

Supplies

- 2 to 2 ½ yards of 54" to 60" wide fabric for Outside of Bag (Canvas, Corduroy, Heavyweight Denim or similar sturdy material)
- 2 to 2 ½ yards of 40" wide fabric for lining (Lighter weight fabric such as quilting cotton is okay.)
- Empty cardboard fabric bolt for 42" wide fabric (Ask you local quilt shop!)
- Cotton Quilt Batting or Old Cotton Towel (to pad fabric bolt and create an ironing surface).
- All Purpose Sewing Thread to match fabric
- Heavier Weight thread such as a 12 wt. to match or contrast with the fabric
- Machine Needles Topstitch, Sharp (Microtex) or Denim in sizes to match thread weight
- Baby Lock Quilt Binding Foot (BLSA-QBF)
- 2 Wooden Dowels ½" to 5/8" in diameter cut 24" long for handles (Available at home improvement stores and can be purchased pre-cut.)

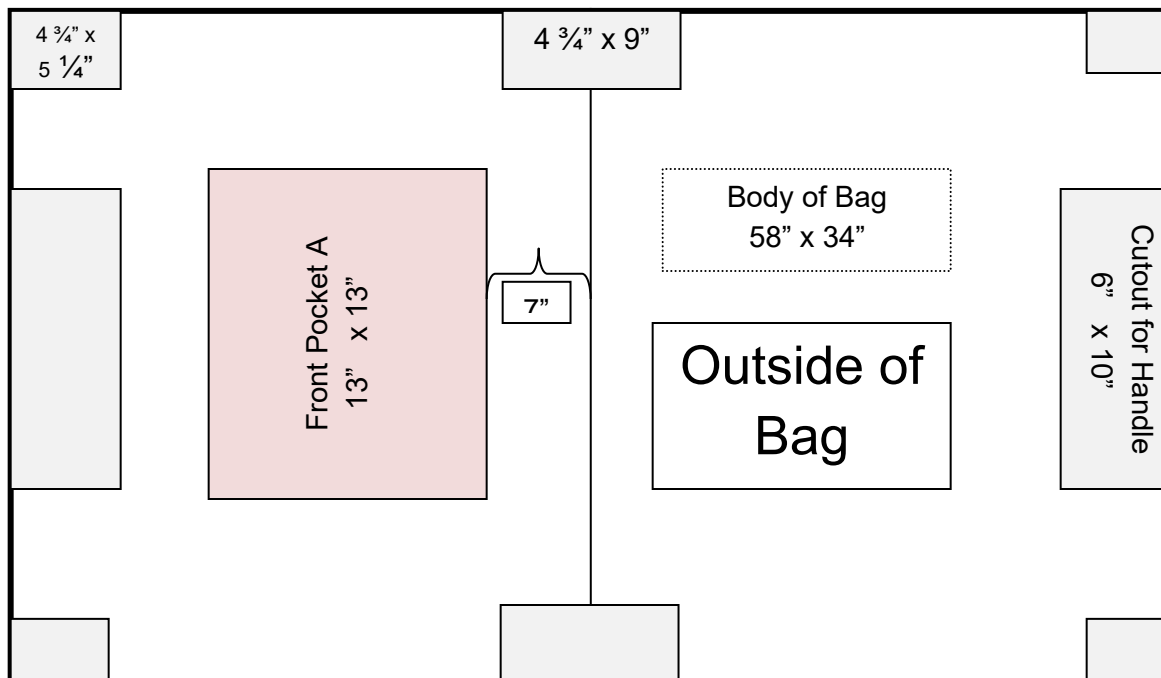
Instructions

Cut the Pieces

Cut out a 34" x 58" piece of outside and lining fabric. Fold the outside fabric in half wrong sides together with the two 34" edges together ("hamburger" fold). Using a removable marker such as chalk or wash away



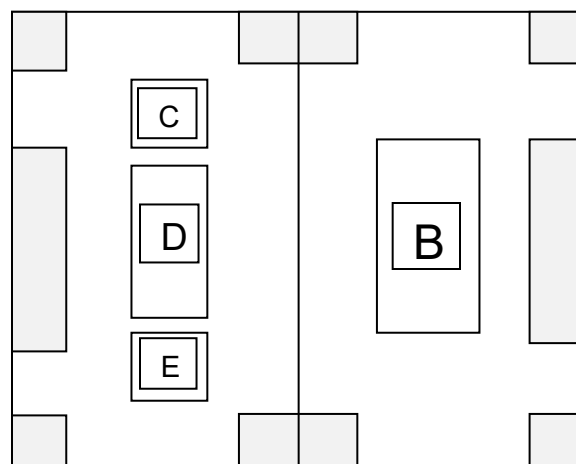
pen and the diagram below, mark the four corners and the center top cutout. Use a small plate to round the square corners on the top edge and the cutout for the handle. Do not round the corners by the fold. Use a ruler to find the center, measure from the center bottom fold and mark the placement lines for the pocket. Cut the corners and the top cutout for the handle making sure to cut along the curved edge. Open the outside fabric and



lay it on the lining fabric to use as a template. Cut out the lining fabric and mark the placement of the inside pockets.

From the remaining fabric, cut all the pockets. Use the diagram and the cutting chart to cut pockets or cut custom pockets keeping in mind what you will carry in the bag.

- ✓ Outside Pocket A – cut (2) fabric pieces 14" x 14"
- ✓ Inside Pocket B – cut (2) fabric pieces 10" x 13"
- ✓ Inside Pocket C – cut (2) fabric pieces 7" x 9"
- ✓ Inside Pocket D – cut (2) fabric pieces 9" x 11"
- ✓ Inside Pocket E - cut (2) fabric pieces 7" x 9"



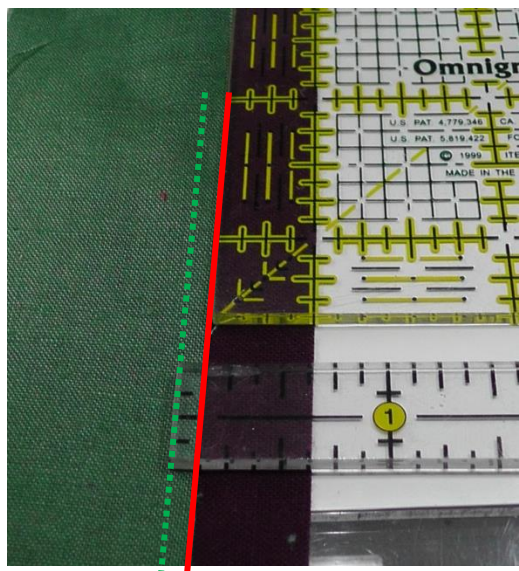
Embellish the pockets with appliqué, decorative stitches or embroidery, if desired, at this time. For lots of pocket options, see the Sewing Tech Talk Handout “Pocket Pizzazz”.

Sew the Pockets

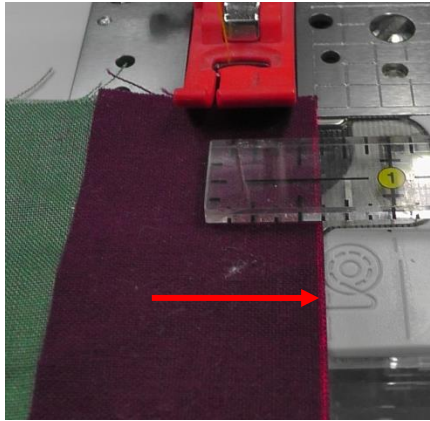
Thread machine with all-purpose thread and a denim machine needle. Place pocket pieces right sides together and sew around edge using a ½” seam and leaving an opening in the bottom for turning. Turn pocket right side out and press corners out. Topstitch along top edge. Modify pockets as desired for closures with buttons, zippers or Velcro. Pin or baste pockets to both outside and lining fabrics using a long stitch length. Make sure that bottom edges of pockets are at least 6” up from center bottom crease and 8” down from top edge. If the pocket will get heavy use, reinforce along pocket seam line on the back the fabric with fusible stabilizer before stitching. On the right side, topstitch pockets in place and reinforce corners by sewing a square. Pockets can also be reinforced by using the automatic bar tack function.

Sew the Mega Bag with Strong Seams

The side seams for both the outside and lining fabric need to be very strong to handle the load in this extra-large bag. Stitch a Flat Fell Seam such as the seam used on jeans. Thread the machine with a heavier thread and Topstitch, Jeans or Sharp machine needle in the



machine. Match the size of the needle to the size of the thread. Regular all-purpose thread will work well with an 80 wt. needle. Use a larger needle such as a 90 or 100 for heavier threads. Place the side seams **wrong sides together** with one raw edge ½” away from the other (see the photo left with the red line indicating the raw edge and the green line indicating the back side of the seam). Turn the work over and sew a 5/8” seam with the dropped raw edge on the underside. Use a seam guide or the guide marks on the bed of the machine to help guide the fabric or engage the LED

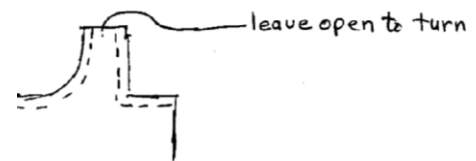


guide light. With the needle on the extreme left in position 0.0, the guideline setting of 15.0 – 15.5 mm should give you a 5/8" seam guide. (See photo left for position of fabric and LED guide light along the raw edge.) On the underside, the seam will be a scant 1/8". Press the seam flat and then press the seam to one side with the longer piece on top. Fold the raw edge of the long piece under and press. Pin the fold down or use

wash away tape to hold the seam in place. Stitch down fold just along the edge. Two rows of stitching will show on the right side of the project.

The bottom will be "boxed". The cutouts on the bottom of the bag make this simple. Bring the raw edges of the bottom corners together and sew with a 5/8" seam.

Repeat for all four-bottom corners. Place the lining inside the outside with the right sides together. Align the raw edges. Stitch the top edge using a strong triple stitch with all-purpose thread. Do not sew across the top extensions. Turn the bag right side out through one of the top openings. Press flat and stitch along the top edge



with a straight stitch or the triple stretch stitch. Finish the raw edge of the four openings with a zig zag and then turn the edge under 1/8". Stitch the edge down to hold in place. Wrap the fabric around the dowel to check for the depth of the casing. The dowel should fit snugly, but not be too tight to insert dowel. Stitch casing for dowel along the folded edge. Make this seam very, very secure using the triple stretch stitch or multiple passes of straight stitch.

Cover the Bottom to Use as an Pressing Surface

Use an empty cardboard bolt to stabilize the bottom of the bag. Cover the bolt a towel and pin or hand-sew in place. If desired, cover the bolt with cotton batting and make a muslin cover. The “ironing pad” can be easily removed to wash the bag.

Judy's Original Drawing

Judy designed and taught this bag for her adult education quilting class. She made her mega tote in denim with a crazy quilt appliqué heart on the front pocket. Just about every one of her students (and she had hundreds of students) made this bag.

