

Tote Bag



Free project - Search Press Craft Group



Tote Bag



Choose vibrant colours and patterns for this cheerful shopper and it looks like stained glass windows! It also has a useful pocket on the back that you can use for an umbrella or flowers.

Materials

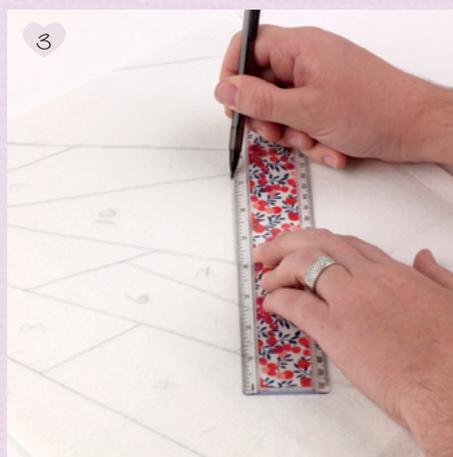
- ♥ 43 x 40cm (17 x 15¾in) of white felt
- ♥ 43 x 40cm (17 x 15¾in) of floral fabric pieces to cover the white felt area
- ♥ 2m (78¾in) of cotton webbing
- ♥ 43 x 40cm (17 x 15¾in) of fabric to back the bag
- ♥ 43 x 40cm (17 x 15¾in) of fabric x 2 to make a bag lining
- ♥ 44 x 36cm (17¼ x 14¼in) of fabric for the umbrella pocket

Tools

- ♥ fabric scissors
- ♥ rotary cutter and cutting mat
- ♥ chalk and a pencil
- ♥ sewing needles
- ♥ paper clips
- ♥ sewing threads
- ♥ sewing machine
- ♥ ruler and tape measure
- ♥ card/paper
- ♥ iron
- ♥ knitting needle



1 Start by marking out on the piece of felt the lines that will form a stained glass effect for the front of your shopper. To do this, place the white felt in a portrait layout and mark several straight lines from the top left-hand corner so that they fan out like the rays of the sun. Divide the space between the lines to create shards. This will produce a stained glass effect. At this point take a photograph or sketch the layout to remind you how to put the sections back together.



2 Cut out all of the sections using a rotary cutter. Instead of paper, these pieces of felt will form your piecing templates. Decide which fabric will cover which shape and tack/baste this directly onto the felt. Instructions for paper piecing are in the Techniques section on page 12. With all of the pieces prepared, whip stitch them together, making sure you catch the edges of the encased felt. The felt 'templates' will remain inside the bag to add padding and will not be removed (unlike traditional paper piecing).

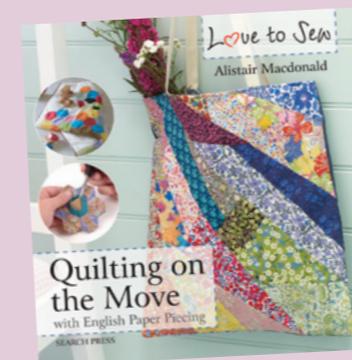
3 Construct the umbrella pocket by folding the chosen fabric in half (right sides facing). Pin to secure. You should have a rectangle measuring 22 x 36cm (8¾ x 14¼in). Machine stitch 1cm (½in) away from the raw edge along only one of the 22cm (8¾in) sides. Turn this through and press the seam flat. Place the pocket onto the bottom right-hand corner of the backing fabric matching the raw edges of the backing and the pocket. Sew the pocket into position along the folded edge. With right sides facing, pin the bag front to the backing and machine sew together 1cm (½in) away from the raw edge. Leave the top of the bag open.



4 Place the lining pieces with right sides together and sew the side and bottom edges, leaving an opening approximately 12.5cm (5in) along the bottom for turning. Cut two 79cm (31in) lengths of cotton webbing for handles. Pin the edges of one piece to the right side of the bag front approximately 6cm (2¼in) from the side seams, hanging into the inside-out bag. Make sure you have no kinks in the webbing or you will have twisted handles. Repeat with the back. Turn the bag lining right side out and insert right sides together into the bag, matching and pinning the side seams. Machine stitch around the entire opening 1cm (½in) away from the raw edge.



5 Turn the bag the right side out through the turning hole in the lining. Sew the hole closed using a whip stitch and matching thread. Tease out the corners of the bag using a knitting needle and topstitch around the opening of the bag 5mm (¼in) away from the edge. Remove the tacking/basting threads. It's time to go shopping!



Taken from *Love to Sew: Quilting on the Move* by Alistair Macdonald

Make sure to share a picture of your finished bag on the Search Press Craft Group, we would love to see it!

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