



Simple Charm Tote Bag

Approx 18"

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This bag is *great* to take to the grocery, or fill with supplies to bring to class at Stitches Etc! It folds up nice and flat so it's easy to store, but open it up and it holds *lots of stuff!* Use 5" charm squares from your stash, or use this as a "Two'fer" project! Buy 8 coordinating 1/3 yd cuts and from each piece of fabric cut across the width of the fabric (from selvedge to selvedge): 1 – 5" strip, 1 – 3 1/2" strip, and 1 – 2 1/2" strip. The 3 1/2" and 2 1/2" strips go right into your stash for future quilting projects, and from each of the 5" strips you will sub cut 8- 5" charm squares – for a total of 64 squares, which just happens to be the number of squares required to make **TWO** tote bags – one for yourself – and one for a friend!

Materials:

32 – 5" charm squares of various coordinating fabrics
 5/8 yd of backing fabric and dense quilter's fleece
 1/4 yd of coordinating fabric for top binding and handles
 1 1/2 yds of 1" wide cotton webbing for handles
 50 wt cotton thread for piecing
 Thread for quilting
 Sewing machine in good working order
 Basic sewing supplies like rotary cutting equipment, seam ripper, seam gauge, FasTurn kit or Clover Loop turner, straight pins, safety pins, etc

From the 1/4 yd of handle and binding fabric cut: 2 – 2 3/4" wide strips across the width of the fabric for the handles, 1 – 2 1/4" wide strip for the binding. Cut 1 1/2 yds of webbing in half to get 2 pieces approx 27" long. Fold each handle fabric strip in half lengthwise, right sides together and sew with a 1/4" seam. Turn right side out and insert the webbing using the FasTurn kit or the Clover loop turner. Adjust the fabric so that the seam runs along one edge of the webbing and then edge stitch both handles along both long edges. Press the binding strip in half lengthwise, wrong sides together.

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
4	3	2	1
8	7	6	5

Arrange 16 – 5" charms in a pleasing pattern, or if using charms from 8 different fabrics layout them out according to the chart depicted. You will need to make 2 – 16 patch blocks – one for the front and one for the back of the tote. Sew the blocks together in rows and then sew the rows together, using a 1/4" seam allowance and pressing the seams open. Cut the backing in half to get 2 squares (*approx.*), layer one piece of backing wrong side up, fleece and one 16 patch unit right side up, pin baste and quilt as desired. I used monofilament thread to free motion meander quilt. Quilt both front and back 16 patch units. After quilting, trim all layers even and clean finish or serge all edges of the front and back. Position front and back right sides together, carefully match and pin the seams and stitch around the bag using about 1/2" seam allowance – a walking foot will help keep the layers from shifting too much! Trim away the bulk from the bottom corners a bit, turn bag right side out. Bind the top edge of the bag

Handle placement: find the center of the top of the bag on both front and back and pin mark 3" to either side – the outer edges of the handles will be 6" apart, one handle strap on each side of the bag. Position the raw ends of the handles approx. 1/2" down from the top edge, stitch close to the raw edge, then flip the handle up over the raw edge and stitch again in the "ditch" of the binding to secure.