

Two Bits Bag

The design for this bag differs slightly from other bags in that you use two different fabrics on both sides of the outside, as well as the inside. The front panel of the bag matches it's lining partner & vice versa. To add some contrast, the handles & pockets are switched.

This bag design has a lot of flexibility and customization options. Since you are only using two fat quarters, you can whip up a very simple, very inexpensive bag. Your finished bag will be about 10" wide, standing about 11" tall, & about 1 1/2" wide.



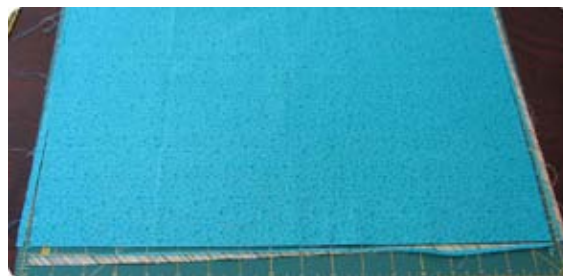
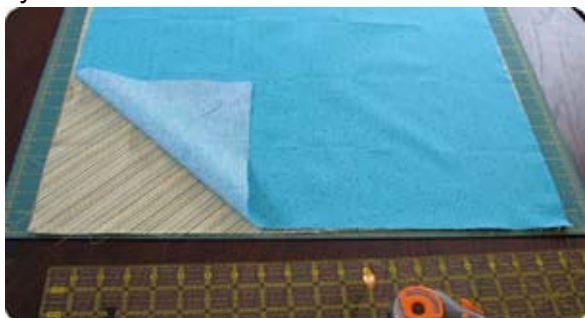
Supplies Needed:

2 fat quarters (or two ~17" by 20" pieces)
matching thread
sewing machine
cutting mat
rotary cutter
rulers
scissors
pencil
iron & ironing board

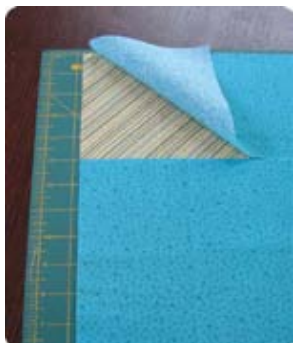
Optional Supplies:

decorations: ric rac, ribbon, patches, etc.
interfacing or batting

1. Lay your fabric, one piece on top of the other, on the cutting mat, using one edge to line them up with each other. Cut the minimum amount off all uneven edges. You should be left with a shape that is ~ 17" by 20".



2. Cut ~4" off of the short edge, making the 17" edge ~13". These will be your handles & pockets.



3. Now you get to pick which design you want to use:

a. One long handle with one pocket design

b. Two short handles with two pocket designs



- If you choose A, then remove the strip of fabric you want to use as your handle, but leave the pocket fabric. If you choose B, just leave both strips.



- Reposition your ruler to cut the ~20" in half. This will cut your pockets (& your straps for B) as well.

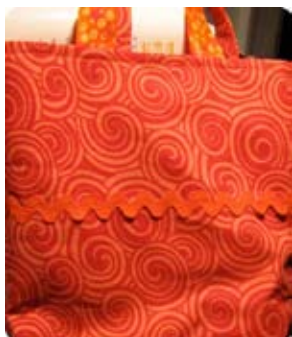


- If you want to add interfacing or batting, this is the time. Add it to your outer pieces. I did not use it for the handles or pockets, but you can certainly do that if you like.



I interface my fabric in what is probably the worst way ever. It works for me & saves me time from measuring & cutting interfacing. I lay the two pieces side-by-side on the interfacing, trim the piece away from the roll of interfacing, then iron as directed. Then I trim the extra bits off & cut the two pieces away from each other. That is a pillowcase that I cut in half, sandwiching the fabric & interfacing, to protect my ironing board & my iron.

- If you are adding any embellishments, this is the time to add those to the outer pieces.



I added ric rac to the bag on the left. I added a plain ribbon to the bag on the right. You could add a bit of embroidery, a fancy bit of trim, a ruffle, a lacy crochet edging . . . really just about anything.



8. Take your pocket pieces & fold in half, short end to short end, right sides together. Sew around the edges, taking care to leave a gap for turning. Make sure to backstitch a few times at the opening. Snip the excess at the corners.



Turn your pocket, right side out, using a small "corner tool" (I use a knitting needle) to make your corners square.



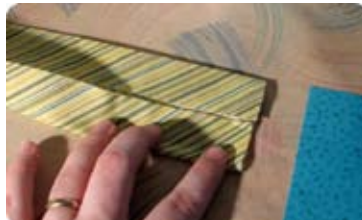
Iron, making sure to fold your gap seam shut.



9. While at the ironing board, iron your handles in half, long side to long side.



Open & iron one side into the fresh seam. Repeat with the other side.



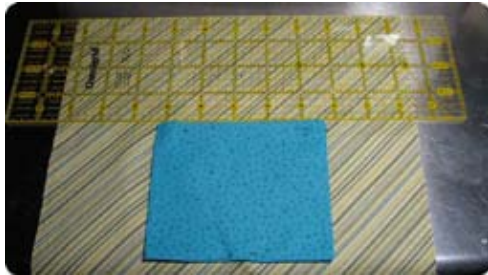
Fold the handle up, like bias tape, & iron it flat.



Take your handles to the sewing machine & sew a seam all around each handle (or just your one handle).



10. Lay out one piece of your inner fabric & lay a 4-inch wide ruler across the top, even with the top of the fabric. Place your pocket against the bottom of the ruler & pin. Repeat for the second inner piece.



Take them to your sewing machine & sew a seam around three edges of the pocket, making sure that the gap seam gets sewn shut (I always put that seam along the bottom of the pocket). You can add another line of stitches if you wish. Be sure to backstitch at the top seams of the pocket.



11. Match your inner fabrics with the right sides together & stitch on three sides.

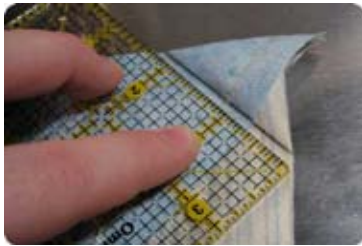


12. Match your outer fabrics with right sides together & stitch on three sides.

13. It is time to square away the corners. With your outer fabrics, pinch the corner & bring the side seam to meet the bottom seam in one corner.



Your fabric should lay out in a near perfect 90 degree angle. Position your ruler so that the seam lines up at about 1 1/8". You should be measuring a line about 2 1/4" from edge to edge. Using your pencil, draw a line.



Use this line to stitch a seam, taking care to back stitch to reinforce the seam. Cut off the excess & repeat for the other side.



Finished outside corners

14. For the inner fabric, you are going to do the same thing to one side, only measure 2", rather than 2 1/4". Line the ruler up with the seam at 1". Stitch your line shut & trim the excess for one corner. For the other corner, you are just going to draw your line & then cut – by not stitching, you are leaving a gap for turning your whole bag.



After cutting, take your side & bottom seams back to your sewing machine & reinforce them with some backstitching (the marks in pink).



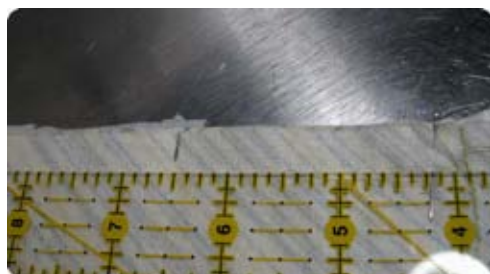
15. Turn your inner fabrics right side out, so they look like they are the outer fabrics. Place the inner inside the outer, making sure that the matching fabrics are facing each other. Line up your side seams & pin at each side.



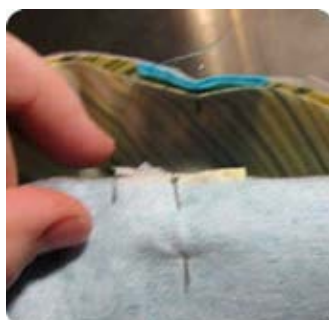
16. If you chose one handle, then attach it either seam to seam or side to side. Use your ruler to determine the middle of the sides to determine where to pin.



17. If you chose two handles, measure in 2 1/2" on each side & mark. This will be where the outside of the handles will fall.



18. Taking care not to twist your handle(s), place them between the inner & outer fabrics & pin into place.



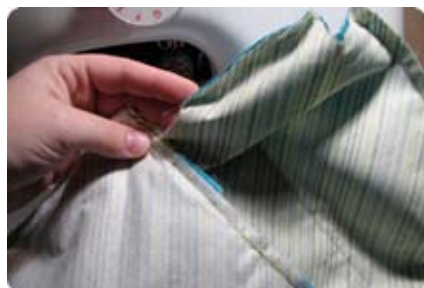
If you run into the problem of having one part of your bag smaller than the other - the outer fabrics are bigger around than your inner fabrics or vice versa - you can put a small pleat on each side of the bag (or multiple pleats, depending on the size difference) to compensate. Pin your pleats at this step.



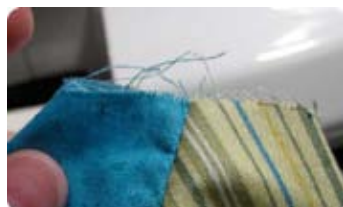
19. Sew a good seam all of the way around the top of the bag. Backstitch at the handles.



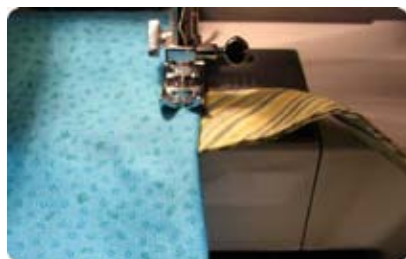
20. Turn your bag out through the unseamed corner in the inner fabric. This will take a few minutes & some manipulation. Go slowly; you will be stressing the seams you backstitched in step 14. You don't want to rip those open accidentally.



21. Once the bag is turned out, make a seam in the unseamed corner & stitch it closed. Push the inner fabric down into the outer fabric.



22. You can iron the bag at this point, if you want to, but I usually don't. Stitch a line around the top of the bag to finish it off.



23. Congratulations! You now have a cute bag!