sides, and across the bottom, leaving a hole several inches long to turn the bag through.



25. The corners will still be open. Take them, place the seams from the side and the bottom together, and sew straight across.



Tip:

When you place the seams together, lay one to one side and the other to the other side. This will even out the thickness of the fabric you're putting through the machine, and it'll give you perfect corners.

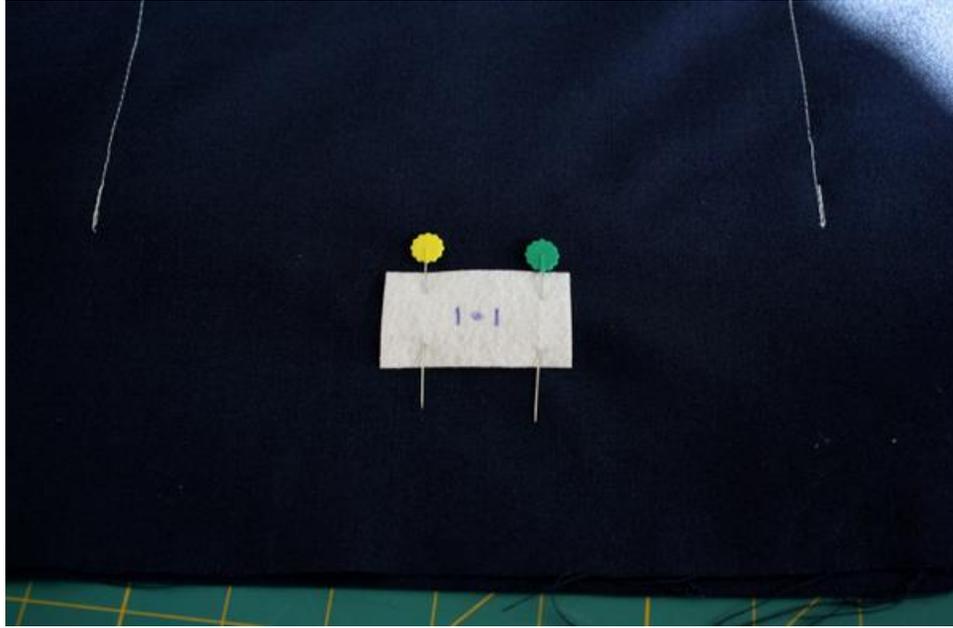




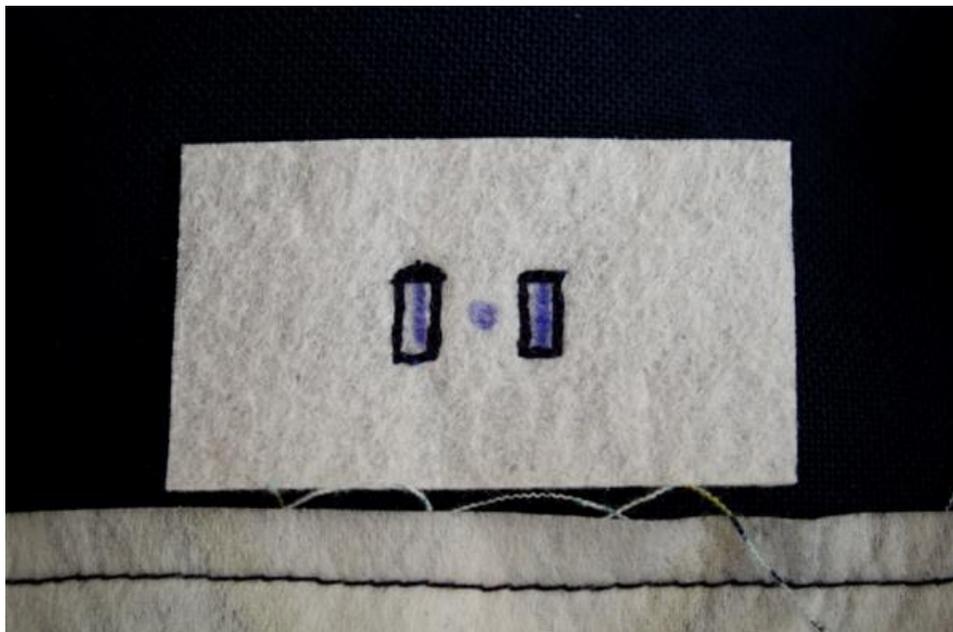
26. To do the magnetic closure, take 2 scrap pieces of interfacing, and mark the slits in the washer pieces that come with the closure.



27. Place them on the wrong side of each side of the lining, 3 inches from the top and centered.



28. Stitch around each slit marking, making a sort of buttonhole for added security.



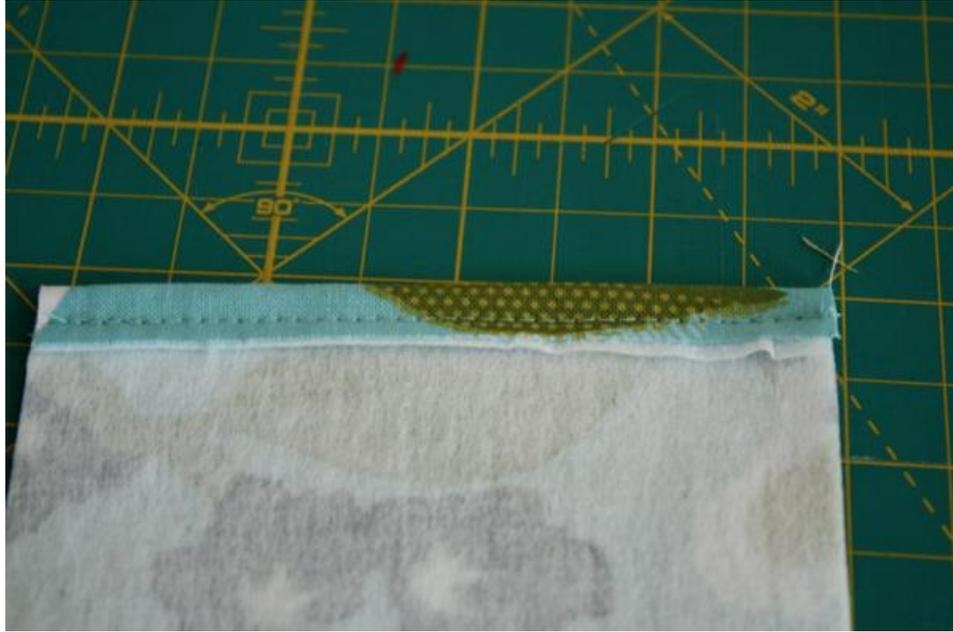
29. Cut on the lines and insert the magnetic closure.



30. For the straps, cut 2 pieces 4 inches wide by 32 inches long of both the fabric and the fusible interfacing. Apply the interfacing to the wrong side of the straps.



31. Fold down 1/2" on each side and sew.



32. Fold right sides together and sew down the length of the strap. Then using a safety pin, turn the straps right side out, and sew down both sides for stability.



33. Place each strap 2" down from the top of the bag and eyeball how far in from the sides you want.



34. Take the lining and with right sides together, put the outside into the lining, making sure your straps are tucked down inside the 2 layers.



35. Pin the pieces together, and sew around the perimeter with a 1/2" seam allowance.





36. Pull the bag through the hole in the lining and iron the top the same way you did the accent on the outer pocket. Then stitch the lining to the bag right along the fold, and sew the hole closed in the bottom.



And your bag is done!

Accessory Bags Directions:

1. The floral one is 1 piece 15" x 33" and the striped one is 12" x 24." Fold right sides together.



2. Iron the top down 1".



3. Lift the flap and fold the fabric down to the line you just ironed and press again.



4. Fold down on the original crease and press (so your fabric is turned and ironed twice), creating a casing. Sew from the bottom of the bag to the edge of casing.





5. Unfold the casing and fold over, aligning the fold with the seam. Press.



6. Repeat on the other side.



7. Fold the casing back down and iron, keeping your little flaps in so the edges are finished.



8. Sew along the bottom of the casing on each side of the bag.



9. Thread it through with a safety pin and sew in the middle of each side to secure the ribbon.



10. Heat seal the ends, turn right side out and you're done!

[It's a Cinch Bag](#)

By: Katy from [Sweet Verbena](#)

Beach bag, diaper bag, school bag, overnight bag, no matter what you use it for this bag is a cinch! This "It's a Cinch" Bag is a purse sewing pattern that you don't want to miss. It's a perfect sized bag for all your needs.



Materials:

- 2/3 yard of the main, outer fabric (gray linen in my case)
- 1 2/3 yard of the contrasting fabric (black upholstery fabric)
- Smaller Zipper(s) for interior pockets (optional)
- One 24" Zipper

Note:

This tutorial shows you how to construct the outer bag portion. The materials called for assume that you will also add a zipper to the lined bag. Assume 1/4" seam allowances. Use an upholstery weight fabric for at least the strap of this bag. The black fabric here is upholstery cotton. The gray, outer portion of this bag is linen.

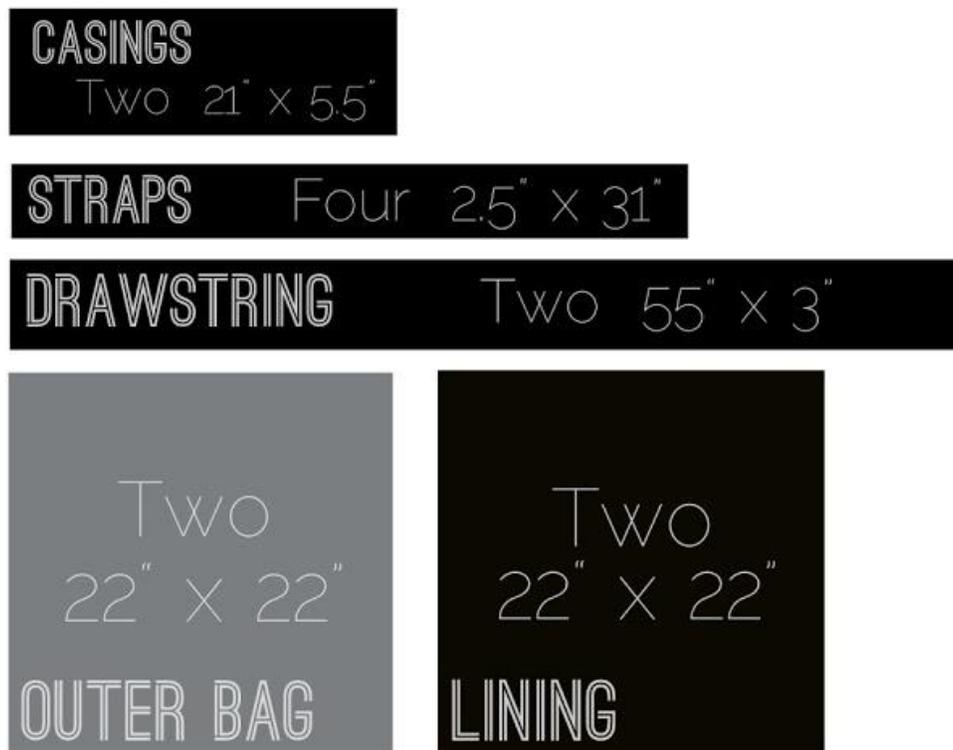
Cut Fabric:

- Casings: Two 21" x 5.5"
- Straps: Four 2.5" x 3"
- Drawstring: Two 55" x 3"
- Outer Bag: Two 22" x 22"
- Lining: Two 22" x 22"

Directions:

Casing/Outer Bag Construction:

1. Cut fabric as shown below:



2. The smallest rectangle of your contrasting fabric will be used as the casing. Press about 1/2" down along all sides of both casings.



3. Sew in place the short ends of the casing.



4. Position the casing onto one of your outer bag pieces as shown below (Right side of outer bag to wrong side of casing) and pin in place.



5. Sew **only the bottom**, long side of the casing to the outer bag.



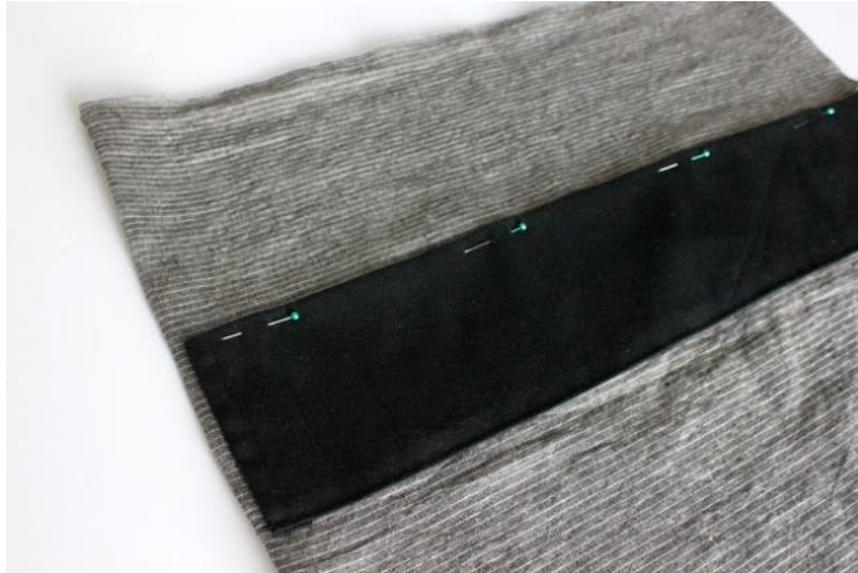
6. You don't want to sew either of the short ends or the top of the casing just yet. Leave it pinned in place as shown:



7. Repeat with other casing and other outer bag piece. Now take both outer bag pieces and pin with right sides together. Sew as shown below:



Notice how the casing is not caught up in the seam. That's how you want it at all four ends so that, later, the drawstring can be pulled through.



8. Hem the opening of the bag.

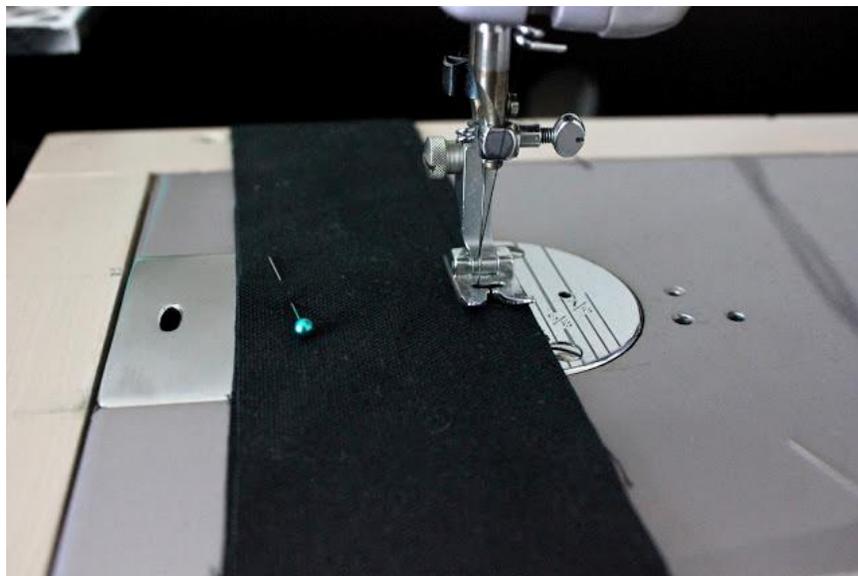


Straps:

1. You should have cut four 31" x 2.5" rectangles to use as your straps. Pair the straps and lay them right sides together. Pin in place.



2. Sew with a 1/4" seam allowance as shown. The gap is left so that the strap can later be turned right side out.



3. Snip out the extra fabric at all four corners.



4. Use a (not too sharp) instrument to turn the strap right side out. You can use the eraser of a pencil.



It's going to look a little wonky at first but give it a good press with the iron and it'll come together.



5. Topstitch all the way around the straps. This will make them look more professional and close that gap up as well.



6. This is why we didn't sew the top of the casing earlier. We want the straps to go underneath our casing. The straps should dip down about a 1/2" below the top of the casing.



7. Position and pin straps as shown below:



Sew as shown:



Drawstring:

1. The long skinny rectangles are going to be the drawstrings for the bag. Take them and fold them in half hot dog style. Pin in place.



2. Sew as shown below leaving a 4" gap somewhere along one of the long sides so that it can be turned right side out. The angled seam at the short ends gives you a nice little point, if you're into that.



3. Turn right side out, press, and top-stitch both drawstrings, just as you did with the straps.

4. Now pull the strings through the casing. You can use a large safety pin to help feed it through if needed.



5. And just cinch it up!

Follow [this tutorial](#) to add a zippered lining to your bag. You don't have to but it's going to add so much more stability and practicality to it. Well worth the effort.

[One Yard Dish Towel Tote Bag](#)

By: Joey from [One Yard Projects](#)

Here's a slight variation on the typical placemat tote. Grab a few colorful dish towels and create the One Yard Dish Towel Tote Bag. From this tutorial you'll learn how to make a tote bag that's comfortable to wear and large enough to store all of your everyday belongings. If you've been looking for crafts to make with towels, this is the project for you. Kitchen towel crafts are Eco-friendly, easy and inexpensive. Simply sew the two sides of the towels together, add straps and you're set to go!



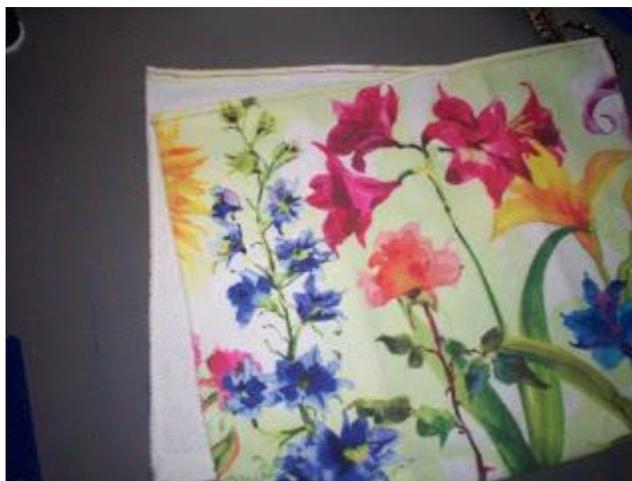
Materials:

- 2 equal sized dish towels
- Sturdy material/fabric for straps



Directions:

1. Sew a double-roll hem along the cut sides along the "top" parts of the bag.



2. Match the good sides of the bag and sew the bag together on three sides. Note how the bottom seam has a greater seam allowance. This is because the "bottom" of the bag was the original "top" and it has the store-bought finished seams. If you're working with something thick try sewing just outside of the already finished hem rather than try to fold them.



3. Turn the bag right-side out and attach the straps. Use some 1-inch webbing. If you want the straps a little long cut two 32" pieces of webbing.



4. Attach straps about three inches in from the sides of the bag. Position one strap about three inches in and arrange it so that the strap flows towards the bottom of the bag.



5. Sew a square to attach the strap, the square is about 3/4" along each side.



6. Fold the strap back up towards the top of the bag. This covers the initial sewn square. Sew the strap down again. This folding over and sewing twice will securely attach the webbing and finish the webbing edge as well.



Helpful Tip

Try this project with
two placemats!



7. When you sew the folded over strap, again sew a square with an "X" in the middle.



8. Follow the same scheme to attach the remaining ends of the straps. Be sure you don't have any twists in your strap before you secure the ends to the bag.

Here's the finished product with the long straps:



Library Tote

By: Terra from [Mama Says Sew](#)

Carry all your books home in this useful Library Tote. This simple tote bag tutorial is easy and fast to make, a great beginner sewing project. The sturdy design will let you bring home all the books you want!



Materials:

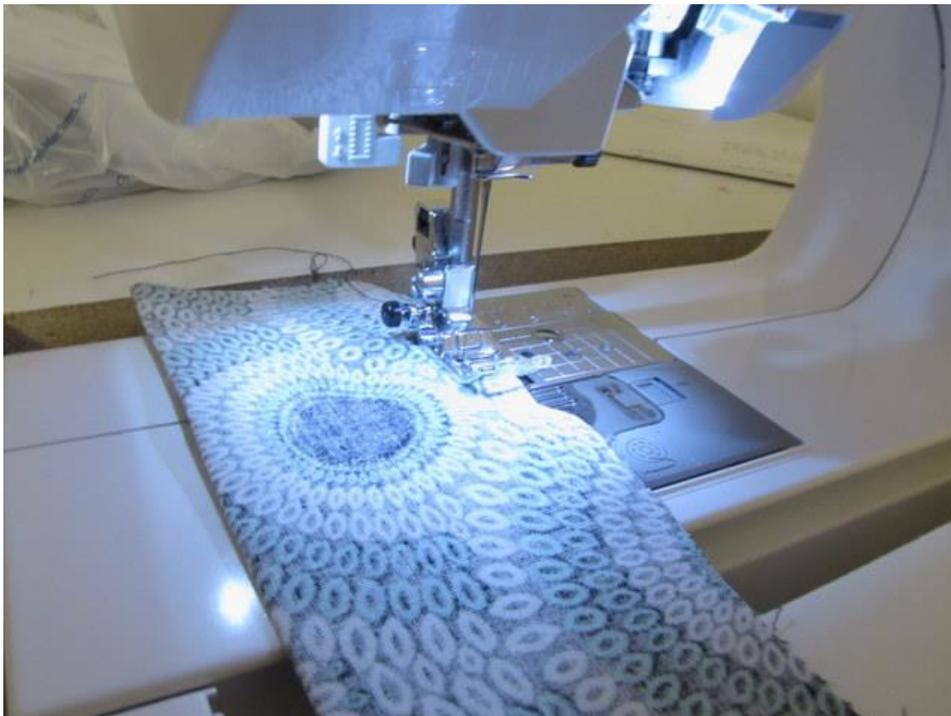
- ½ yard of fabric for the tote
- ¼ yard of fabric for the handles

Directions:

1. Start with 1/2 yard of fabric for the tote itself and 1/4 yard of fabric for the handles. Cut the handle piece in half lengthwise and the tote fabric into 2-14x19 inch rectangles.
2. Iron one 19 inch end over then over again on both rectangles. Topstitch it down.



3. Fold your handle pieces in half lengthwise and press. Stitch down the long end.



4. Turn both handles right side out and press.



5. Pin the handles to the tote. The raw edges of the handles should line up with the raw edges of the tote, so you'll have an upside-down "U" shape. Measure so that both your handles are 5 inches from the outside edge of your tote. Do the same with the other handle and tote piece.



6. Topstitch all around the handles to secure them to the tote. To make them secure you may want to sew two rows.



7. Match up your two tote pieces right sides together. Sew down both sides and along the bottom of the tote. Cut out a 2-inch square piece from the bottom corners of your tote.



8. Pinch the edges together and pin in place. Sew it shut.



Now go to the library and fill your tote with books. Even better, you now have your hands free to grab your baby before he or she sends every book in the library toppling to the floor.



DIY Fancy Lace Clutch

By: Gloria from [Domestic Diva](#)

The DIY Fancy Lace Clutch is perfect for a fun night out. Follow these simple steps and learn how to make a clutch bag. With special edgings and beads attached, this dainty clutch is a lovely way to complete your outfit. Choose fabric and embellishments that will compliment your special outfit. Once you know how to sew with lace you can add the special fabric to tons of different projects. It's a great way to dress up the ordinary piece.



Materials:

- All fabric pieces measure 15" x 8.5"
- 1 piece outer fabric
- 1 piece lace
- 1 piece lining
- 1 piece heavy fusible interfacing
- Sewing notions
- Crystal button
- Elastic Thread
- [Fancy Clutch Pattern](#)*
- [Clutch Purse Pattern](#)**

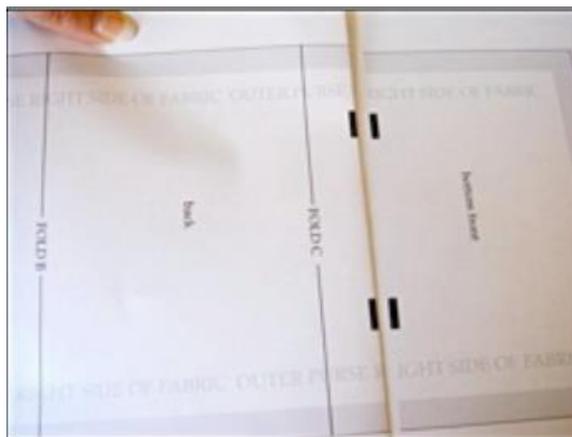
**The Fancy Edge Clutch Pattern is for lace with special edgings (see photo) like scallops or if beads are attached. You don't want to sew this type of edge into the seam. It should remain free. The Fancy Edge Pattern includes those directions.*



***Download the basic Clutch Purse pattern if you are making a lace clutch, or one with any other fabric that has no special edge treatment. Use this pattern and just cut out the lace with the outer fabric and treat it as one piece. Follow all the instructions for sewing the outer fabric.*

Directions:

1. Download and print out the pattern of choice. The two pattern pieces are too large for most home printers so each must be printed in two sections and then taped together. All directions are included with the pattern.
2. Cut out the outer fabric, the lace, and the interfacing together. Cut out the lining.
3. Remove all the pins.
4. Fuse the interfacing to the outer fabric.
5. Follow the pattern directions for sewing your purse.



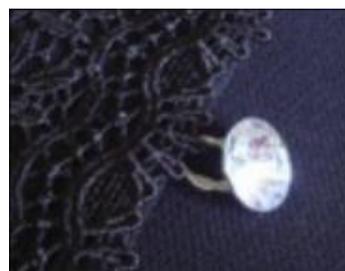
6. Match up the black boxes to join the printed pattern pieces then tape together.

Tips and Shortcuts:

- When it comes to clasps, think outside the box. The clasp on this lace purse in the photo is optional and made up simply from a crystal button and an elastic loop that fastens around it. You can use interesting buttons, decorative pins, and even large earrings on purses. The pattern

includes markings for positioning a loop on the flap.

- Make loops from the same fabric as the purse or buy small pieces of braid, metal chains, or jewelry findings. Search the trim counter of your fabric store for interesting options. Look for colors and materials that suit your purse fabric and style.
- An easy loop can be made from elastic thread or cord. Braid together three lengths and knot the ends. Attach the braid ends when you're sewing the flap seam. The loop shown on the right is intentionally white so it will be visible against the black fabric in the photo. Match your loop about an elastic braid is it will stretch to fit over the button with ease.
- Make your clutch purse for even less by finding your fabric in the remnant bin at the fabric store.



Pretty Petite Purse

By: Kitty and Jennifer from [Running with Sisters](#)

When you need just a few things for a night out, it's easier to carry along a smaller, more compact bag. Let this tutorial teach you how to sew your own purse that's just the right size. It's a pretty bag you'll find useful.



Materials:

- Fabrics & Embellishments
- Cotton fabric: floral, $\frac{1}{4}$ yd.
- Cotton fabric: polka dot, $\frac{1}{4}$ yd.
- Pelion Fusible Interfacing, $\frac{1}{4}$ yd.
- Patterned red ribbon, $\frac{7}{8}$ ", 60"
- Gold rings, $1\frac{1}{4}$ ", two
- Ornate button, gold with shank, $1\frac{1}{2}$ "
- Sew-on snap, $\frac{1}{2}$ " size
- Iron & ironing board
- Pressing cloth
- Sewing needle
- Sewing machine & matching threads

Directions:

1. Place the rough side of the fusible interfacing to the wrong side of the floral fabric, cover with a damp pressing cloth, and steam the pieces together for 15 seconds.

2. Cut two $7\frac{1}{2}$ " x $7\frac{3}{4}$ " rectangles from the floral fabric and two from the polka dot fabric. Cut the $7\frac{1}{2}$ " sides of each rectangle so they angle inward and the top of the rectangle measures 6" and the bottom measures $7\frac{3}{4}$ ".

3. Cut a curve into the top edge (6" side) of each piece of fabric so the center of the arc is 1" below the top. (Cut one to use as a pattern so all the curves match.)

4. Place a floral and a polka dot piece together, good sides facing in. Machine sew just the curved edge using a straight stitch with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance. Repeat for the other pieces of fabric.

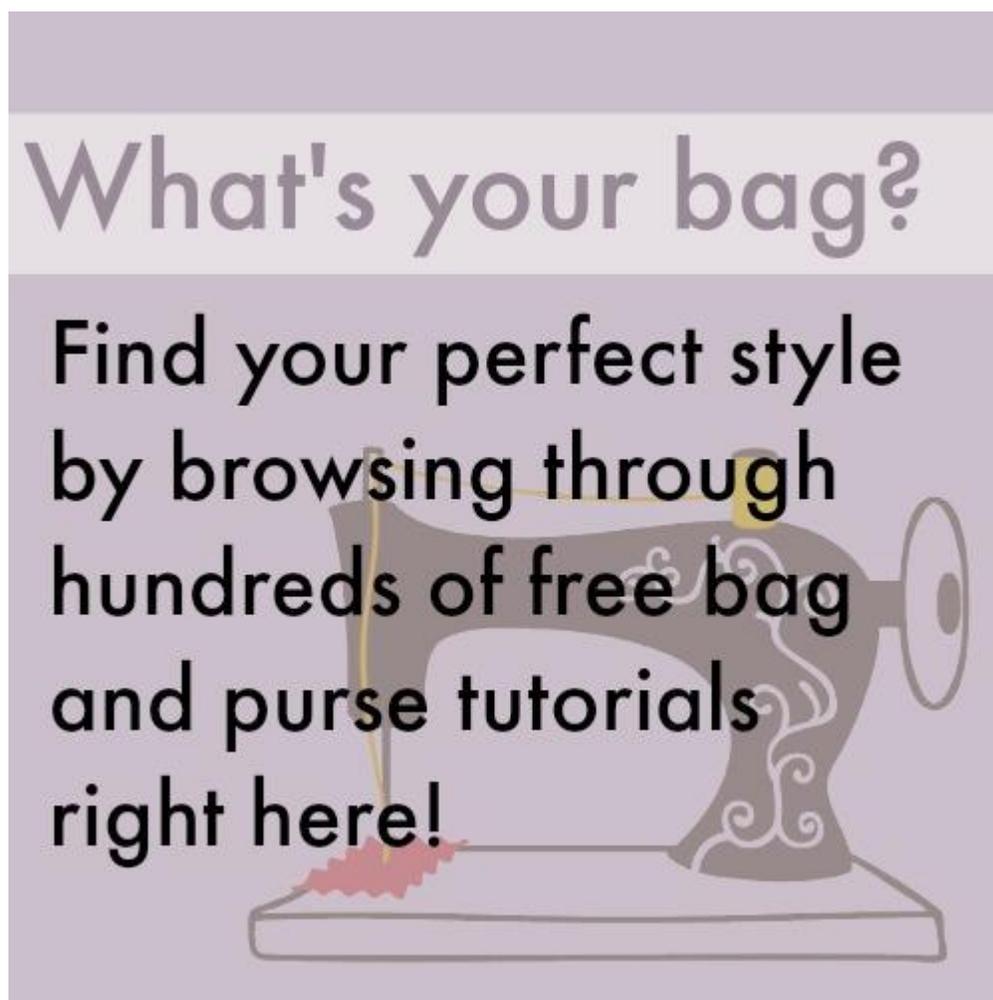
5. Open the two pieces of fabric and place together, good sides facing in, making sure the floral fabric faces the floral fabric and the polka dot faces the polka dot. Pin all the way around the edges. Machine stitch the pieces together using a straight stitch with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance. Leave a 2" opening in the side of the polka dot fabric.

Making a boxed corner is as easy as sewing a straight line across each corner of the purse.

6. Create "boxed corners" by pulling the fabric at one corner apart and creating a triangle with the seam line down the center. Measure 1" from the point of the triangle along the seam line and mark a straight line perpendicular to the seam. Machine stitch along this straight line. Repeat for all 4 corners.



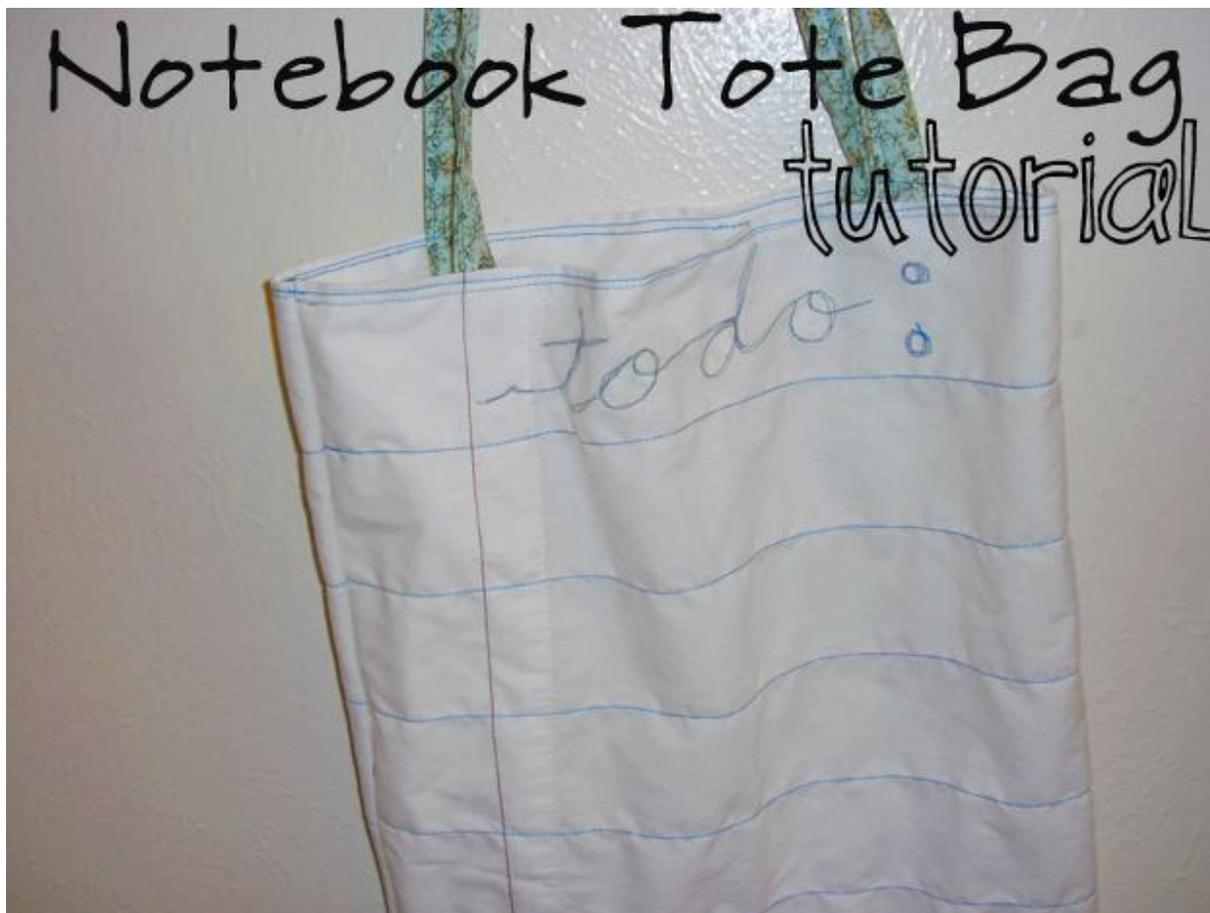
7. Turn the piece right side out. Hand sew the opening closed. Stuff the polka dot end inside the floral end to form the purse lining.
8. Cut the red ribbon into two 23" lengths and machine sew together with the good sides facing out. Then cut and sew two 11" lengths of ribbon together in the same way. Center the longer ribbon on the bottom of the purse and pin it to the bottom and sides. Hand sew the ribbon into place being careful not to sew into the lining.
9. Fold the end of the ribbon over 1/8" and feed it through one of the gold rings toward the inside of the purse. Pin the folded end of the ribbon to itself below the ring. Machine stitch to secure. Repeat for the other side. Attach the 11" ribbon handle to the gold rings in the same way.
10. Sew the snap to the inside of the purse 1/2" from the top edge, being careful not to sew through to the outside fabric. Sew the glitzy button to the outside front of the purse over the snap.



Notebook Tote Bag Tutorial

By: Katie from [Punk Projects](#)

Carry your books in style with this Notebook Paper Tote Bag. The body of this DIY tote bag is stitched with blue and red thread to look like an over-sized piece of notebook paper. Make this cute sewing project for yourself or as a teacher gift.



Materials:

- White Fabric
- Blue and Red Thread
- Ribbon
- Sewing Machine or Needle and Thread

Directions:

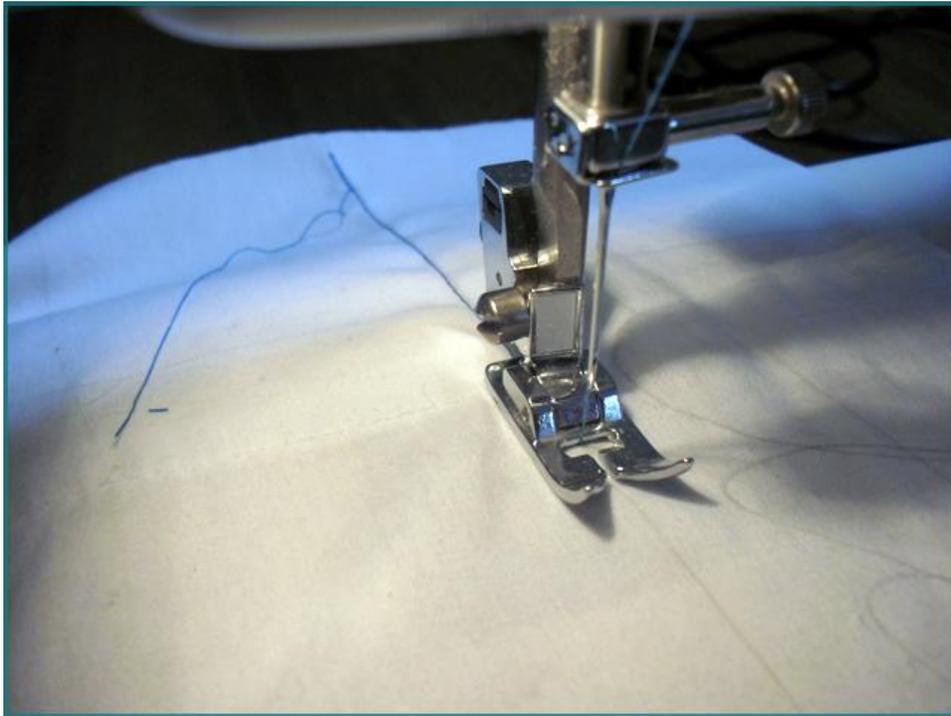
1. Cut your fabric. This one is cute 18" x 24" and folded it in half.



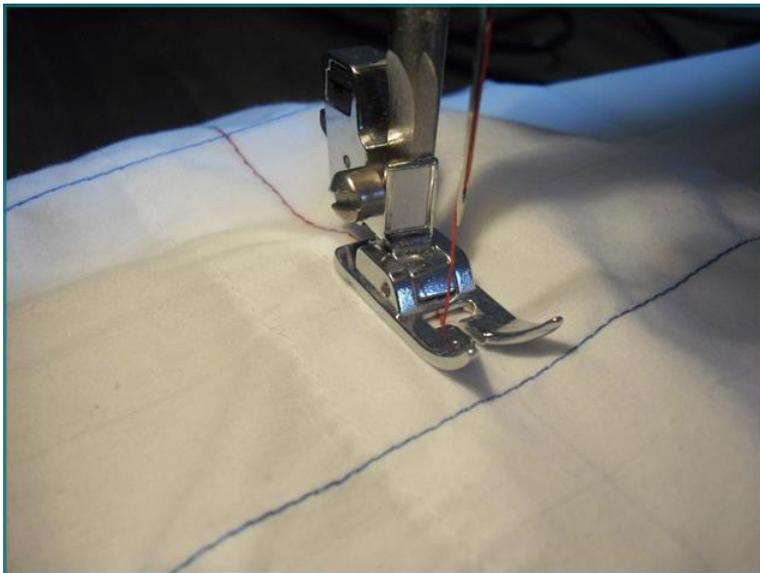
2. Sketch out your notebook lines and if you want a "to-do list".



3. Taking your fabric, start sewing blue lines across it. Keep sewing blue lines until you get the notebook look you are going for.



4. Switch to red thread and Sew 1 red line down your fabric.



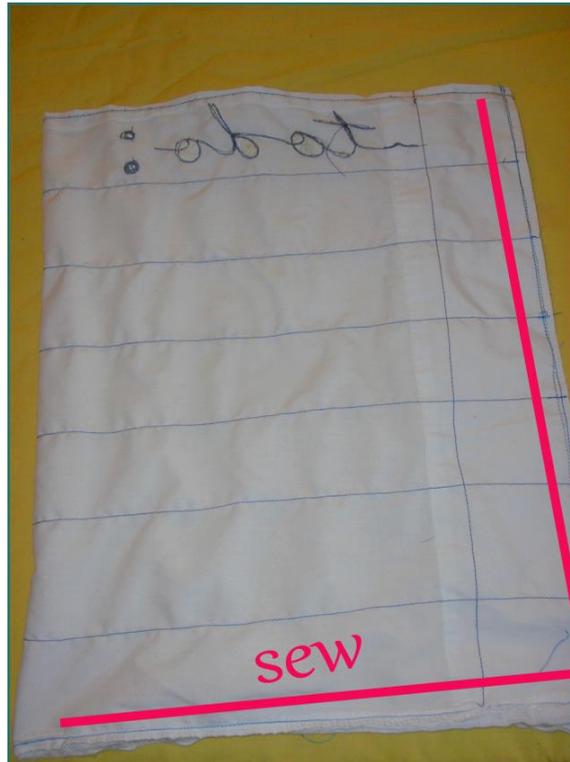
5. Now you can sew on your 'To-Do'. If you don't want to embroider it use the free motion foot on your sewing machine. You can also hand embroider it.



6. Hem the top edge.



7. With your bag inside out, sew up the side(s) and bottom of your bag. Be sure to leave the top open!



8. For the straps, cut your ribbon to the length you want, OR you can use fabric strips. Pin your straps to the top of your bag.



9. Sew on your straps. You can do this by sewing around the top of your bag again.



Voila! Now you have a cute new tote bag!



12 Beautiful Tote Purse Patterns



A special thanks to our contributors:

- Ashley from [Cherished Bliss](#)
- Cynthia from [The Sewing Dork](#)
- Gloria from [Domestic Diva](#)
- Heather from [Dollar Store Crafts](#)
- Jennifer & Kitty, [Running with Sisters](#)
- Joey from [One Yard Projects](#)
- Katie from [Punk Projects](#)
- Katy from [Sweet Verbena](#)
- Melissa from [Sew Like My Mom](#)
- Tamara from [Etcetorize](#)
- Terra from [Mama Says Sew](#)

Sign up for our [free sewing newsletter](#) and receive more low-cost collections, free sewing projects, quick tips, home décor ideas and more right in your inbox every week.