Go Green Fabric Shopping Bag
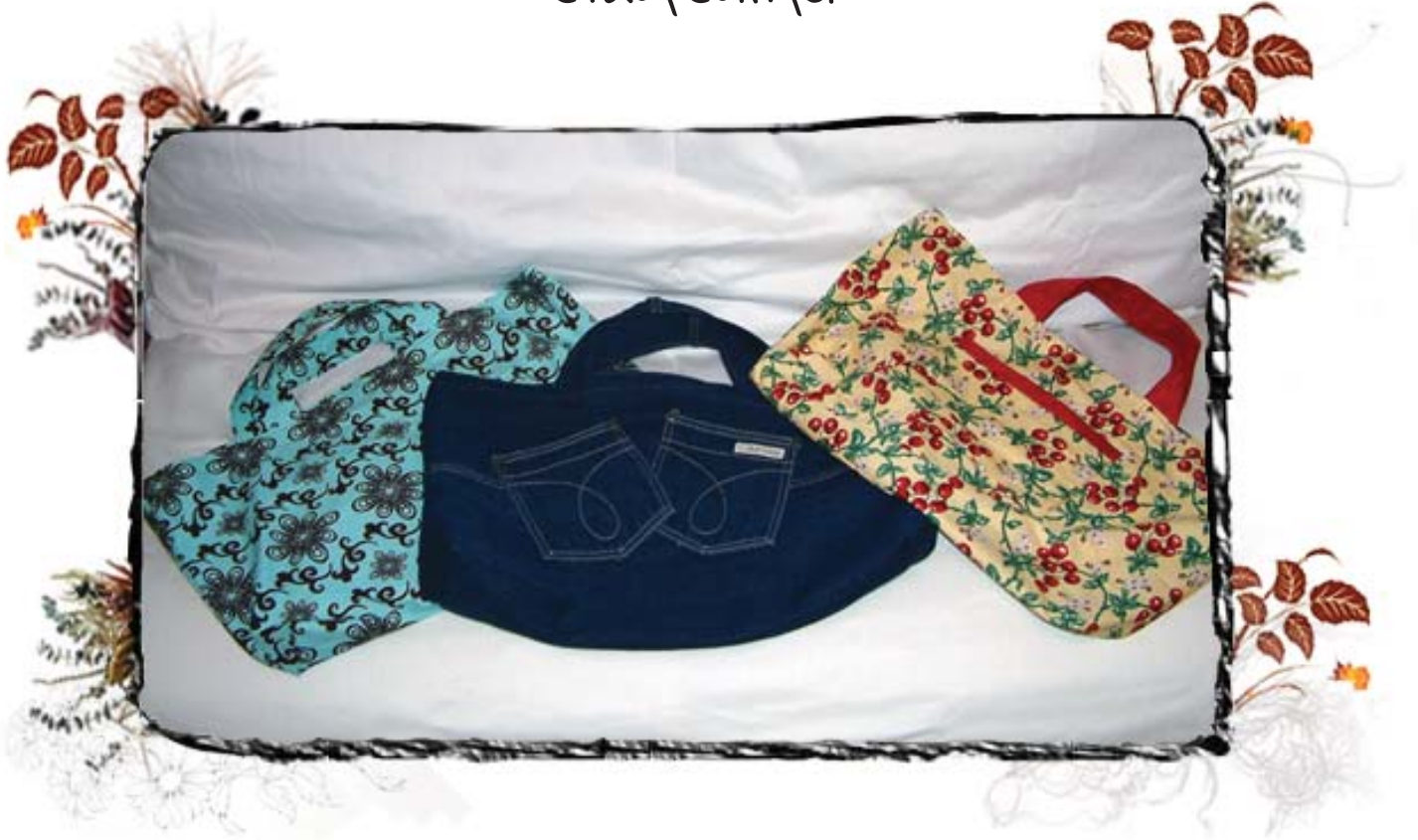
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MATERIALS

- ¾ yard material of your choice or a combination of materials to make ¾ yard (the heavier the material, the more durable the bag). To be extra green, use recycled materials when making your bag. Try using old sheets, flour or rice sacks, or thrift store clothing.
- Thread to match
- Scissors and ruler or rotary cutter and mat
- Pins
- Tailor's chalk or water soluble pen for marking
- Iron for pressing
- Fusible interfacing (optional)

Cutting

1. Seam allowances are ½″ unless otherwise noted.

2. Cutting the material:

Using your ruler, mark off 2 pieces of material 16″ x 23″ and 2 pieces 5″ x 16″. Cut using scissors or your rotary cutter.

2. Take the 16″ x 23″ piece of fabric and along the longest edge, chalk mark 2″ from the bottom corner with your chalk. From this mark, measure over 2″ and make a second mark with your chalk. Connect these two marks. Draw a line from the last mark down to the raw edge of the fabric so that you now have a square shape.

3. Repeat on the other side of the fabric and on the remaining 16″ x 23″ piece of fabric. Follow along the lines you have chalk marked and cut. Now you have two square-shaped pieces cut out on the bottom of your bag. This notched piece will form a gusset that will not only create a boxier shape to your bag, but help you be able to carry more inside!

SEWING REPUBLIC

Sewing

4. Place the two pieces of material, right sides together, matching raw edges and notched corners. Sew the two side seams of the bag and bottom edge. Do not sew the notches together! To add extra strength and prevent popped seams, sew over stitching on bottom of the bag.

5. Now we'll be sewing the notched area/gusset closed. To do this, match the side seam with the bottom bag seam, wrong sides together and pin in place. Sew across the fabric creating a diagonal seam. To add extra strength and prevent popped seams sew over diagonal seam a second time. Repeat for other side.

6. Fold the top of the bag down ½" to the wrong side. Press and fold over again. Sew close to the upper edge of the bag to create a finished top to your bag.

7. Creating the straps:

If you would like to add extra support and firmness to the handles of your bag, fuse a strip of interfacing to the wrong side of the material following the manufacturer's directions.

8. Fold ½" on each long side of the strap to the wrong side of material and press.

9. Fold the strap in half, wrong sides together, so that both edges are even.

10. Stitch each long side about ⅛″ from the edge.

11. Attaching the straps:

From each seam of the bag measure out 6 inches and chalk mark.

12. Fold under ½″–⅝″ on the raw edges of the straps to create a finished edge. Place the strap on the inside of the bag, match the side of the strap next to your 6″ marking and the folded edge of the strap along the bottom fold of the bag opening. Pin in place.
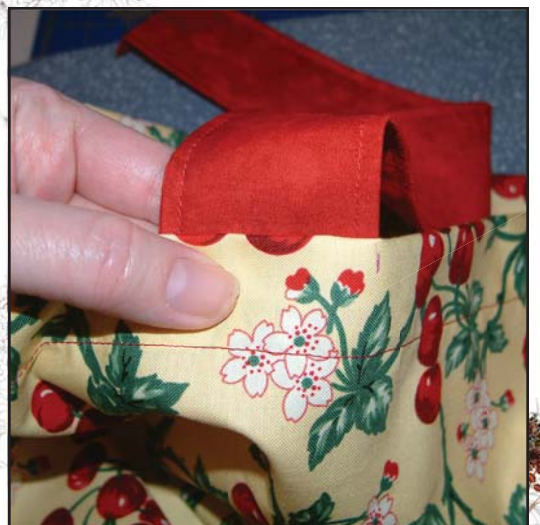
13. Sew ⅛" from each edge (along each side, finished strap edge, and near the top of the bag) creating a square. Reinforce the handles by stitching a square with an X in the center. Repeat at each end of each handle.

14. How to make your bag one of a kind:

Add a pocket on the front of the bag. This way you can have all your necessary items right at your fingertips.

Embellish your bag with iron on transfers, patches, appliqués or embroidery work.

15. Making your bags even greener:

Instead of using gift wrap, place your gift inside one of these reusable bags —not only is it pretty, it's much more environmentally friendly.