



Simple Drawstring Bag Tutorial

Finished size: Customized!

Requirements

The size of your drawstring bag is entirely up to you!

If you need your drawstring bag to be a specific size, complete the table below to work out your requirements:

Finished width x length X
Finished width plus 4cm width of fabric required
Finished length plus 7cm length of fabric required*

If you already have a piece of fabric and want to know how big a bag you can make with it...

Fabric width x length X
Fabric width minus 4cm finished width
Fabric length minus 7 then divided by 2 finished length*

In addition to your fabric, you will need 2x pieces of ribbon approx. 1.75-2 times the finished width of your bag.

If you would like to make a label slot on the front, you will also need a small piece of clear PVC (we bought 0.5mm clear PVC from Ebay).

**For fabrics with a particular direction add an additional 4cm.*

This pattern involves folding your fabric in half to make the basic bag shape, with the fold running along the bottom. If your fabric has a clear direction this will result in the pattern being upside down on one side of your bag. If you want the fabric to be facing the right way on both sides, you will need to cut your fabric in half (along the bottom) and turn one piece around to ensure both sides are facing the right way up.

Pin your two pieces of fabric together, wrong sides facing each other, double checking pattern direction on both sides. Sew together along the bottom, then cut the seam allowance back by half.

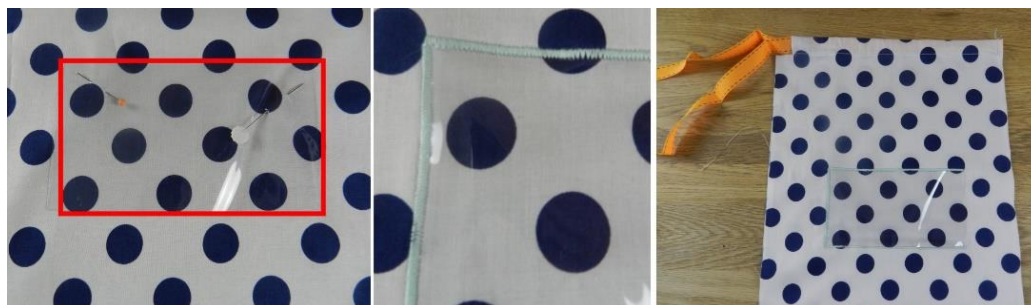
Turn your fabrics out so that the right sides are facing each other and the sewn line is running along the bottom. Press and then sew across the bottom one more time (you have created a tidy French seam). Continue as if the fabric is a single piece.

Instructions

OPTIONAL CLEAR PLASTIC POCKET

Cut your plastic to your preferred size and position on the front of your bag, pin into place.

Sew around the top bottom and one short side. You can use any stitch you like, as long as you have pinned your fabric in a couple of places it won't move. We used a tight zig zag stitch to cover all the edges.

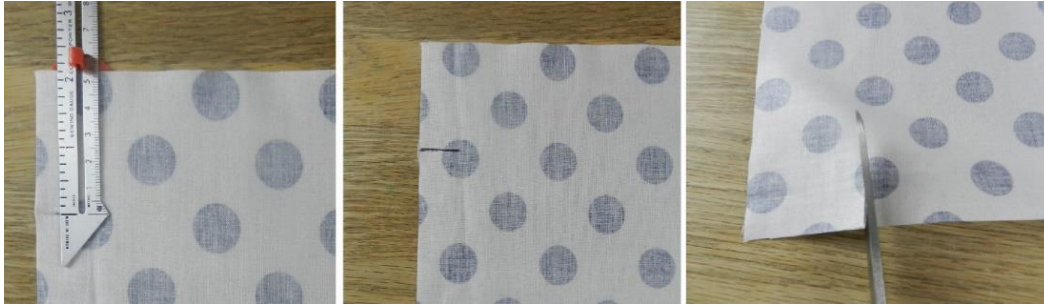


STEP 1 – ALL

Place your fabric in front of you so that the part you want to become the top of the bag is at the top and you are looking at the back.

Measure down the left side, from the top, 5.5cm. Draw a line, 2cm long, in from the side and make a cut along the line (see images below).

Repeat this process, measuring up 5.5cm from the bottom (on the same side) and making a cut approx. 2cm wide as before.



STEP 2

Still working on the left side. Fold the section above the top cut line in, so that the wrong sides of the fabric are facing each other, and the fold is lined up with the inside edge of the cut. Press and top stitch the fabric into place.

Repeat these steps at the bottom.



STEP 3

Fold the top edge over by 12mm (1/2") and iron the crease into place. Then fold over again by 18mm (3/4") and iron once more.

Top stitch the fabric into place, close to the folded internal edge, and then repeat these steps along the bottom edge (we lined the sewing machine foot up with the folded edge on the left, and then moved our needle position to the left).



STEP 4

Place a large safety pin in the end of one piece of ribbon and thread it through the opening on one side of the bag. Pull through to the opposite side. You are looking to get approx. 1cm poking through the side you have not yet cut or folded (see image below). Once in position, sew across the short edge of the opening, trapping the ribbon, and then trim away any excess ribbon on this edge.



Repeat this process with your second piece of ribbon in the channel at the bottom of your fabric.

STEP 5

Fold the fabric in half, from the bottom to the top, with the wrong sides of the fabric facing each other (you will be looking at the right side of the fabric) and pin the layers together.

Sew down each long side, on the left, where the ribbons are, start just below the ribbons (this will be under the cut you made earlier).

Once you have finished sewing, trim the seam allowance on the two long sides, back by half.



STEP 6

Turn your bag inside out, so you are looking at the wrong side of the fabric. Iron your bag flat, ensuring the seams you have just sewn are on the left and right folds.

Sew the left and right seams once more (as in step 5) BUT DO NOT trim the seam allowance back.



Now turn your bag out the right way – ta dah!

During This Tutorial You Have Used French Seams – Here is Why...

One of the biggest challenges when sewing is dealing with raw edges, they don't look nice and when you start using your projects they start to unravel. You can deal with these edges in a number of ways, one of which is French seams.

When sewing regular seams you place your fabrics together, right sides facing each other, then you sew together and turn the fabrics out the right way, the raw edges are hidden on the back of your fabric, but are still there, waiting to unravel!

When you sew French seams you start by placing your fabrics together with the wrong sides facing each other, you then sew together as normal. Next you trim the seam allowance back – that's the fabric between the edge of the fabric and your sew line, you need to cut about half the fabric away. Then you turn the fabric out so you are looking at the back of the fabric, iron flat, and then sew again, using the same seam allowance. This captures all the raw edges inside the sewn section, hiding them from sight and stopping them unravelling.

Why not try...

When you get more confident you could..

- Give your bag a 'boxed' bottom – look out for future tutorials on our blog.
- Applique a letter or some text on the front of your bag to identify the owner, or the bag's use.
- Quilt the front panel – a great way to use up your favourite scraps.