

# EASY TOTE BAG

## EASY CRAFT

### YOU WILL NEED

- 1 x rectangle of fabric, 40 x 80cm (e.g. 165 gsm of soft oilskin)
- 2 x lengths of the same fabric, 10 x 82cm
- 1 x snap or magnetic closure (optional)
- Pinking scissors (zig-zag blades)
- Sewing machine (optional) and matching thread



### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cut out your fabric with pinking scissors to prevent fraying.
2. Fold your fabric in half length-wise to make a square with the right sides together (RST). Pin and sew up both sides with a 1.5cm seam allowance (SA). Or tack on each side in a contrasting colour at 1.5cm and then follow the lines. Smooth or press the seams open (follow your fabric guidelines for pressing).
3. Fold a 3cm SA at the bag opening and sew at 2.5cm all the way around. Add the snap fastener or magnetic closure, if using.
4. For the strap, pin or tack a 1cm SA around the four sides of each length of fabric. With wrong sides together, edge stitch the two lengths together all the way around the outside. Note: you could use one piece of fabric folded length-wise, but stitching two pieces together makes the strap look the same on both sides.
5. Position each end of the strap across the inside side seams of the bag, level with the bottom of the hem at the top of the bag. Stitch each end of the strap in place with a square of stitches with a cross through from corner to corner.
6. Optional: To make a gusset (boxed corners):
  - a. With RST and working on one side seam at a time, position the bottom inside corner flat in front of you (bag sides open with the side seam in the centre and the bottom corner forming a triangle pointing downwards). Sew a line across the corner 5cm up from the point, then cut off the corner 1.5cm below the stitch line. Repeat on other side seam/corner.
7. Turn your bag right-side-out and smooth flat or press.

*Tip: Depending on the "frayability" of your fabric, rather than using pinking scissors, you can either overlock or zig-zag the seam edges. Alternatively, you can add an additional 1.5cm seam allowance to each side and end when you cut out your main piece of fabric, and fold each seam in twice before sewing (or keep the same measurements and lose a little in size from your finished bag).*

Note: You can create shopping totes in all manner of sizes and fabrics! Consider recycling old clothing or making patchwork bags from fabric remnants. A piece of leftover fabric could also be sewn inside as a pocket, or used to make a small storage bag for your tote (attached to the inside side top seam with a piece of ribbon or fabric).

*Free your Flow*

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