



Strip Tote

approx. 12" x 12" x 3"

This is a GREAT carry-all tote with 2 pairs of nested pockets on the inside! Nice project for fabric collections - and we've got lots of fun fabrics to choose from!

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Materials:

! 3/8 yd pieces of 4 different coordinating fabrics

OR

! 24 (minimum) 3 1/2" x 12 1/2" strips from your stash PLUS - 2 - 12 1/2" squares, 2 to 4 - 6 1/2" squares and 2 or 4 - 4 1/2" squares for inner pockets (you need 2 squares per pocket)

! Sewing machine in good working order with all accessories including 1/4" foot and walking foot

! 5/8 yd muslin for underlining (will not be seen)

! cotton thread to coordinate with fabrics

! decorative thread to coordinate with fabrics

! Warm and White cotton craft batt

! piece of plastic canvas

! basic sewing supplies like pins, seam gage, seam ripper, chalk, masking tape, point turner, etc.

! From EACH of the 4 pieces of fabric, trim off the selvages and cut (starting from the selvedge side) 6 - 3 1/2" wide strips parallel to the LENGTHWISE grain (the strips should measure in length about 13 1/2"). Trim all strips down to 12 1/2" in length. Reserve remaining fabric for lining and inside pockets.

! Find a pleasing arrangement of the strips and make 2 panels of 4 strips each, stitching with 1/4" seams and pressing the seams open. **Measure the dimensions of the panels, record**, and cut 2 rectangles from the left over fabric that size for the lining panels or adjust the size of the 12 1/2" squares, if necessary, for the lining.

Also from the left over fabric cut 4 - 4 1/2" squares and 4 - 6 1/2" squares for the inside pockets. To make the pockets, place the squares right sides together (RST) and sew with 1/4" seam all the way around. Trim corners. Finger press open the seam at the bottom, un-sew to create an opening large enough to turn the pockets RSO and turn and press flat. Lay the smaller pocket on top of the larger and edge stitch in place, make sure to catch the bottom seam in the stitching. Place the pair of pockets on the lining, center and position approximately 2" down from the top edge, edge stitch in place, be sure to secure the bottom seam.

! Use one strip to join the two outside panels, for the bottom gusset. Press seams open

! Sew 2 strips onto the sides of *one* of the panels for the side gussets. Press seams open.

! Layer muslin, batting and bag top right side up (RSU). Pin thru all layers. Quilt with a walking foot by stitching thru the seams. Suggestion - use a decorative stitch, start sewing at the bottom gusset seam and work your way out. Decorative stitch over bottom gusset seams last. Trim all layers even. Using walking foot, sew side seams and then sew across bottom gusset to make bottom corners of bag.

! Make lining in a similar manner to the outside bag but use the non-pieced fabric panels - sew a strip to the bottom to join the two panels and then sew 2 strips onto the sides, sew side seams and bottom seams to form corners.

! To make handles: sew two strips together across the short dimension - do this 4 times to make 4 pairs of strips. Place two pairs of strips RST and place on top of batting. Using walking foot sew down long sides, turn RSO, press and edge stitch long edges.

! Place handle RST on outside of bag, short edges centered over panel seam (see photo). Place lining RST over outside of bag, using walking foot sew around top, un-sew one seam in lining bottom, turn bag RSO, edges stitch opening closed, top stitch around bag top thru all layers. Pleat handles at top seams, sew thru all layers of pleat.

