

Snap Bag Tutorial

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Snap Bag

What you can't see here is that this bag stays closed by recycling a used tape measure from a home improvement center. Fortunately, my husband had one he was happy to donate. The measurements are 8" Width x 6" Height x 2" Depth. As with any sewing project, there is room to personalize and modify to your specific needs. The dimensions can change if you wish, but I recommend making one first and then you will know what measurements need to change for the second bag. Add embroidery, eliminate the 2" box pleat, use up to three fabrics, or omit the prairie point handles and sew a loop, hair tie as the handle, etc. The choice is yours.



Examples of Snap Bags as gifts



I'm Dana. Welcome and take a look around!



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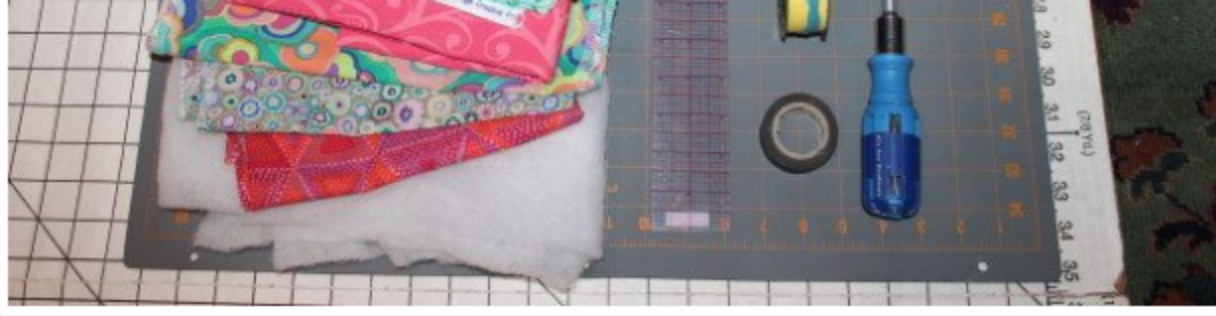


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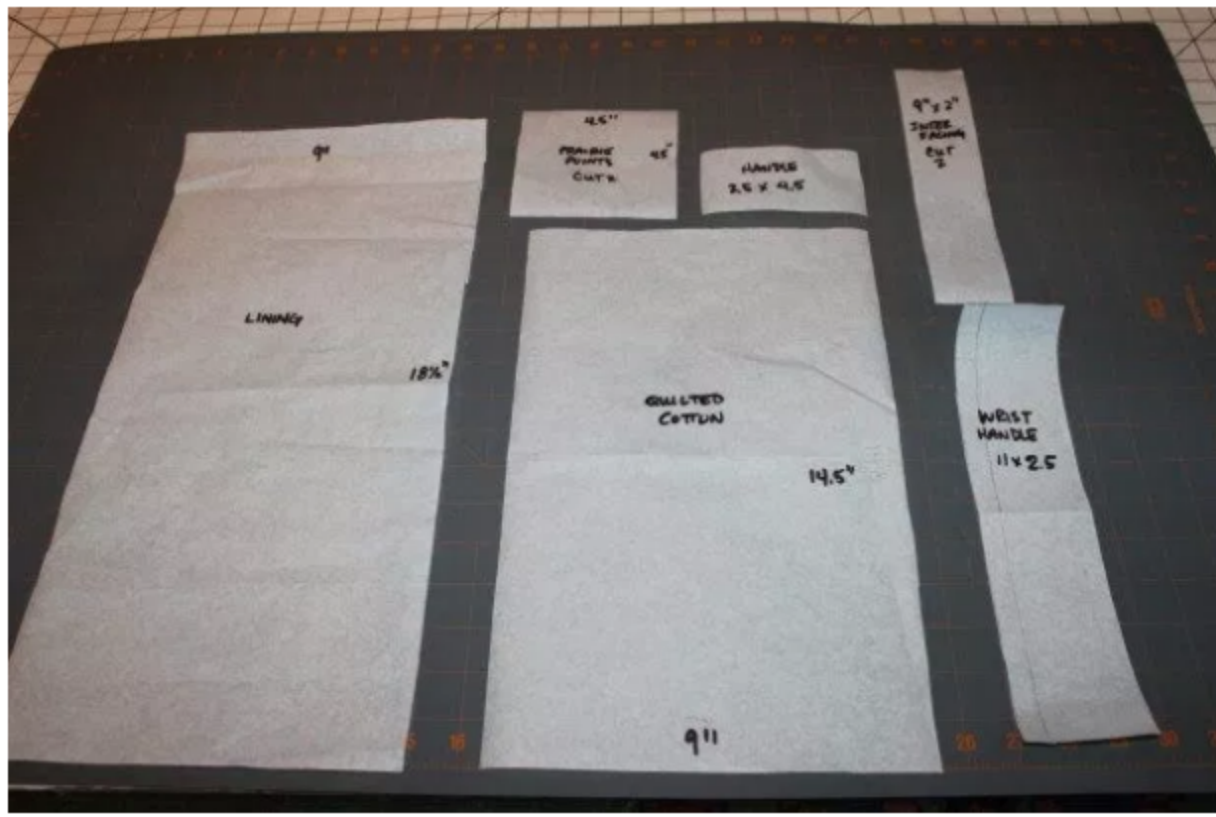
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Supplies Needed

- 1.) Quilted Fabric (or fabric and batting to quilt your own) 9" x 14.5" This is the outer bag fabric.
- 2.) Lining Fabric 9" x 18.5" This fabric covers the measuring tape across top of bag.
- 3.) Side Loop Handle 2.5" x 4.5" Can be lining or outer fabric-your choice.
- 4.) Wrist handle (Optional) 11" x 2.5".
- 5.) Handles (Prairie Points) Cut Two 4.5" x 4.5" (Same fabric as lining)
- 6.) Coordinating thread for both fabrics
- 7.) Fusible Interfacing 9' x 2" (Use up small scraps of left over interfacing and piece together)
- 8.) 1' Tape measure from hardware store. (Check to see what screwdriver or tapered cross tip screwdriver to have handy to undo outer case of tape measure)
- 9.) Roll of tape (either electrical or blue painter's tape to cover tape measure ends)
- 10.) Sharp, heavy duty utility scissors (to cut tape measure)
- 11.) Ruler (to draw quilt lines if quilting your own fabric)
- 12.) Chalk or water soluble marker (to draw quilt lines)



Prepare your pattern pieces

Step 1 Prepare Pattern Pieces using tissue, medical paper, newsprint, etc.

All measurements are based on a 1" tape measure. Adjust if you use a 3/4" measuring tape. My Sharpie drawings are not as clear as the measurements stated above, so this is just to show you what the pattern pieces should look like.



Cut out pieces

Step 2. Cut Out Main Pattern Pieces To Tissue Measurements EXCEPT Batting And Outer Fabric If You Are Going To Quilt It. Leave some extra fabric and batting on all sides until quilt stitching is completed. Trim to pattern piece dimensions after quilting.



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Step 3. Using The Ruler, Draw Line From One Corner To the Other In 1" Lines Using a quilt guide or lines drawn on the fabric, stitch the quilting lines to sew batting to outer fabric. Click [here](#) to see another example of quilting your own outer fabric.



Faint chalk line from corner to corner

You can barely see the chalk line-this is what you want. Pin batting along the line to secure. Move pins as you sew each line until all stitching is complete.

Step 4. Stitch quilt lines. I like to set my stitch length to 3.0 and use a quilting bar that I can set to the 1" mark, helping me to speed up the sewing process a little.



1" quilted lines



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Trim off excess

Step 5. Trim off excess to match the pattern tissue measurement (9" x 14.5"). I used a rotary cutter and ruler but scissors work just fine.



Press the 2" strip of interfacing

Step 6. Press the 2" fusible interfacing to the top edges of wrong side of lining. This is where I use up the leftover small scraps of interfacing from other projects. This will also help the tape measure from cutting through the edges of bag.

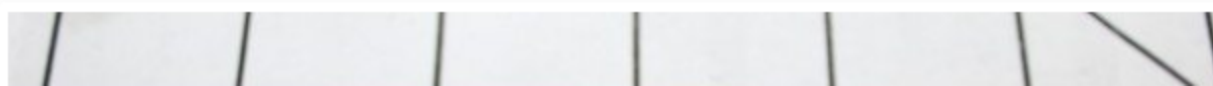


Turn top edge down 5/8"

Step 7. Layer lining and quilted fabric, wrong sides together and press lining down 5/8" towards quilted piece. Set aside for a moment.



Step 8. Prepare prairie points by folding the 4.5" square in half.

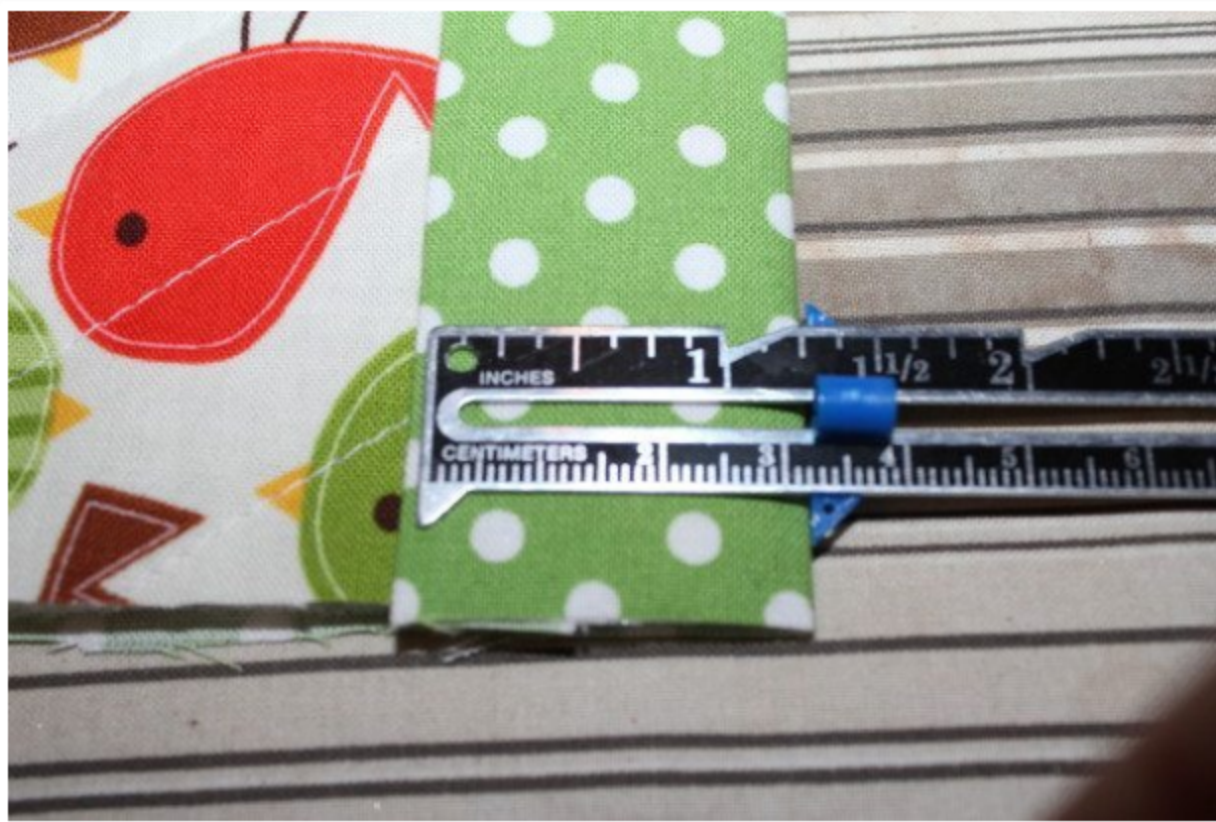




Step 9. Fold up lower left corner up to center. Press.



Step 10. Fold up right corner and bring to center, creating prairie point. The folded edges should be parallel to each other and touching and raw edges should be even. Press.



Pressed 1.25" over quilted fabric edge

Step 12. Fold down the top edge 1.25" to cover raw edge of quilted front. Center prairie points and insert raw edge here under the folded edge. Secure with fusible tape or pins to keep anything from moving before the stitching. Refer to finished bag photo if needed to see placement.





Stitch through all layers

Step 12. Stitch close to folded edge, leaving room for tape measure to slide through. Test before stitching.
(Prairie points don't show here, but they are sewn on both top edges in the center to be used as handles/decoration.)



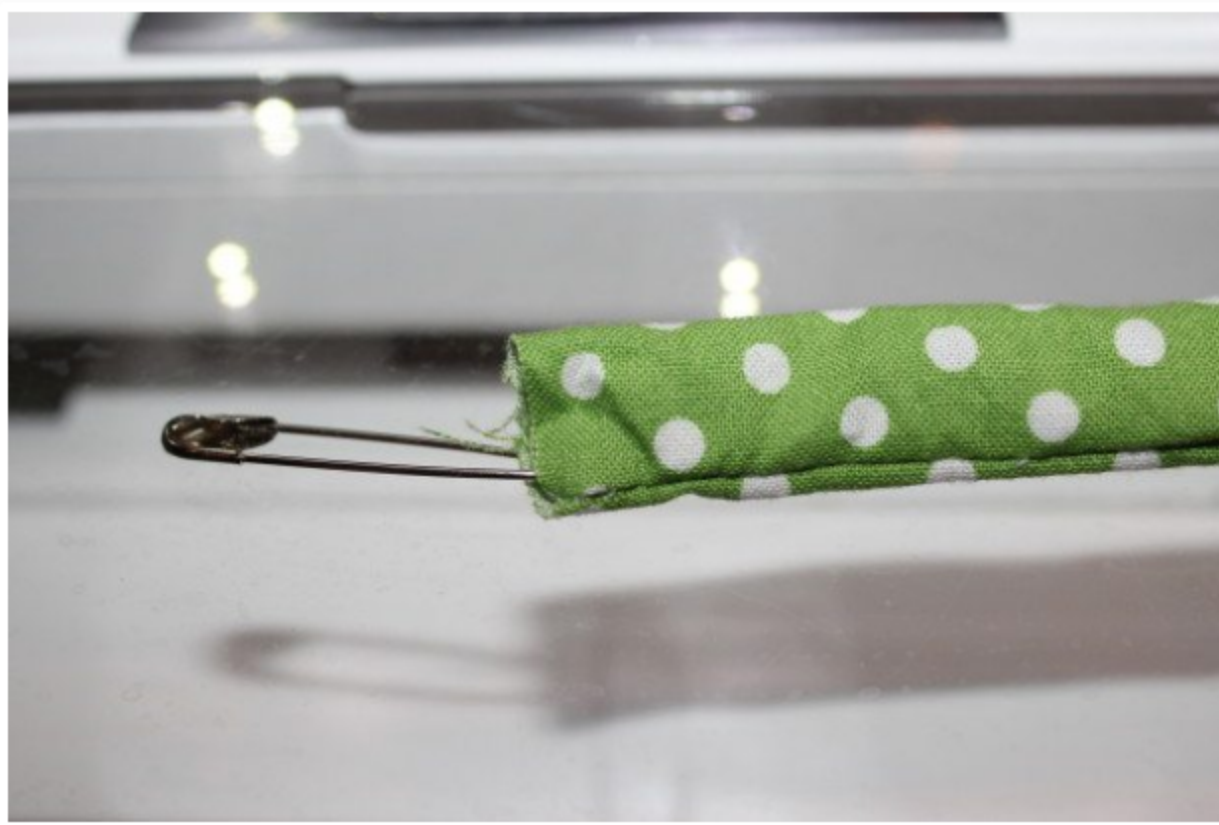
Side Loop

Step 13. Prepare Side Loop. Fold loop, right sides together and stitch down long die leaving ends open. Grade seam allowances.



Safety pin to help turn

Step 14. Attach a safety pin to one edge of the tube. Use the safety pin to turn the tube right side out by sliding through to other side.



Side Loop ready for pressing

Step 15. After loop is right side out, press flat. Remove pin. Fold in half bringing ends together.

Step 12. After loop is right side out, press flat. Remove pin. Fold in half bringing raw edges together.



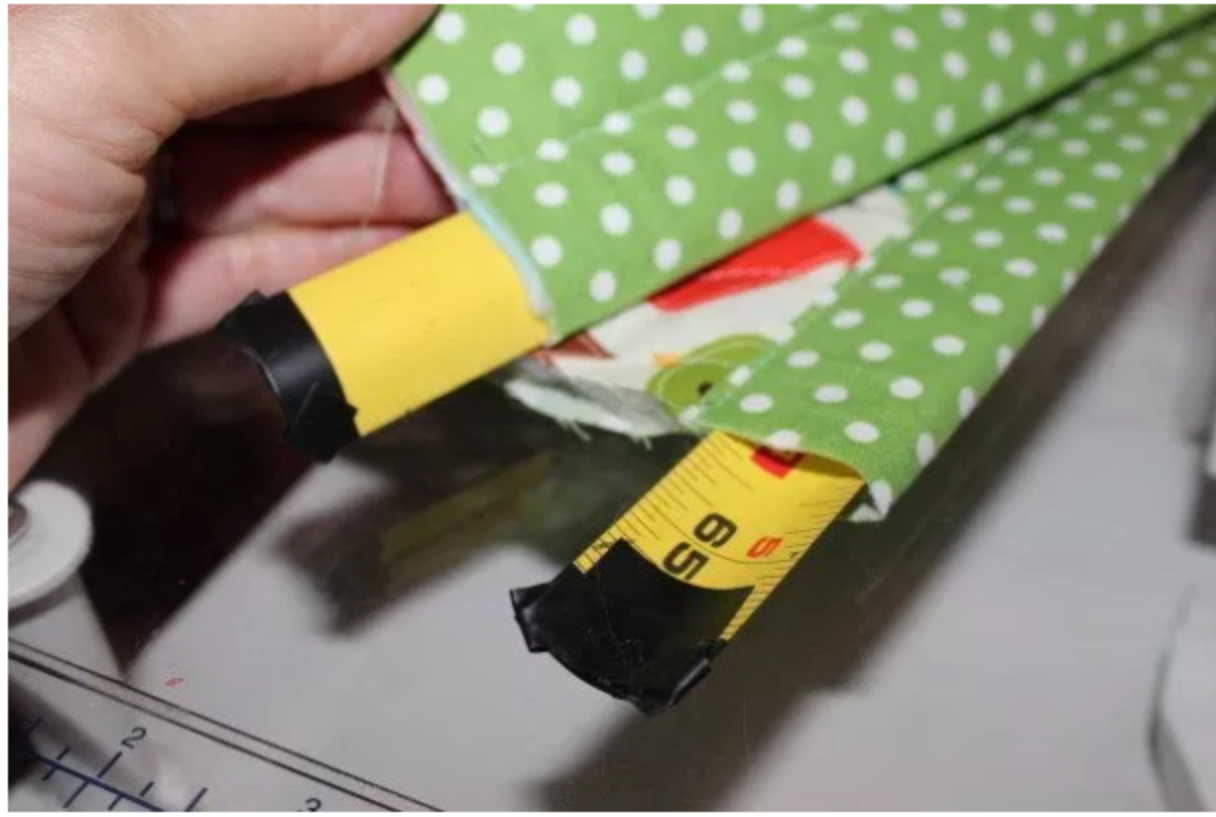
Baste loop

Step 15. Baste Loop to front of bag. With raw edges together, place loop 1/2" right below top band. Baste with an 1/8" seam allowance. This will be sewn permanently when side seams are sewn up.



Sew up side seams

Step 16. Sew up ONE SIDE SEAM only. I ran my finger down inside the bag from top to bottom to smooth out any tucks. Pin. Stitch in a 1/4" seam allowance making sure to back-stitch enthusiastically at the top edge.

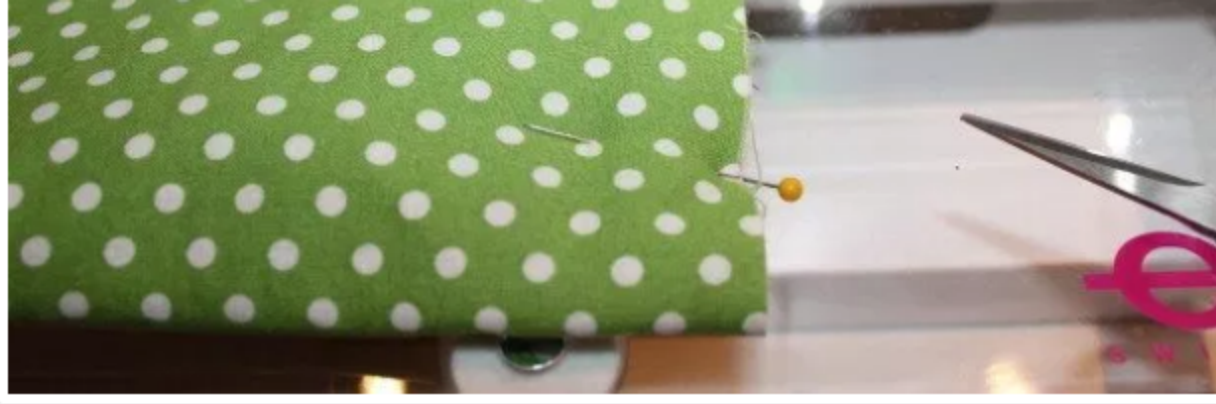


Step 17. Cut tape measure into two (2) pieces measuring 8". Test length by inserting into the casings to see if there is at least a 1/4" seam allowance. If not, trim to fit. Remove tape pieces.

Step 18. Using utility scissors, slightly round edges to remove sharp edges/corners.

Step 19. Tape edges with electrical tape or painter's tape. This is a very important step. I did not do this on my first bag and the corners are working their way through the material.



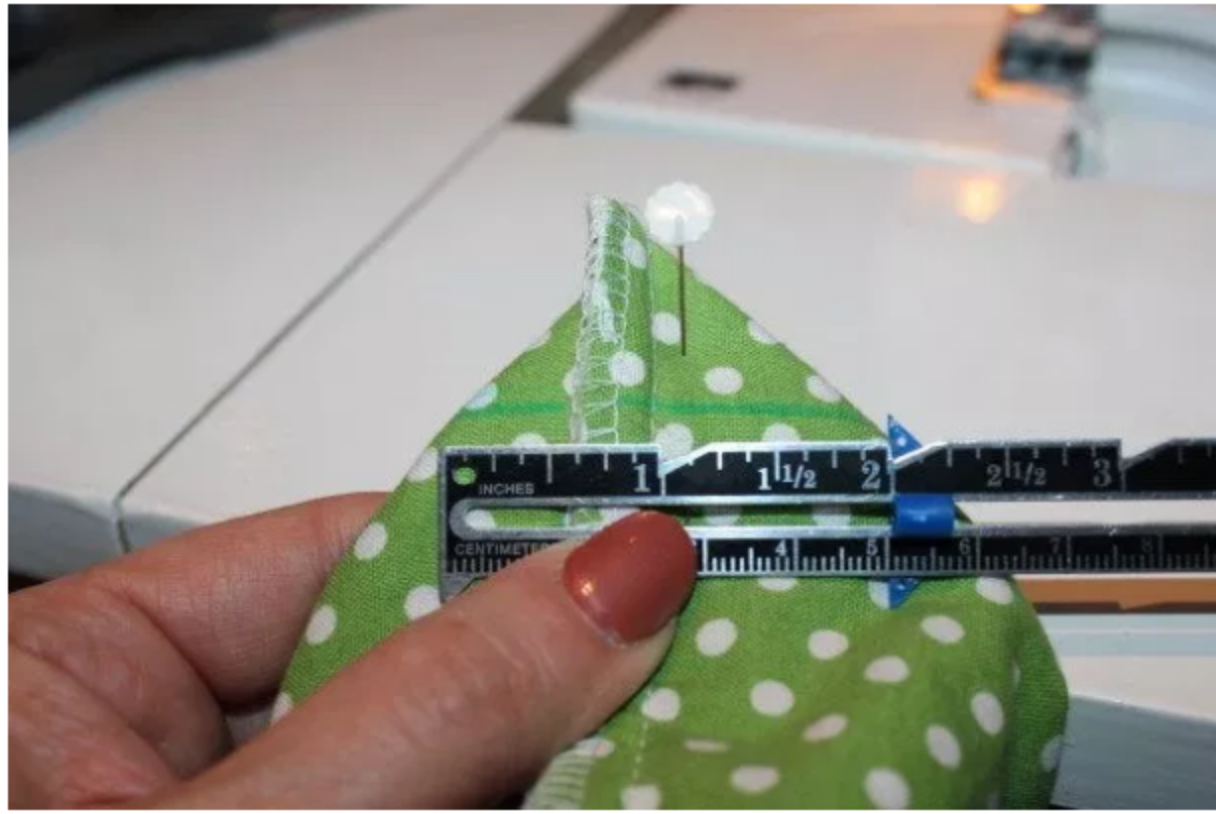


Sew up side seams

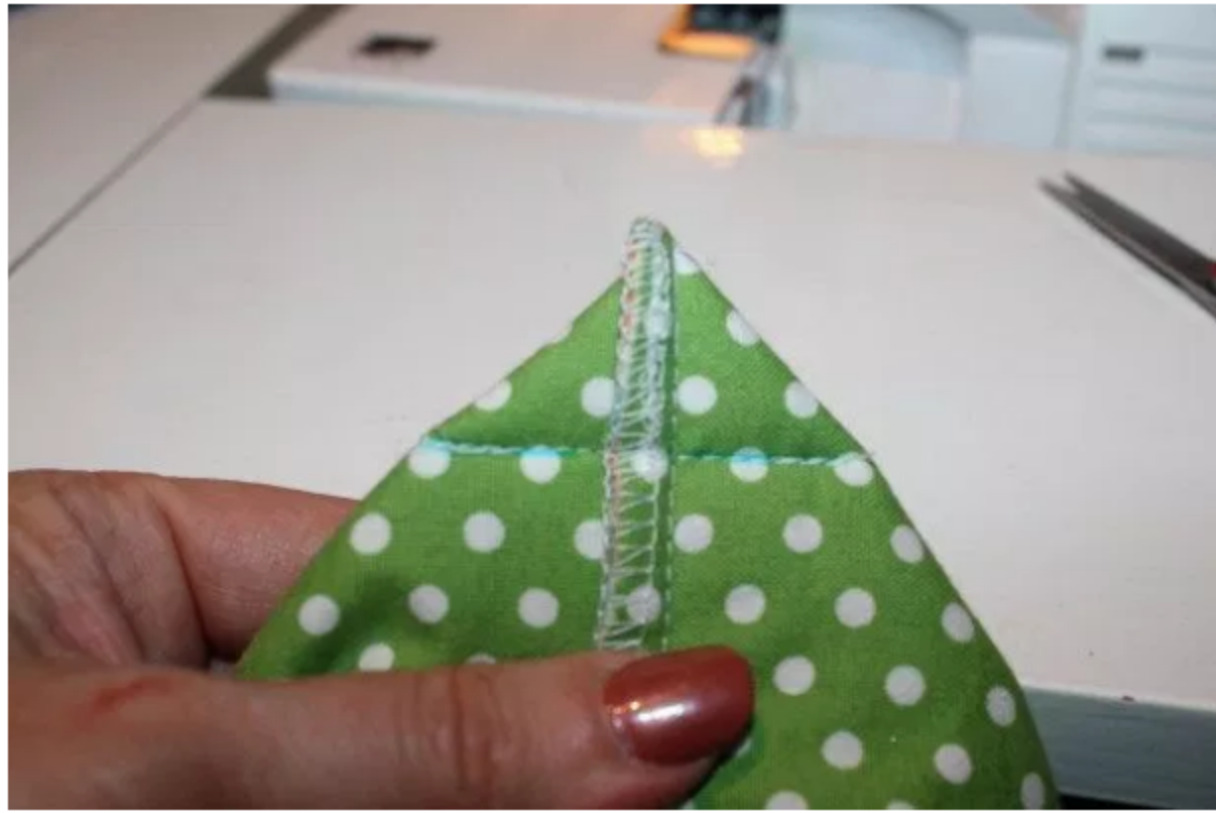
Step 20. Insert tape measure pieces back into casings (like Step 15) pushing them in as far as possible to give ample room to sew on remaining seam allowance. NOTE: MAKE SURE THE TAPE MEASURE PIECES ARE INSERTED WITH THE BLANK SIDES OF TAPE ("C" SHAPE) FACE THE LINING SIDE. THE NUMBERED SIDES ("U" SHAPE) ARE FACING THE QUILTED SIDE OF BAG. The "C" shape sides of the tape kissing each other create the 'snap'.

Step 21. Prepare to sew up other side seam. Fold bag in half RST, pin, making sure the side loop is on the inside of the bag and all raw edges are even. Make sure there are no tucks. The top edge gets the most wear-and-tear so once again, back-stitch enthusiastically.

Step 22. Serge or zig zag raw side seams to cleanly finish.



Step 23. Prepare mitered corners. Keeping the rights sides together, pull apart bag at lower edge fold (base of bag) with one hand on front of bag and one hand on back of bag until the side seam looks like the picture. My thumb is on the side seam and my index finger is on the base of the bag. This creates a triangle-looking area on the inside of the bag, but a nice miter on the outside, allowing the bag to sit up by itself. Measure across 2" or 1" on both sides of seam, pressing seam allowance to one side. Mark the line.



Step 24. Sew across triangle/miter. Trimming corner is optional. I left my triangle in place to give the base of the bag more substance. Repeat for other side.





Step 25. Turn right side out. This will take a little muscle because the tape measure doesn't want to bend this way. Work it until the bag inverts. Add seam sealant to upper seam allowances.

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26 Comments

- Shirley** JUNE 23RD, 2014

I love my bag and use it all the time! This will be my Christmas gift for the girls in my family. Thank you for sharing!

REPLY
- Dana** JUNE 23RD, 2014

I'm so glad you love it. I have some measuring tape I can give you!

REPLY
- Susie Westbrook** NOVEMBER 25TH, 2015

Such a cute bag. Using the tape measure is a stroke of genius! I'm using this pattern to make travel/cosmetics bags for myself and my daughters.

REPLY
- Dana** NOVEMBER 25TH, 2015

Hi Susie-
This is the most popular post on my blog and I'm glad you like it. Let me know how the bags turn out. Thanks for commenting.
-Dana

REPLY
- Colleen** DECEMBER 1ST, 2016

Cute bag, great instructions! Thanks much.

REPLY
- Dana** DECEMBER 2ND, 2016

Enjoy! I hope you have fun making these bags. Thanks for visiting.

REPLY
- Barb** DECEMBER 17TH, 2016

Thank you. I made several of these today and loved the pattern. When I inserted the tape measure in the way you stated, I found it very, very hard to snap it open. So, I had the number side face the lining as was directed by another tutorial, and it was much easier to open.

A tip I read somewhere was not to use a measuring tape from the Dollar Store. It isn't strong enough in case anyone was going to buy one there.

REPLY
- Dana** DECEMBER 24TH, 2016

I'm so glad you made a few of these. You are right; the blank tape sides facing, forming a "C" shape does make the bag pretty hard to open. The tabs HAVE to be there to pull open. I'm glad you experimented and found another way to make it work. Apparently, the tape measures can vary in strength. Thanks for the tip about Dollar Store. I used an old construction-grade one discarded by my husband, so I suppose it was tougher than usual...it is a great gift for guys!:) Thanks for responding back!

REPLY
- Delores** DECEMBER 28TH, 2016

Dolores DECEMBER 17TH, 2016

Great Idea! Tried to print off instructions but web site address is showing up all over the instructions. I guess the only way to save instructions is to book mark site.

REPLY



Dana DECEMBER 31ST, 2016

Dolores- I'm sorry you had difficulty. My son has been doing some major technical updates on my site which may have made your printing difficult. Maybe try again with copy/paste?? Bookmarking is a successful way I keep track of my favorite blog posts, also. I will follow up if I have any other tips.

REPLY



Aileen MARCH 18TH, 2017

I'm so glad that the intenret allows free info like this!

REPLY



Dana MARCH 20TH, 2017

Aileen-
Glad you enjoyed it! Thanks for commenting.

REPLY



Dianna JANUARY 22ND, 2017

I love your sweet bags. The colors grabbed me first then the prairie point. I have seen these before and i already have the tape. I believe tomorrow this will be my first project. Thank you for sharing.

REPLY



Dana JANUARY 23RD, 2017

Good luck with the bags! I'm so glad they caught your eye and you're going to give it a try. (rhyme unintended). Thanks for sending me a comment.

REPLY



Jenny MARCH 19TH, 2017

Beautiful bag. Will make more for gifts.

REPLY



Dana MARCH 20TH, 2017

Hi Jenny,
Thank you for commenting. I'm glad you like the bag. I hope you can make many for gifts and maybe one for yourself.
-Dana

REPLY



Roseanne APRIL 10TH, 2017

Hi Dana,
I'm on one of the quilting boards and a member just posted several of these bags that she made, along with a link to your tutorial. I would like to share this link to my blog readers - and of course, give you credit. I hope you don't mind?! I think the bags are very cute. ~smile~

REPLY



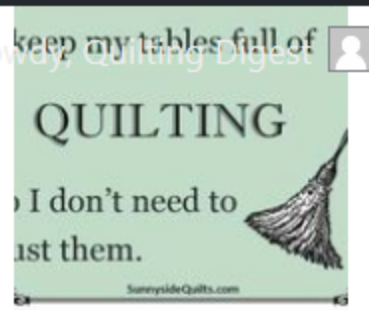
Dana APRIL 11TH, 2017

Rosanne-
Thank you for asking first. Of course, please share with your members!

REPLY



Mari Teague APRIL 17TH 2017



Dana from Deedle & Thread has written up a tutorial for a similar bag. She goes into more detail about making the box bottom.

[Click here for the free “Snap Bag Tutorial”.](#)

If that page doesn’t load, [click here for a PDF of the tutorial](#). Some of the photos are missing but all of the instructions are there.



Thank you for your comments. It is a great use for an old tape measure. I use my bag to hold my pattern weights. My tip to share is to file or smooth out the edges of the tape. They have a way or working their way through the fabric. Good luck.

REPLY



Elsie Bulva DECEMBER 26TH, 2017

Thank you so much for this pattern. The idea of repurposing an old tape measure is wonderful plus not all bags need a zipper. I can see me using this as a small bag in my purse. Will try this for sure

REPLY



Dana DECEMBER 27TH, 2017

Elsie Bulva-
You are welcome. I hope you enjoy the process...and the outcome! The ‘snap’ it makes is loud, so maybe not great for meetings or church, but it will definitely keep items secure. Thank you for stopping by the blog.

REPLY



Sharreen FEBRUARY 10TH, 2018

My friend hosted two middle school Chinese exchange students recently and wanted to make a gift for them that was NOT “Made in China” for them. I suggested she make “Snap Bags/Metal Tape Measure Bags” for them in colors they liked. She asked them their favorite color and proceeded to use your blog site tutorial.

I would like to print it for my own use. I was unable to.

REPLY



Dana FEBRUARY 12TH, 2018

Hi Sharreen,
Thank you for visiting and commenting! I’m happy to hear your friend could use the tutorial. In my opinion, handmade items are the most gratifying to give and receive. Unfortunately, this post is not in a printable form unless you copy and paste the text into a Word program. Having a tablet nearby would probably be the easiest way...
I wrote this some time ago and need to look into a way to make that easier. Thanks for the suggestion.
-Dana

REPLY



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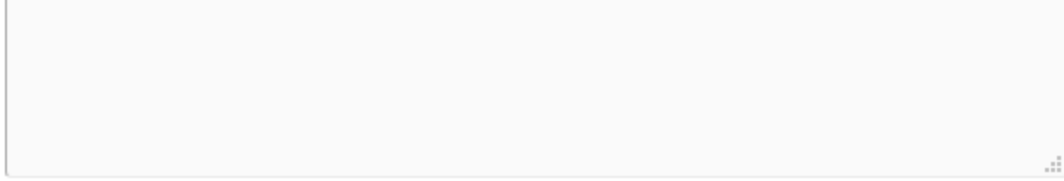
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