



“Tote-ally Cute”
by Stephanie Struckmann at Totally Stitchin’



INTRO: Tote bags make a great gift! Personalize the tote with fabric the recipient will love! This tote is so quick and easy, you’ll really enjoy making it!

Created by: Stephanie Struckmann, www.TotallyStitchin.net

Baby Lock machine: Baby Lock Esante and Diana Serger

SUPPLIES:

- Baby Lock Sewing Machine
- Baby Lock Embroidery Machine (optional)
- Baby Lock Serger (optional)
- Rotary cutter/mat or a ruler, fabric marker, and scissors to mark the dimensions and cut your fabric
- ½ yard cute fabric for the exterior of the bag, (I used a printed duck or canvas)
- ½ yard fabric for the interior of the bag, (I just chose a basic gray cotton fabric that matched my exterior)
- ½-1 yard heavy fusible interfacing (I used craft bond; note: get a yard if the interfacing is not folded on the bolt, you’ll need to get 2 - 17” x 17” squares out of your interfacing)
- 2 - 8” squares of complementary fabric for the pocket (pocket optional)
- 1 ¾ yd. cotton webbing trim (pre-made straps; I cut my straps 29” each)
- Sewing thread

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. If pocket is desired: Cut 2 - 8” squares for one pocket. If embroidery is desired, go ahead and get this started on one square so that’s running while you cut and interface the bag fabric.

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2. Cut exterior, interior, and interfacing fabric 17" x 17" (I layered all 3 fabrics and cut them together to save time). Fuse the interfacing to either the 2 exterior OR interior 17" fabric squares. I interfaced my outer because it's printed duck cloth and it fused very nicely and won't show wrinkles, whereas a thinner, basic cotton fabric might show wrinkles more when fused (then, you would interface your interior fabrics).
3. Now, layer one lining layer (wrong side) to the wrong side of one exterior square (I put a couple dabs of stick glue (near the middle) on the fused interfacing pieces to lightly hold the layers together). Do the same with the other 2 squares. So, now you should have 2-17" squares that are an exterior, interfacing, interior layered "sandwich".
4. Now, layer the 2 - 17" square "sandwiches" on top of each other and cut 3" squares from the bottom corners only (as shown in the picture; this will be used to make the corners of the bag later).



5. Separate into the 2 "sandwiches" again and serge (or baste and finish the seams of) the layers of each sandwich together at the top, sides, and bottom. Don't serge those 3" square elbows that were cut out.



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6. For your pocket, (I interfaced one of the squares to give it some structure if you happen to have some extra; otherwise, I wouldn't worry about it) put the 2 - 8" squares pretty sides together and sew the sides and top; don't sew the bottom of the pocket. Clip the 2 corners where you pivoted. Turn your pocket right side out; gently push your corners out to make them pretty. Press flat. Then, iron the lower raw edge a 1/2" under to the back side.



7. Place your pocket to your liking on the exterior of one of your "sandwich pieces". Pin in place (if the ironed-under seam at the bottom shows on the sides at all, you can clip those at an angle just on the raw flap so that it hides better underneath the pocket). Sew your pocket on, sewing close to the edge, starting at the top right, sewing 3 sides, leaving the top open (I put my needle in the center and lined up the pocket with the inside of the foot).



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To sew your straps on, mark 3" in at the top right and left of each "sandwich" piece. With one strap per "sandwich" piece, line your strap to the inside of the mark on the left and pin, and then the other side of the strap to the inside of your right mark making sure that it's not twisted. Baste strap in place. Finish strap tips with your serger or fray check.

8.



9. Place 2 "sandwich" pieces pretty sides together and sew the bottom seam first (optional: stitch twice for strength). Press seam open. Now, stitch the right and left sides together (optional: stitch twice for strength) and press seams open.



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10. Pinch the openings of the corners together, matching your side seam and bottom seam, stitch both corners closed. Serge or finish raw edge.



11. Iron top edge down an inch to the inside of the bag. Straps will now point out of the bag. Stitch about $\frac{3}{4}$ " down around the top of the bag (bag should be to the left of your needle and straps to the right of your needle). Stitch once more closer to the top edge less than a $\frac{1}{4}$ " away (I reinforced the straps, backstitching and proceeding when I came to a strap for added strength). Admire your work because you're done!

