

GROCERY TOTE BAGS

To make fabric bags that are equal in size to grocery bags, you will need:

NOTE: The fabric below can be pieced – that is, they don't need to be a single piece of fabric. You could make the 36"x20" out of several pieces – like a quilt. Just make sure the end product measures 36 x 20.

1 piece of outside fabric – 36" x 20"

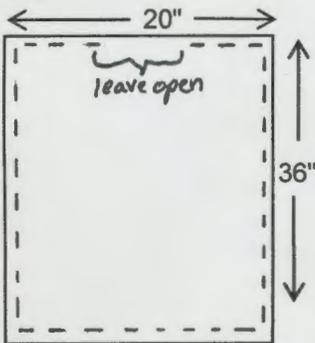
(Note: if using fabric that has an obvious direction – i.e. cats sitting on a fence – cut 2 pieces of outside fabric 18½" x 20", then join them with a ½" seam along the 20" edge - making sure to have the pattern turned so it will face correctly when you have the top edges of the bag up.)

1 piece of lining fabric – 36" x 20"

1 strip of strapping or braid - 3½" x 100" for the handle

1 piece of pocket fabric - 9" x 11" (optional)

1 piece of pocket lining fabric - 9" x 11" (optional)

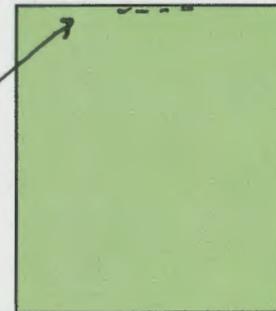


Sew the outside fabric to the lining fabric with right sides together – 1/2" seam.

Leave 5-6" open along one of the 20" sides. Trim seam to 1/4", except where the opening is - leave that part of the seam 1/2".

Turn right side out, press seams.

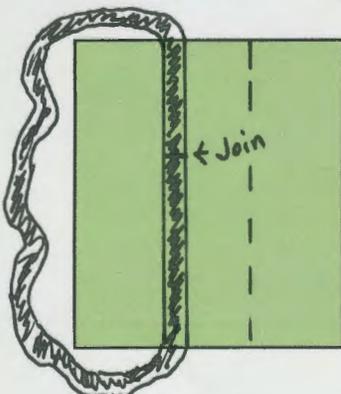
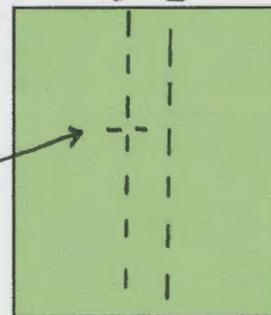
Sew the opening along the top shut.



The 20" sides are the top edges of the bag.

Using erasable pen (like Frixion pens), measure and mark 8" from each 36" side of the bag. This is where the **INSIDE** edge of the strapping will be sewn.

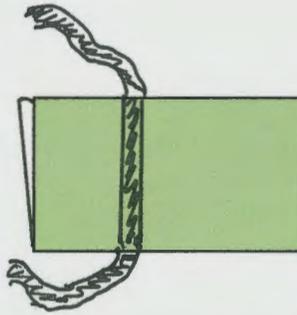
Also mark a line 14" from the top of the bag along one of the 8" lines. This is where you will place the end of the strapping to start sewing it.



Stitch the strapping down, reinforcing where it hits the top edge by stitching back and forth a couple of times. Then, take the other end of the strapping and match it to the end you have already sewn. Make sure the strapping will lay flat when it is sewn down - that is, make sure it is not twisted. Then sew that part of the strapping to the bag. At the "join" of the strapping, zig-zag stitch across the seam 2 or 3 times to reinforce.

You now have 1 side of the strapping sewn.

To figure out where to sew the other side of the strapping, place the 20" sides of the bag together, just like it will look when the bag is done.

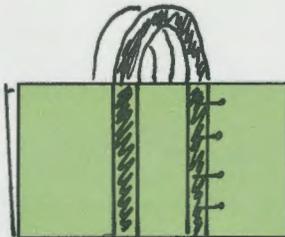
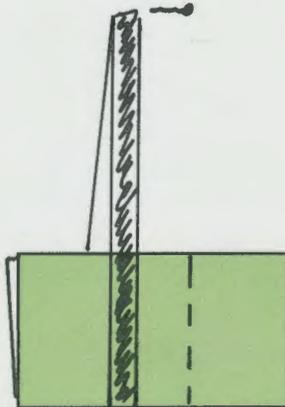


Pull the strapping up to its full length. Put a pin where it folds at the top. This will go at the bottom of the bag, where you have the fold.

Again, make sure you lay the strapping on the bag so it will not be twisted.

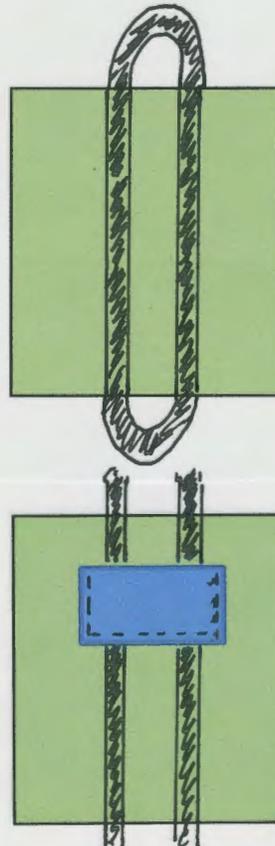
Pin the strapping onto the bag.

Double-check that your handles are the same length by folding the bag with the outsides out, like they will be when you are done, and hold the handles together. If they are not the same, adjust the strapping until they are.



Stitch this side of the strapping to the bag.

Take the 9" x 11" pieces of pocket and pocket lining fabric and sew them right sides together, leaving a 3" gap to allow you to turn the pocket right side out. Place the top of the pocket 3" from the top edge of the bag, centered horizontally. Topstitch around the three sides.

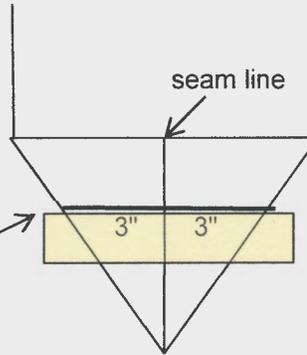


Fold the bag with the outsides together.
Sew 1/2" seams on both sides of the bag.

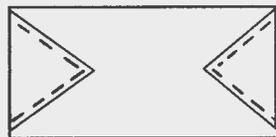


For the bottom corners, with the bag inside out, turn so the bottom points toward you.

Place a ruler on the seam, and move so there are 3" on each side – draw a line across. Stitch across the line.



Then, turn the bag right side out, and stitch the triangles to the bottom of the bag.



(Looking into the bottom of the bag.)

Pattern designed by Sharon Lau
Courtesy of Rainbow Resource Co. (www.rainbowresourceco.com)