

Tutorial 3-FABRIC, 10-STEP TOTE



SHOWCASE YOUR FAVORITE FABRICS WITH THIS LINING-BOUND TOTE
THE Inspired WREN

Materials

- Three coordinating quilting-weight cottons for the outer Shell, the inner Lining, and the Handles*
- Medium-weight iron-on stabilizer
- Coordinating thread

*See **Cutting** for the amount of materials needed. Keep in mind that you could cut this project across the grain (depending on the print) with satisfactory results and therefore not need as large a cut of fabric. Also note the Shell is folded in half with no bottom seam, so beware a one-way directional print as it will appear upside down on one side of the tote. In this example I made sure the flowers were oriented correctly and decided the remainder of the print was abstract enough not to be distracting upside down. Use your best judgment when choosing and placing the fabric.

Cutting

The dimensions listed here will create a final Tote Bag 9 ½" wide x 12" tall x 2" deep. You can easily change these dimensions to fit your need; keep in mind that the seam-allowance varies in places.

Shell	13" x 22 ½"	cut 1 fabric; cut 1 interfacing
Lining	13" x 30 ½"	cut 1 fabric; cut 1 interfacing
Handles	4" x 22"	cut 2



Construction

- 1 Prepare each Handle by folding it in half, wrong sides together and press. Open it up and press each outside edge to the center line. Fold fabric in half again and press. The final width of the Handle will be approximately 1" with the raw edges enclosed in the fold. Edge-stitch down each side. Set aside.

- 2 Apply the interfacing to the Shell and Lining fabrics following the manufacturer's instructions.
- 3 Working with the right side up and matching the raw edges, center the ends of one Handle 4" apart on a short end of the Shell fabric; pin in place. Repeat with the second Handle on the opposite short end of the Shell.



Step 1

Step 3

- 4 With right sides together, align the short ends of the Lining and the Shell sandwiching the Handles in between—note the Lining will not lay flat as it is longer than the Shell. Pin in place.
- 5 Stitch each short end with a ¼" seam allowance, catching the Handles in the seams.



Step 4 & 5

The red dotted lines indicated the location of stitching in Step 5.

- 6 Turn the Tote right side out and press the seam allowance toward the Shell. Press the entire Tote flat so that the Lining fabric is an even 2" at each end. Pin on either side of the Handles to maintain the 2" borders.

- 7 Stitch each Handle onto the Lining fabric (through both layers) with an approximately 1 ¼"-tall X.

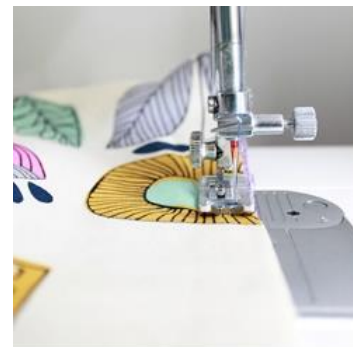


Step 6

Step 7

- 8 Sew the side seams of the Tote with a French-seam finish:
 - a. Fold the Tote in half right side out—with the Lining in and the Shell facing out—and stitch down both sides with a **shy** ¼" (or a 1/8") seam allowance. **QUICK TIP:** Sew with the fabric in the ¼" position but move the needle to the far RIGHT position for these seams. Trim any loose or frayed threads.
 - b. Turn the Tote wrong side out and press the side seams flat. Stitch down both sides with a **generous** ¼" (or a 3/8") seam allowance encasing the raw edges of the seam. **QUICK TIP:** Sew with the fabric in the ¼" position but move the needle to the far LEFT position for these seams.

*if you prefer to finish the two side seams with an alternate method, know there is a ½" seam-allowance on each side.



Needle far right



Needle far left

- 9 Pinch one bottom corner together so that the side seam is centered on the triangle created; fold the seam allowance to one side. Mark up 1" from the corner point and draw a 2"-wide line perpendicular to the seams. Stitch on the line. Do NOT trim; if you prefer you can hand-tack the point of the corner to the side seam, but it is not necessary. Repeat on the second Tote corner.
- 10 For a finished touch, top-stitch on the top lining-bound border at each of the side seams catching the seam allowance beneath. [Optional.]



Step 9



Step 10

You're done! 

This is the perfect project to highlight great fabric combinations. It's time to stop petting those fabrics in your stash and show them off! With no bottom seam and reinforced handles you know this lined bag will hold up well to daily use. Of course it would also make a great gift. Pair it with a [Pocket Tissue Pack Cover](#) and a [Hand Sanitizer Jacket](#) for a lovely, coordinated gift set this Holiday season.

If you sew a 3-Fabric, 10-Step Tote for yourself or as a gift I'd love to see it. Come share your projects on [The Inspired Wren Share page](#). There you can link up images of your work from a blog, Flickr, Pinterest, or Instagram.