

Fabric Panel Tote

A beautiful printed fabric panel becomes a useful work of art! This over-sized tote bag with interior pockets is perfect for week-end getaways, flea market day, or keeping larger projects tidy. Select one large printed panel or two smaller panels to create this stunning, yet functional tote.

Approximate Finished Size: 3" D x 22¾" W x 21" H

Supplies Needed:

- One printed fabric panel, measuring 24" x 45" (front and back)
- Or
- ⅝ yd. Print cotton fabric
- 1¾ yd. Accent fabric (gussets, straps, draw cords, and lining)
- ⅞ yd. Fusible fleece batting

Helpful Notions:

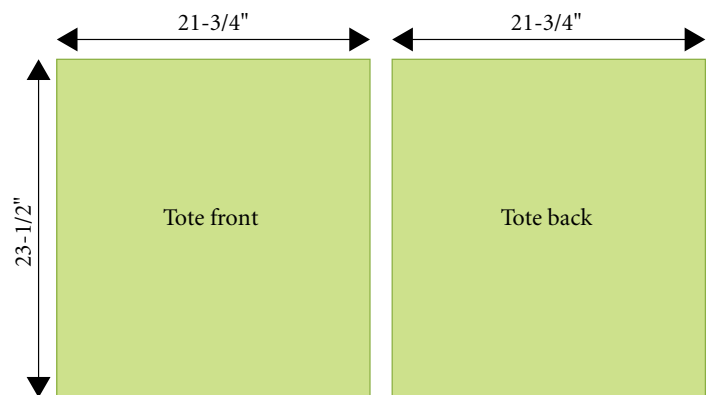
- Rotary cutter, mat, and ruler
- Coordinating all-purpose thread
- Fabric marking pen or pencil
- Wonder Clips
- Optional: Tailor's Chalk
- Optional: Adhesive seam guide
- Fasturn Set- tube #4
- Bodkin or large safety pin
- Point Turner and Seam Creaser
- Seam roll
- Spray starch or starch alternative, such as Best Press®
- Optional: Sewer's Fix It Tape

Instructions:

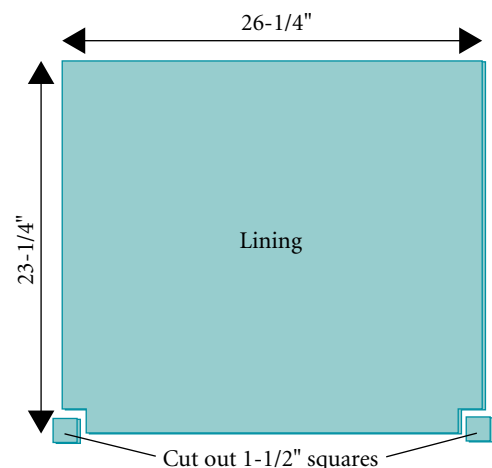
Read all instructions before beginning project. All seam allowances are ¼" unless otherwise stated.

1. Prepare and cut fabrics:

- Press all fabrics well to remove wrinkles. Lightly spray cotton fabrics with starch or starch alternative to aid in relaxing stubborn creases.
- Trim fabric panel; remove selvage edges and if applicable to your fabric panel, trim printed panel borders to ½" wide.
- Cut fabrics:
 - Fabric panel:
 - * Cut two 21¾" x 23½" rectangles for tote's front and back. For our project, we divided fabric panel in half.



- Or, print cotton fabric:
 - * Cut two 21¾" x 23½" rectangles for tote's front and back.
- Accent fabric:
 - * Cut two 23¾" x 26¼" rectangles for lining:
 - Then, cut out 1½" squares from lower corners.

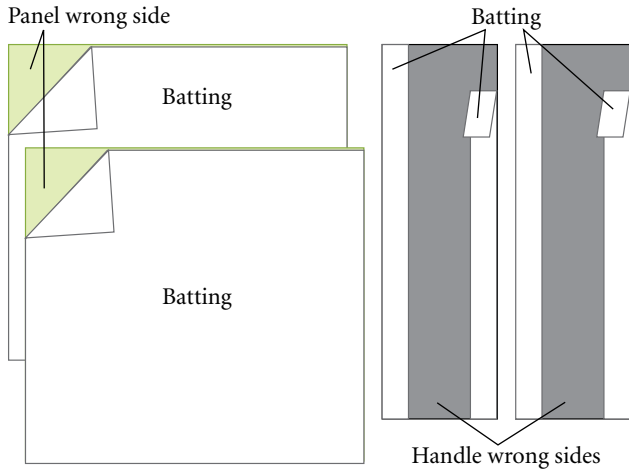


- * Cut three 2½" crosswise strips for draw cord.
- * Cut two 8" x 26" strips for handles.
- * Cut two 2" x 23½" strips for base gusset.

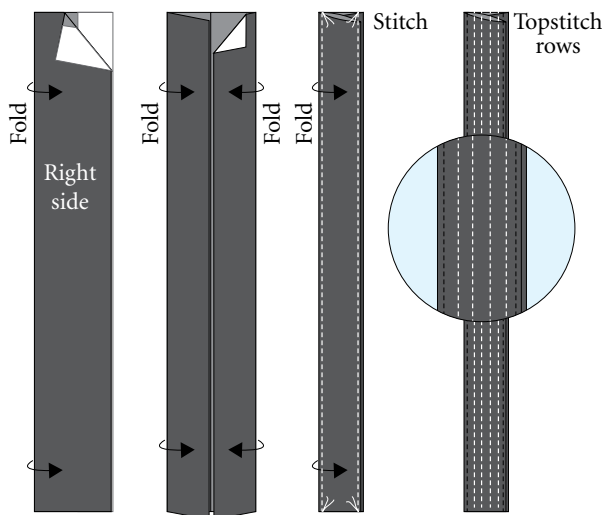
- * Cut four 2" x 21 $\frac{3}{4}$ " strips for side gussets.
- * Cut one 13" x 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ " rectangle for lining pocket.
- Fusible fleece batting:
 - * Cut two 21 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 23 $\frac{1}{2}$ " rectangles for tote front and back.
 - * Cut four 1 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 26" strips for handles.

2. Create outer tote:

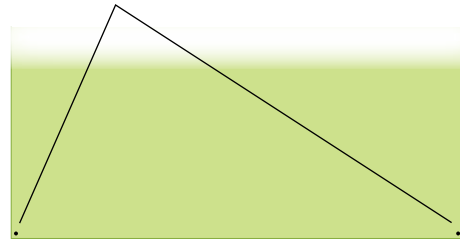
- Fuse fleece batting:
 - Center batting on fabric panel, fuse fleece to wrong side of tote front and back rectangles, following manufacturer's instructions.
 - Repeat steps applying fleece to wrong side of handle strips, aligning outer long cut edges even, as illustrated.



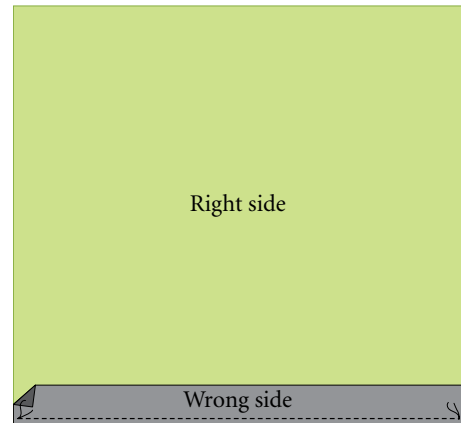
- Create handles:
 - Fold fleece/handle strip in half, wrong sides together, and meeting long cut edges even. Press along fold.
 - Open fleece/handle strip. Fold outer cut edge to center aligning outer edge with pressed fold. Press along both outer folds.
 - Refold strip along center fold and aligning both long outer folds, creating a 2" x 26" handle.
 - Edgestitch approximately $\frac{1}{8}$ " away from pressed folds, along both long edges of handle.
 - Add rows of topstitching spaced approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ " apart to add strength to handle.
 - Repeat for second handle. Set handles aside.



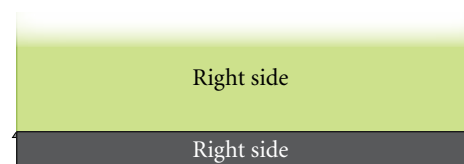
- Add gussets to tote front and back:
 - With fabric marking pen or pencil, mark $\frac{1}{4}$ " in at both lower corners of front and back panels.



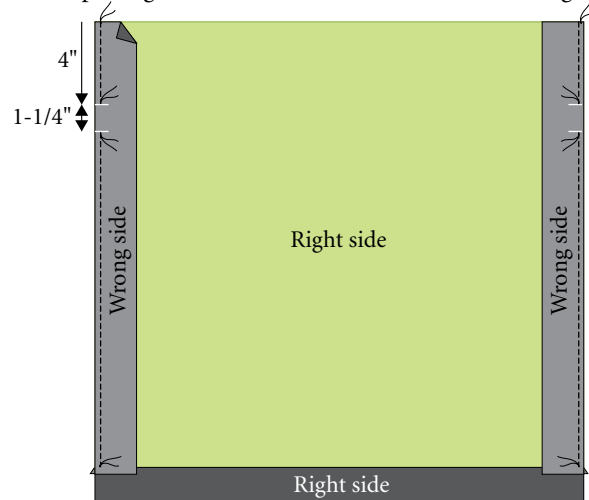
- Meeting right sides together, align base gusset to lower edge of front panel.
- Begin and end stitching at the $\frac{1}{4}$ " markings on the front panel.



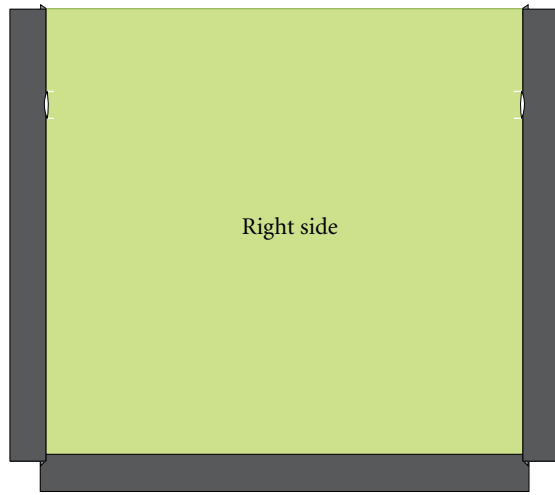
- Press seam flat, then press gusset away from front panel.
- Repeat for back tote panel.



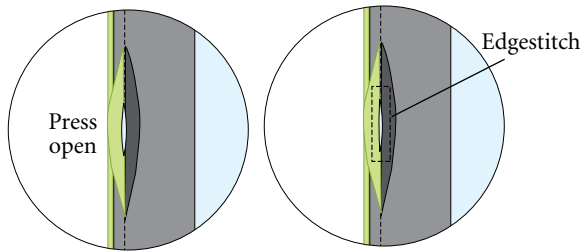
- Position and align side gussets following steps for base gusset. Pin in place.
- With fabric marking pen or pencil, mark both seams, with an 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " opening 4" below upper cut edge for draw cord.
- Stitch side gusset stopping and starting at marked opening. Be careful not to stitch into the base gusset.



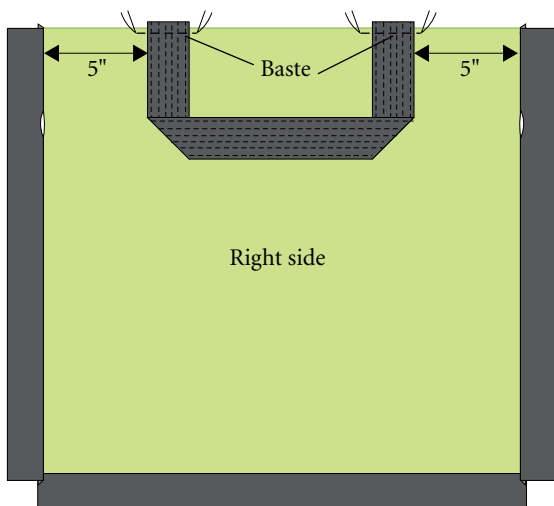
- Repeat steps for remaining side and back tote panel.



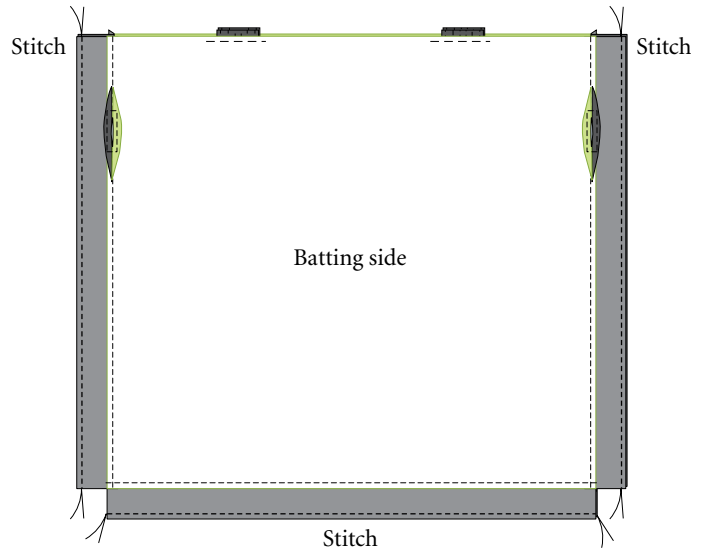
- Press seams flat, then, press gussets away from panels. Repress the seam open **only** at the 1¼" draw cord openings.
- Edgestitch closely to both fold edges of each opening to secure and reinforce seam allowances.



- Attach tote handles:
 - Align cut ends of one handle ¼" above upper edge of tote front, position outer edges of handle 5" in from gusset seams.
 - Check that handle is not twisted.
 - Pin or Wonder Clip handle in place.
 - Baste handle to tote front using a **scant** ¼" seam allowance. Remove pins or clips as you stitch.
 - * Repeat for second handle and tote back.

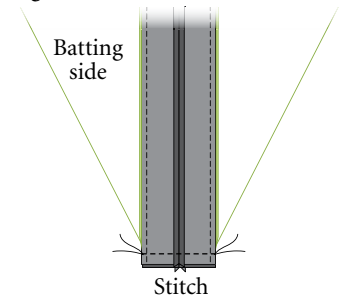


- Assemble outer tote:
 - Meet tote front and back, right sides together, aligning side and base gusset edges even. Pin.
 - Stitch three seams, two sides and one base.



- Press seams flat, then, open. To achieve a flat seam without affecting other areas of tote, use a seam roll.
- Create box corners at lower edge of tote:

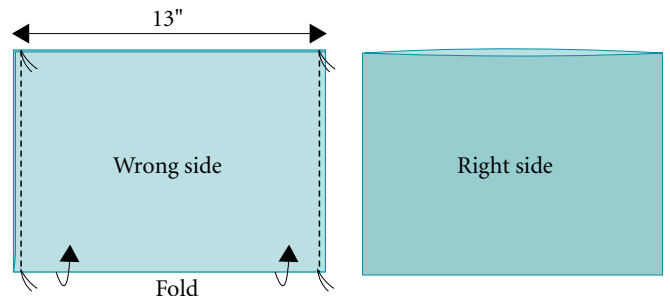
- With right sides together, match gusset base seam to gusset side seam, aligning cut edges even. Pin.
- Stitch seam ½" from pinned cut edges.
- Repeat for opposite lower box corner.



- Turn outer tote to right side.

3. Assemble tote lining and lining pocket:

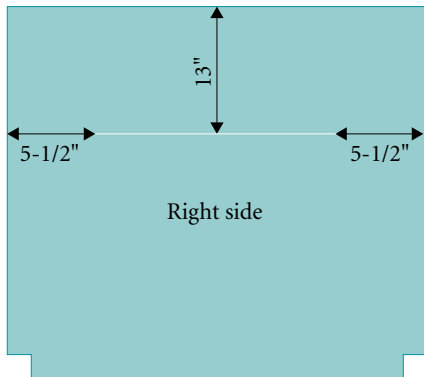
- Create lining pocket:
 - Fold pocket rectangle in half, right sides together, meeting 13" edges.
 - Stitch short ends. Press flat.
 - Turn pocket to right side through unstitched side.



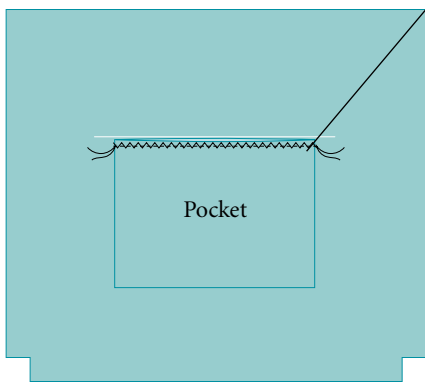
- Shape corners using a point turner. Press for crisp edges.

- Attach lining pocket to one lining piece:
 - With Tailor's Chalk, mark a 13" line 13" down from upper lining edge and approximately 5½" from sides.

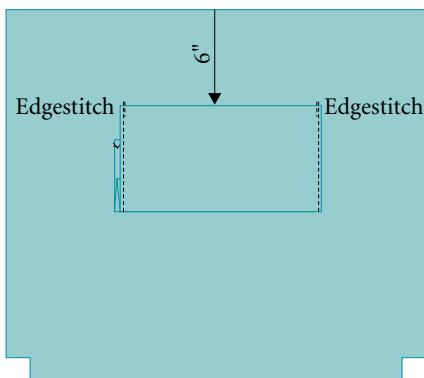
Note: Tailor's Chalk is used for marking. It works well on darker fabric and easily brushed or washed off fabric when markings are no longer needed.



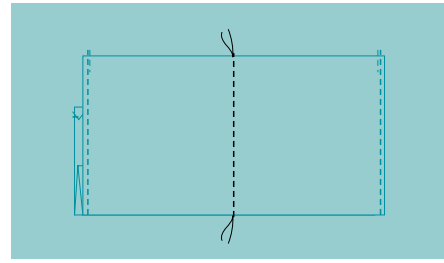
- Position cut edges of pocket along the drawn line, with the pocket "body" extending below the line. Pin or tape, with Sewer's Fix It Tape, in place.
- Stitch through all layers. Zigzag over the cut edges of pocket to further secure pocket to lining.



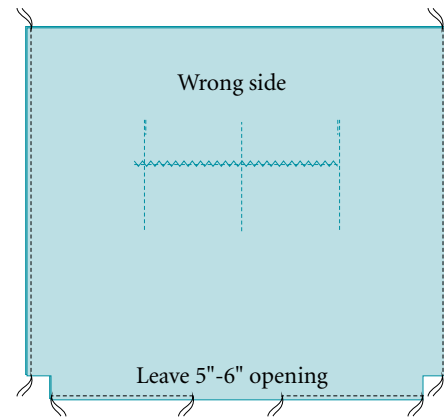
- Fold pocket up, pressing along stitched seam.
- Refold pocket; positioning pocket upper edge 6" from upper lining edge. Pin upper edge of pocket in place.
- Create a pleat at lower edge of pocket, by tucking in excess pocket length until a fold is aligned with the lower seam.
- Pin pocket sides and pleat in place.
- Edgestitch pocket sides reinforcing upper edge and securing pleat.



- Optional: Stitch pocket divisions, if desired.



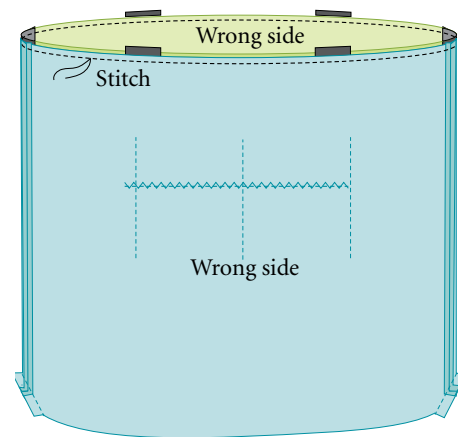
- Create tote lining:
 - Place lining front and back pieces, right sides together, aligning cut edges even.
 - Stitch side and base seams, leaving a 5" – 6" opening in base seam for turning.



- Press seams flat, then open.
- Shape box corners in same manner as detailed in step 2- "Create box corners at lower edge of tote".
- Keep tote lining with wrong sides out.

4. Complete tote:

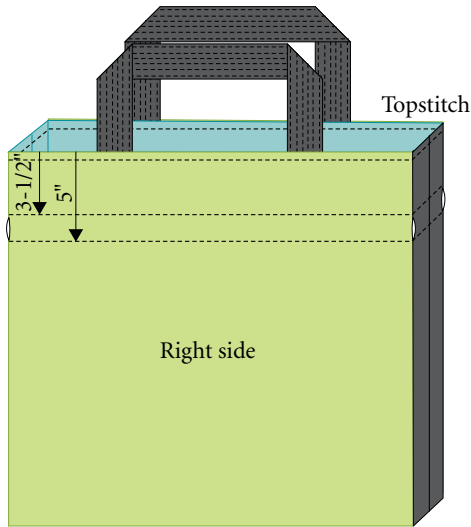
- Slip outer tote into tote lining, right sides together, ensuring that both handles are tucked in between layers.
- Align seams and upper cut edges. Handle ends will extend slightly.
- Pin or Wonder Clip upper edges. Stitch, joining outer tote and lining along upper edge.



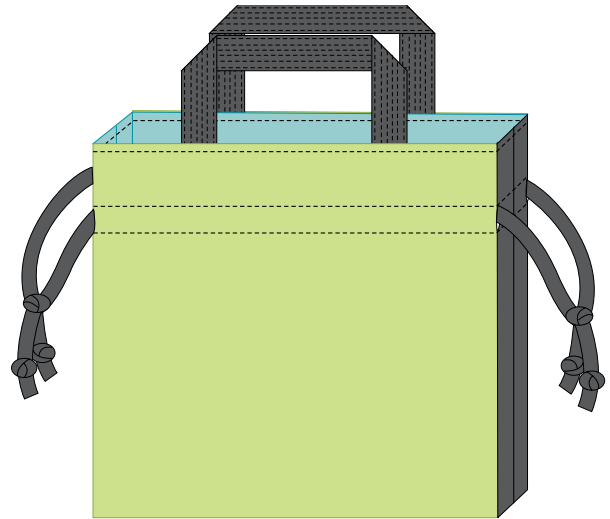
- Turn tote to right side, through opening in lining.
- Close the lining opening using a slipstitch or machine stitched edgestitch.

- Smooth all layers. Pin or Wonder Clip upper tote edge, making sure seam is positioned along the upper tote edge.
- Topstitch $\frac{1}{4}$ " from upper seam edge.
- Stitch draw cord casing:
 - Topstitch $3\frac{1}{2}$ " then 5", respectively, from upper tote edge.

Note: Using an adhesive seam guide will help you stitch neat, even lines of stitching.

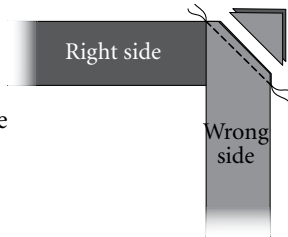


- Using a bodkin or large safety pin, thread each draw cord into the tote casing, beginning at opposite side openings for each draw cord.
- Knot ends of each draw cord loop together.

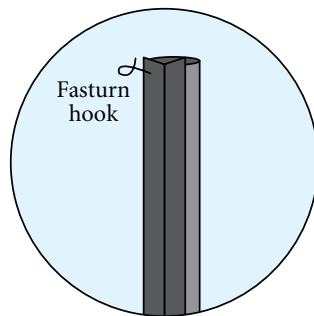
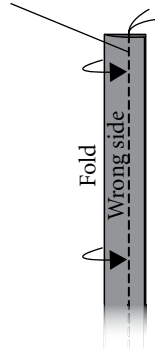


5. Add draw cords:

- Stitch three draw cord fabric strips together at short ends, using diagonal seams to reduce bulk.
- Trim to $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowances.
- Press seams flat, then open.



- Cut into two long equal lengths, approximately 66" or longer.
- Fold one strip in half, right sides together, meeting long cut edges even.
- Stitch a $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam allowance.



- Slide fabric draw cord tube onto a fasturn tube to quickly and easily turn draw cord to its right side.
- Repeat for second draw cord.