

## Instructions for Making A Bag of Love

The drawstring bags for our Bags of Love need to be sturdy; they will be used a lot. Very often CPS tries to reunite families, so the children get home visitations, when they do, they use this bag as an “overnighter”. We try to use fabric that can withstand multiple uses and stands the test of time - for example, canvas, lightweight denim, duck cloth or lightweight upholstery. You get the idea. Steer away from any upholstery or other fabrics that are too thick to be closed via drawstring.

Sturdy fabrics are best. Thinner materials can be used for the pockets, but aren't recommended for the main bag because they don't stand up well to the wear & tear a child can put on them. If all you have is quilting fabric then use it. It is better to have a colorful and fun to give away to a child than not. We are giving and flexible.

We do not make all bags alike (same size but not same material). We use prints, interesting patterns, children's prints, masculine and feminine prints, etc. We also make the pocket a contrasting print or color. We want to brighten their lives as much as possible. You can make the pocket of the same fabric if you can't find something that coordinates with the bag material.

It is easier if you use the 42-45” fabric because the bag is designed to use that width. You can use 60” wide fabric, but you need to change the layout orientation to make full use of the extra width.

Take care to sew neatly and well. Give away only your best work.

- **Bags:** You will need a piece 45” x 30”. You will get six bags out of five yards. If purchasing 60” wide fabric you will get eight bags out of five yards.
- **Pocket and Flap:** You will need one flap, cut one piece, and one pocket piece. Select fabric that will coordinate with the bag fabric. You can cut ten pockets and ten flaps out of 1 1/8 yards of 45” wide fabric.
- **Rope/cording:** Use 3/8” white cotton rope. The rope can be found in the fabric department. It works very well. You will need 52” or 1 1/2 yards for each bag.

## **STARTING THE BAG** - You will need:

- Cut 1 piece of fabric for the bag: 45" x 30"
- Cut 1 piece of fabric for the pocket: 9" x 13 1/2"
- Cut 1 piece of fabric for the pocket flap: 9 1/4" x 6 1/2"
- 3/8" white cotton rope 1 1/2" yards (if you can't find 3/8" than 1/4" works great too)
- Velcro for pocket closure: 3/4" x 6"

## **PREPARING THE BAG**

Set your sewing machine stitch on zigzag, and stitch across what will be the top of bag fabric, along the 45" edge. You can choose to zigzag or serge the top raw edge of your bag when you are ready to turn under to make the casing you can leave this edge exposed. Your other option before you fold the casing under by an additional 1 3/4" {a total of 2"} when making the casing is to also turn the zig-zag edge under by a 1/4" to create a clean edge before sewing down the seam. (Reference picture on page 7, "Sew the Bag of Love.")



To create openings for the drawstring you will need to make buttonholes. Measure over from the 30" edge 11 1/2" and make a vertical mark on the inside of the bag (You will place a button hole on each side of this line). Now measure down from the top 2 1/4" along the vertical mark, make a horizontal mark (which will mark the top of the buttonholes).

This is where you are going to place two - 1" buttonholes 1/2" apart. Cut a piece of fusible stabilizer or interfacing about 1.5" x 1.5" centered behind where you will sew the buttonholes, this is to reinforce them so they won't tear during use. Make buttonholes. Take seam ripper or a sharp pair of scissors and cut open buttonholes. Be sure not to cut the stitches.



**Option 2** - If you can't create buttonholes with your machine, then you can use the side seam to pull the cording through by leaving a gap in the stitching when you create the casing. This can be done after the pocket is attached and you are completing the bag.

**Option 3** - If you don't have a machine that can create buttonholes then you can put a grommet in place of each buttonhole. It is extremely important to reinforce the backside where the grommets will go with at least 3 pieces of stabilizer. Grommets are heavy and need the extra support.

## **POCKET**

Take the pocket piece and zigzag along all 4 edges.

Fold the top of the pocket back onto itself 2". Right sides will be together. Stitch  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance on both sides of the folded edge. Turn right side out. Press down, then top stitch the facing you just created. This will be the top edge of the pocket.

**Optional** - To create a finished look, after you fold the top edge of the pocket down 2", flip the zig-zagged edge up  $\frac{1}{4}$ ", wrong sides together. Stitch down the sides to create self facing. Turn right sides out. Press.



Fold over and press the 3 remaining raw edges - wrong sides together. The zigzag stitch will make this easier.



Take 6" piece of velcro and pull it apart. Place loop Velcro about  $\frac{1}{2}$ " down from the top of the pocket, centered, and stitch in place. Make sure the velcro is on the front side of the pocket fabric, and be sure you topstitch the 2" facing you folded over.

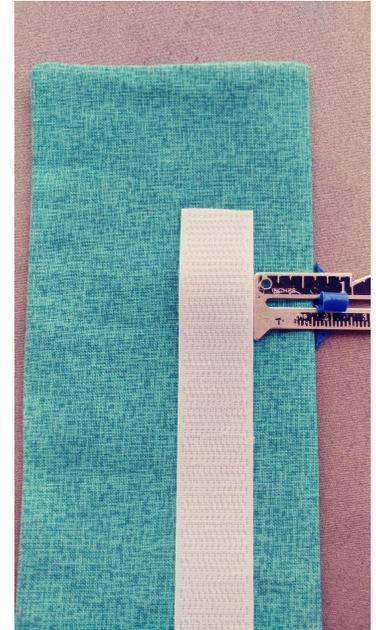


## **POCKET FLAP**

Fold flap piece right sides together. It will now be  $9\frac{1}{4}$ " x  $3\frac{1}{4}$ ". Straight stitch a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam down the sides and across the top but leave an opening at the top (where the raw edges are) so you can turn right side out. Press. The opening will be secured later when you sew the flap to the bag.



Take the second half of the velcro and center the hook side of the Velcro about  $\frac{5}{8}$ " above the folded edge and stitch it in place onto the underside of the pocket flap.



After attaching the velcro onto the underside of the pocket flap, use a decorative or zigzag stitch to attach the Bags of Love label to the front side of the pocket flap.



**Optional** - if the label will interfere with the pattern on the pocket it is perfectly fine to sew the label directly onto the bag fabric above the pocket flap.



## **ATTACH POCKET AND FLAP TO BAG**

Open the fabric you are using for the bag so that it is laying flat, not folded. From the right side edge of the bag (the 30" side) measure in 7 ½" and from the top of the bag measure down 10 ½" and place the pocket without the flap.



Pin to secure. Top stitch left, bottom and right sides of the pocket. Be sure you do not stitch the top of the pocket, this must remain open otherwise it would not be a pocket.



Remember to backstitch at the beginning and the end to reinforce the corners.



Next, line up the Velcro on the pocket flap to the Velcro on the pocket. Pin to the bag fabric and top stitch pocket flap to the bag. It is at this point, that the slit in the seam of the flap that you used to turn the flap right side out will be closed.

Remember to backstitch at the beginning and the end to reinforce the corners.



## **SEW THE BAG OF LOVE**

Fold the bag fabric in half and pin right sides together. Sew across the bottom and up the side and then zigzag or use a serger to prevent fraying. Remember to backstitch at the beginning and the end to reinforce the corners.

The bag should measure 22 ½" x 30" at this point.

You next need to create a casing to house the drawstring and you will do this by simply folding the top edge of the bag over 2", press, at this point you can also press the raw edge under so the bag facing will have a finished look. Sew seam to create a casing for the drawstring.



Insert rope (drawstring) by pulling it through one of the buttonholes and pulling it out of the other buttonhole. Before inserting the rope wrap a piece of tape around the end so it won't fray. Use a safety pin to help guide it through the casing. Remove the tape and tie knots on the ends, so it won't slip out.



At the center on the back of the bag, stitch up and down to secure the cord to the bag. This will ensure the cord will not be able to be removed from its casing.



You have just completed an "It's My Very Own Bag of Love" It ends up being an extra-large drawstring bag with a secured pocket.

