

basic tote

WHAT YOU NEED:

1/2 yard fabric for outer bag
1/2 yard fabric for lining
1/4 yard fusible interfacing
Matching thread

WHAT YOU DO:

1. Cut 2 pieces of outer bag fabric and lining 13" x 15".
Cut 2 straps of outer fabric 2 1/2" x 22".
Cut 2 pieces of fusible interfacing 1 1/2" x 22".
If desired, cut pocket for lining: 2 pieces 6"x6".
2. Make straps -- Using iron set on setting appropriate for fabric being used, center interfacing on wrong side of strap and fuse in place. Fold long edges of strap along edge of interfacing and press. Fold strap in half lengthwise and press again. You will now have a strap that measures 3/4" wide x 22" long. Pin together and topstitch 1/8" from edge of both long edges of strap. Repeat with second strap and set aside.
3. Sew exterior -- With right sides together, stitch sides and bottom of bag with 1/4" seam allowance. Clip corners and turn bag right sides out. Press.
4. Sew lining -- If making optional pocket, place 2 - 6" squares wrong sides together and stitch, using a 1/4" seam allowance, leaving an opening on one side for turning. Clip corners, turn and press. Pin pocket to lining of bag, 4" down from top and centered on one side of the lining. Make sure your opening is on a side or the bottom so that it will be closed when you topstitch. Topstitch 1/8" from sides and bottom of pocket to attach to bag. Now, place lining pieces, right sides together and stitch around the sides and bottom of lining, using a 1/4" seam allowance.
5. Attach straps -- Measure 3" from outer edge of top of bag and pin one end of strap to bag. Do the same for the other end, making sure not to twist strap. Repeat for second strap. Stitch straps in place to secure, using a 1/4" seam allowance.
6. Finish bag -- Place outer bag inside lining and pin together at top edges, taking care to match seams. Using a 1/2" seam allowance, begin stitching around top of bag, leaving an opening between straps on one side for turning. Be sure to backstitch to secure. Turn bag through opening and press. Topstitch around top edge. This will close the opening through which you turned the bag.
7. Press one last time and enjoy! You can embellish to your heart's content! Try applique, buttons, ribbons, etc. You can also make them smaller or larger. They make great gifts, too!

