

HOW TO MAKE A FLIP AND SEW MARKET TOTE BAG

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TIP

It is important to use 1/4" seams (unless otherwise noted). Some sewing machines have a 1/4" foot but if not, a 4 x 6 index card can be used to measure where to position the raw edge of the fabric. Position a line on the index card under the machine needle and mark with masking tape where the line to the right is on the machine deck. Your raw fabric edge needs to line up with the left edge of the masking tape.

INTRODUCTION

This guide provides instructions on how to sew a quilted and lined market tote bag with handles, using a technique called 'flip and sew'. You will need basic sewing skills, such as how to sew a straight stitch, and how to measure and cut accurately. You do not need to have quilting expertise.

As you read through this guide, you will see tips along the sides of the page. These tips are designed to help make your sewing easier, or to provide ideas on how to personalize your bag.

A basic bag takes about 6 to 8 hours to make, and you can finish in one weekend. They make great gifts for holidays, birthdays, or any special occasion. The main thing is to relax and have fun as you sew.

TOOLS

- Good thread (old thread breaks!)
- Sharp scissors!
- Pencil (#2 pencils are fine, a chalk pencil sometimes shows up better on fabric)
- Transparent ruler
- Optional rotary cutter and mat
- 1/4" sewing foot OR 4 x 6 index card
- Spray starch
- Spray bottle with water
- Iron (steam or dry)
- Good lighting!

MATERIALS

- 100% cotton quilters fabric
- 1 yd low loft batting (preferably 100% cotton or 80/20 blend), 42" wide
- White or beige thread
- 7" zipper (optional for inside pocket (see **Tip** page 4)

PERSONALIZING YOUR BAG

The outer shell of the bag as shown in these instructions consists of 5 panels for the top piece, with an overall finished measurement of 18 1/2" W x 10 1/2" H, and a darker bottom piece measuring 18 1/2" w x 6 1/2" H. However, there are many ways to personalize your bag. Here are several ideas:

- Use a decorative scene panel for the top
- Use white fabric for the top piece and write words, names, musical notes, etc., using fabric markers
- Quilt squares, mug rugs and embroidered napkins make great tops
- A strip of white fabric, cut to the proper measurements, can be given to a child along with some Crayola® crayons. Have the child draw a design and heat press the fabric with a hot iron to set the colors. Be sure to lay a piece of fabric on top of the colored design so that you don't get crayon residue on your ironing plate!

Be sure that that you end up with two top pieces, each measuring 18 1/2" W x 10 1/2" H, when you personalize your bag.

TIP

Seam allowances and cutting lines must be accurate in order to produce a bag with straight lines. A rotary cutter and mat is best, but a clear quilting ruler, pencil and sharp scissors also work well.

4 x 6 index cards can be used as guides when folding over raw edges. They can be ironed!

If you prewash your fabric, press it before use. Because washing removes the manufacturers' sizing, you may want to use a spray starch when ironing.

If the material puckers or shifts when sewing, STOP! Leave the material in the machine, remove any pins, line up the material correctly, and flatten with your fingers. Re-pin if necessary. Continue sewing.



HANDLES

FoC: Fabric of Choice

- Cut two (2): 4" x 28" strips **FoC**
- Cut two (2): 1" x 26" strips low loft batting

Fold the long side of a fabric strip to the wrong side approximately 1/4" (use a 4 x 6 index card as a guide (see **Tip** on page 1). Press, stitch in place if desired. Repeat for the second strip.

Fold the short ends of both strips to the wrong side approximately 1/2".

Lay the 1" strip of batting down the middle of one fabric strip. Fold the raw edge of the fabric strip over the batting to just beyond the center of the batting strip. Finger-press. Fold the finished edge of the fabric strip over so that it covers the raw edge. Adjust as necessary. Press and pin in place. Sew down the center of the strip approximately 1/8" inside the finished edge, using the fold as a guide. Repeat for the second strip. The finished handles should each be approximately 1 1/4" x 27".

See page 7 for diagrams.

OUTER SHELL

FoC: Fabric of Choice

- Cut six (6): 4 3/4" x 10 1/2" strips **FoC** (color 1)
- Cut four (4): 3" x 10 1/2" strips **FoC** (color 2)

Use any combination of fabrics—they can all be different, they can be print/solid combinations, large/small print combinations, or even scraps. See 'Personalizing Your Bag' on page 2 for more ideas.

- Cut two (2) 6 1/2" x 18 1/2" strips FoC (color 3) for the bottom half of the bag.
- Cut two (2) 16 1/2" x 18 1/2" strips low loft batting. Put a pin in the 18 1/2" side to mark the width.

Orient one strip of batting so that the 18 1/2" width is horizontal. Using a strip of colored chalk or pencil, lightly mark vertical lines, starting from the left raw edge, as follows:

4 3/4"	2 1/2"	4 1/2"	2 1/2"	4 1/2"
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OUTER SHELL (CONT.)

Flip and sew method:

Take one (1) 4 3/4" x 10 1/2" strip (color 1) and pin to upper left corner of the marked batting. Place a 3" x 10 1/2" strip (color 2), right sides together, to the right side of the 4 3/4" x 10 1/2" strip, lining up both raw edges with the marked line on the batting. Sew through all layers using a 1/4" seam allowance (see **Tip** on page 1 for seam allowances). Flip the top fabric strip to the right, and finger press.

Using this method, alternate the remaining 4 3/4" x 10 1/2" strips with the 3" x 10 1/2" strip, ending with the last 4 3/4" x 10 1/2" strip. You will have 5 strips sewn across the 18 1/2" piece of batting when done.

Take one (1) 6 1/2" x 18 1/2" strip and lay over the finished top piece, right sides together, bottom raw edges matching. Sew the bottom edges together through all layers. Flip over and iron the finished piece.

Repeat flip and sew method for the second piece of marked batting. See page 7 for diagrams.

FINISHING THE OUTER SHELL

The flip and sew method eliminates the need for traditional quilting, but feel free to quilt as desired. Channel stitching, decorative patterns and outline stitching can all be used for both the top and bottom.

Once the two outer shell pieces are complete, trim off raw edges so that each piece measures 16 1/2" x 18 1/2". Note that your bag may not be exactly these measurements—just be sure the lining measurements match the outer shell measurements. Placing right sides together and matching seams, sew side seams using a 1/2" seam allowance. Sew bottom seam, using a 1/2" seam allowance.

Keeping the outer shell wrong sides out, bring the two side seams together and smooth the piece so that the bottom forms two upside-down triangles. Measure the sides to be sure they are the same length. This can take a few tries to get the correct measurements. Poke out the triangle points with a blunt knitting needle. Press lightly with an iron if needed.

Measure 2 1/2" in from the point of the upside-down triangle and draw a line across to form a sub triangle. Sew along the line. Trim approximately 1/2" away from the sewing line. Repeat for second upside-down triangle. See page 7 for diagrams.

TIP

To match seams easily, line the seams up and pin in the sewing line. This will keep the fabric from shifting.

When pinning side seams, pin on the horizontal rather than the vertical. This will also keep the fabric from shifting.

If you are pressing batting, lay a light piece of cloth over the batting to keep it from

LINING

Cut two (2) lining strips, 16 1/2" H x 18 1/2"W. Measure the length and width of the outer shell, and trim the lining to match if necessary. Note that the following assumes measurements of 16 1/2" H x 18 1/2"W.

Orient the pieces so that the 18 1/2" measurement is horizontal. With right sides together and using a 1/2" seam allowance, sew side seams. Using a 1/2" seam allowance, sew 5" in on each side of the bottom seam, leaving an 8 1/2" opening. Pin the opening along an imaginary 1/2" sewing line. Press the bottom seam open.

As with the outer shell, above, bring the two side seams together and smooth the piece so that the bottom forms two upside-down triangles. Measure the sides to be sure they are the same length. Poke out the triangle points and press lightly if needed.

Measure 2 1/2" in from the point of the upside-down triangle and draw a line across to form a sub triangle. Sew along the line. Trim approximately 1/2" away from the sewing line. Repeat for second upside-down triangle.

ATTACHING THE OUTER SHELL AND LINING

Turn the outer shell right side out. Fit the shell inside the lining (right sides of the outer shell and lining should be facing each other). Line up the side seams and top raw edges. Pin in place. If the lining is larger than the shell, pleat excess at the side seams. Sew around the top, using a 1/2 inch seam allowance.

Pull the outer shell through the bottom opening in the lining. While the lining is still outside the bag, stitch down the opening, following the pressed fold. Press the seam where the outer shell and lining meet towards the lining. This will allow the seam to 'roll' so that the lining doesn't show over the top of the bag.

Tuck the lining down into the outer shell, making sure everything is smoothed and flat. Press the top seam again, and topstitch 1/8" from the fold.

TIP

Note that no matter what you do, the final measurements may not be exactly 16 1/2" H x 18 1/2"W. Fabrics can be stretched from ironing or piecing, seam allowances can be slightly off, or it might just be gremlins! As long as the lining measurements match the outer shell, the bag will come out fine.

For advanced sewers, if an inner pocket is desired, use whatever construction method you prefer to make the pocket. Attach to the lining before sewing the side seams.

ATTACHING THE HANDLES

Measure and mark 1" up from each end of the two handles. Pin the ends of each handle on the inside of the bag, about 3 1/2" away from each side seam, lining up with the outer seam of each 3" strip. The top of the 1" mark should be even with the top of the bag and the folded seam of the handle should be facing inwards. Take care not to twist handles when pinning. Sew all around the 1" square and then diagonally to form an 'X'. Repeat for each handle end.

Bag handles can be placed on the same side, or on opposite sides for a different look. See diagrams on page 7 for placement.

WEB RESOURCES

Free instructions from Missouri Star Quilt Company:

<http://blog.missouriquiltco.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/Missouri-Star-Quilt-Co-Tote-Bag-Pattern.pdf>

Free patterns for many different bag styles from All People Quilt:

<http://www.allpeoplequilt.com/bags-pillows-gifts/bags-and-purses/free-bag-patterns>

Many free tutorials and advice from The Quilting Board:

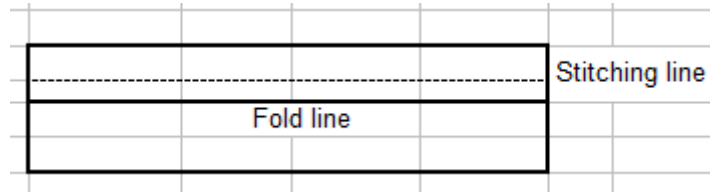
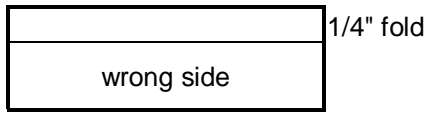
www.quiltingboard.com

Numerous Stitch and Flip (flip and sew method) tutorials from Craftsy:

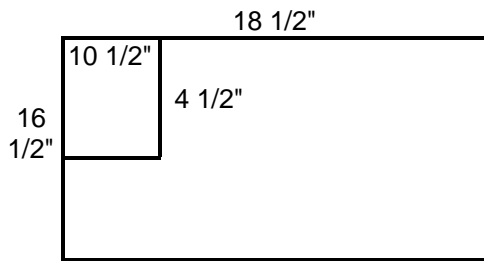
TIP

Another option to attach handles is to place them in between the outer shell and the lining, with the ends lining up with the top of the outer shell and approximately 3 1/2" away from each side seam, lining up with the outer seam of each 3" strip. Sew as directed on page 5.

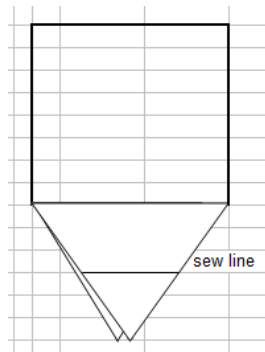
HANDLE DIAGRAMS(FROM PAGE 3)



OUTER SHELL DIAGRAMS(FROM PAGE 4)



FINISHING OUTER SHELL AND LINING DIAGRAMS(FROM PAGE 4 AND 5)



ATTACHING THE HANDLES(FROM PAGE 6)

