

TOTE BAG FOR CATHERINE HOUSE

Catherine House would prefer tote bags 50cm (20") high x 40cm (16") wide. Slightly smaller or larger will be ok. I have chosen to box the bottom corner of the bags I make but did not piece in a gusset. They do not have to be lined and my handles do not have wadding in them. Pretty simple and quick to make. The recipients will be all ages.

The bags could be made from width of fabric pieces, or could be pieced using multiple fabrics. Use quilting cottons, furnishing fabric, what ever you can spare. They will no doubt be used as shopping bags.

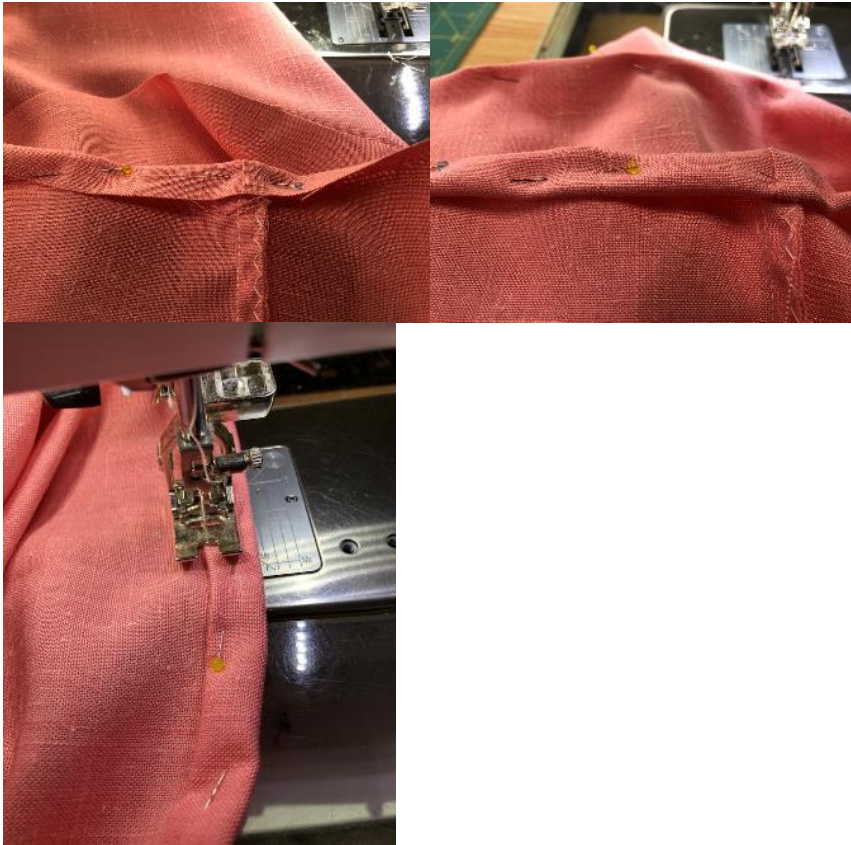
1. Cutting the bag. I used width of fabric, so in some cases slightly larger than 20". Fold fabric in half, selvedge's together and cut one piece 16" wide x WOF for the bag and a second 3" wide x WOF for the handles. Trim off a whisker at the fold to create two handles.



2. Make the bag. Stitch the side seams with the bag right sides together, I did 5/8th inch seams and zig zagged the edges together to add extra strength to the seam. About 3.5W and 3.5L for the zig zag.
3. Box both bottom corners. At one corner lay the side seam along the fold (or seam) at the bottom of the bag to create a triangle. Pin flat and measure to where it is 3" across, down from the point (less for a smaller bag) as indicated in the photo and draw a stitching line. Stitch on the line, trim the corner triangle away and zig zag the seam allowance. Repeat with the second corner.



4. The top of the bag. Fold the top of the bag over $\frac{1}{2}$ " and then $\frac{1}{2}$ " a second time. Raw edges/selvages are now enclosed. Stitch along the bottom fold



5. Make the handles. Fold the handles in half right sides together and stitch a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam. Turn right sides out, I use a bodkin or loop turner to do this.



Press the handle along the length with the seam running down the centre on the back.



Top stitch along the length of the handle close to each edge and down the middle. The extra rows of stitching add strength to the handle. Repeat for both handles.



6. Add handles to the bag Find the middle of the top of the bag and mark. Measure $2\frac{1}{2}$ " to 3" each side of the centre and mark. (For a smaller bag this measurement could be less). Lay the handles on the right side of the bag, right side down, at the outer edge of the pinned mark, with the ends of the handle about half way between the row of stitching and the top edge of the bag.



Stitch the handles in place along the row of stitching, back stitching at each edge of the handle



Fold the handle up and stitch all the way around the top of the bag, double stitching across the handle for extra strength. Repeat for the other handle.



The tote bag is now finished.

