

TABLECLOTH BAG

CS0055

By Rebecca Kemp Brent

Rescue a damaged tablecloth and trim it with yarn made from recycled t-shirts for a summery bag that makes recycling look fabulous.

Finished size: 11" x 5" x 4"

Skill Level: Intermediate

SUPPLIES:

- Coats Purse Zipper: 22"
- Coats Polyester Machine Embroidery thread
- Coats Bobbin thread
- Coats Dual Duty XP All-Purpose thread
- Red Heart Eco-Cotton Blend yarn*
- Susan Bates French Spool Knitter: Medium*
- Tablecloth or other recyclable fabric: at least 22" x 40"
- Fusible interfacing: 1 1/4 yard at least 20" wide
- Tear-away stabilizer
- Fabric dye

*The handles as pictures are knitted I-cord. If you prefer, substitute a purchased braid for the I-cord handles.

STEPS:

Seam allowances are 1/2" unless otherwise noted.

1. Following the manufacturer's instructions, dye the tablecloth tan or a tea-dyed shade.
2. Examine the tablecloth and determine where the bag fabric will be cut. If the tablecloth has a woven stripe or damask pattern, position the pattern to lie attractively on the finished bag. Avoid obvious stains and tears when cutting the bag.
3. Cut one rectangle 20" wide and 22" long for the outer bag. (This piece will be trimmed to 17" x 19" after embellishment.) Cut one rectangle 17" wide and 19" long for the lining and two rectangles 17" x 1 3/8" for the zipper flaps. Cut rectangles of fusible interfacing to match the fabric pieces.

NOTE: To best utilize a design on the recycled fabric, the bag can be cut as two pieces and joined at the bag bottom. Cut each piece 20" wide and 11 1/2" long; trim to 17" x 19" after seaming and embellishing.

4. Fuse the interfacing to the corresponding fabric pieces' wrong sides.



5. To create a decorative embellishment on each bag side, use a removable marking tool to trace the outlines of the woven fabric design (Illus. 1), or create a motif from traced, stenciled or freehand art. Alternatively, embellish the bag with decorative machine stitches or use an embroidery machine and digitized motifs.

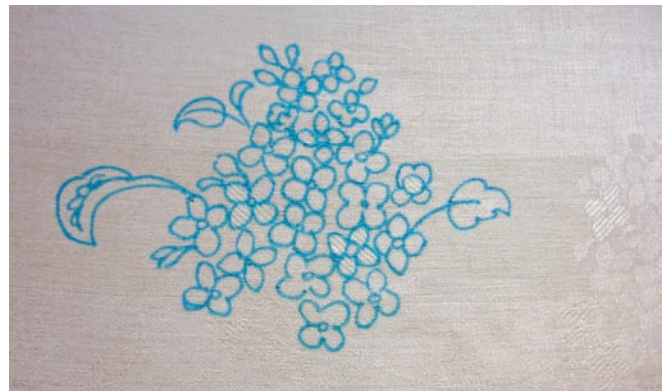


Illustration 1

6. Thread the machine with Coats Polyester Embroidery thread and the bobbin with Coats Bobbin thread. Slide a piece of tear-away stabilizer under the fabric. Lower the feed dogs and use [free-motion techniques](http://www.coatsandclark.com/Crafts/Machine+Embroidery/Howtos/Free+Motion+Machine+Embroidery.htm) (link: <http://www.coatsandclark.com/Crafts/Machine+Embroidery/Howtos/Free+Motion+Machine+Embroidery.htm>) to stitch the marked motif.

SEWING PROJECTS

- Remove the tear-away stabilizer and carefully press the work from the wrong side. Trim the embellished fabric to 17" x 19", keeping the motifs centered.
- Using the French spool knitter, knit 160" of I-cord with the Eco-Cotton yarn. Divide the cord into three equal lengths and mark with pins.
- Thread the machine needle and bobbin with Coats Dual Duty XP All-Purpose thread that coordinates with the yarn colors. Set the machine for a zigzag stitch 2.5 mm wide and 1.4 mm long. Reduce the presser foot pressure if the machine allows. TIP: Remember to raise the feed dogs.
- Fold the I-cord at one pin and position two cord sections side by side under the presser foot. Zigzag the sections together (Illus. 2). Fold the remaining third into position and repeat to create a braid three cords wide.



Illustration 2

- Draw guidelines 5 1/2" from each side of the embellished bag fabric. Fold the fabric in half widthwise to find the center bottom and mark. Draw placement lines 7" from the center bottom on each side, crossing the first guidelines (Illus. 3).

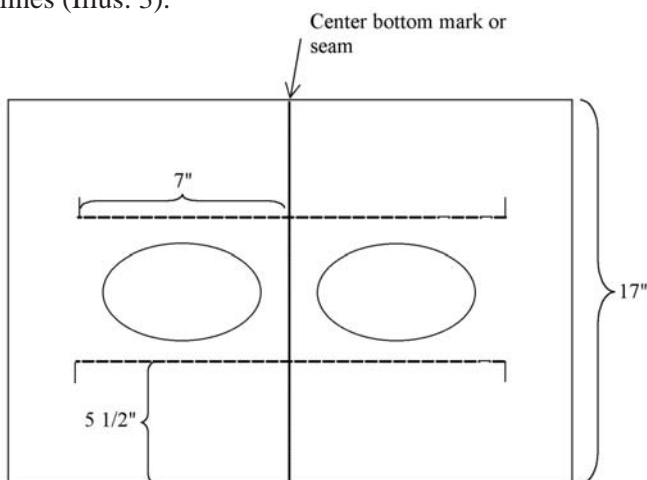


Illustration 3

- Beginning at the center bottom, position the I-cord braid along the guideline, with the braid extending toward the bag side. Pin the first 7" of braid in place, then measure 12" along the braid for the handle. Match the 12" mark to the cross mark on the other side of the embellishment and pin the next 7" to the bag, continuing along the guideline for another 7" to reach the next cross mark. Skip 12" for the second handle and pin a final 7" to the last guideline, ending with the braid abutting the starting point (Illus. 4).

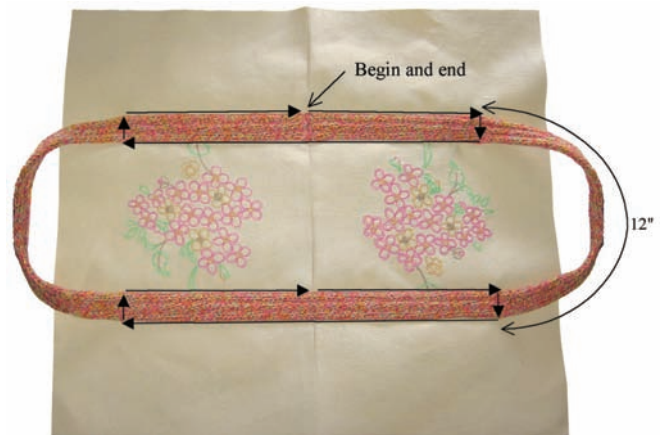


Illustration 4

- Stitch the braid to the bag with the zigzag stitch, beginning at the center bottom and traveling up the guideline to the cross mark. The zigzag stitch should enter the braid on one swing and drop into the fabric only with its next movement. Pivot at the cross mark and stitch across the braid, then pivot again and stitch along the braid's other edge.
- Continue stitching and pivoting to attach the braid to one side. Zigzag across the braid ends several times to secure the yarns. Trim away any excess or uneven lengths (Illus. 5).



Illustration 5

- Stitch the strap along the second side in the same way, omitting the reference to finishing the braid ends. TIP: Remember to return the presser foot pressure to its normal setting.

16. Move both zipper pulls to one end of the zipper so they will be out of the way. Fold each zipper flap in half lengthwise, wrong sides together, and press. Baste one folded flap to each zipper tape, right sides facing up and raw edges matched (Illus. 6). The flap folds will meet over the zipper teeth, and the zipper will extend beyond the fabric on each side.

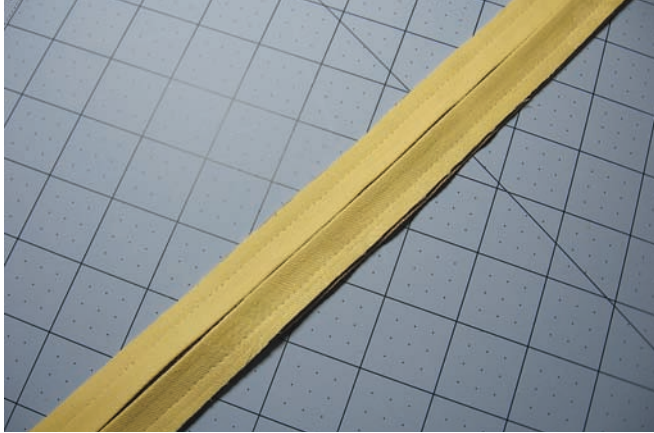


Illustration 6

17. Center the zipper tape on one short end of the bag fabric, right sides together, with the flap between the zipper tape and bag fabric. Stitch with a $\frac{3}{8}$ " seam. Match one end of the bag lining to the same zipper tape, placing the lining right side against the zipper wrong side, and stitch again over the first seam. Stitch the bag's other end to the second zipper tape.
18. Open the zipper. Pin the remaining lining end to the second zipper tape, with the lining right side against the zipper wrong side. The bag and lining will form separate tubes with the zipper at the center (Illus. 7). Stitch with a $\frac{3}{8}$ " seam. Turn the bag right side out, inserting the lining into the bag.

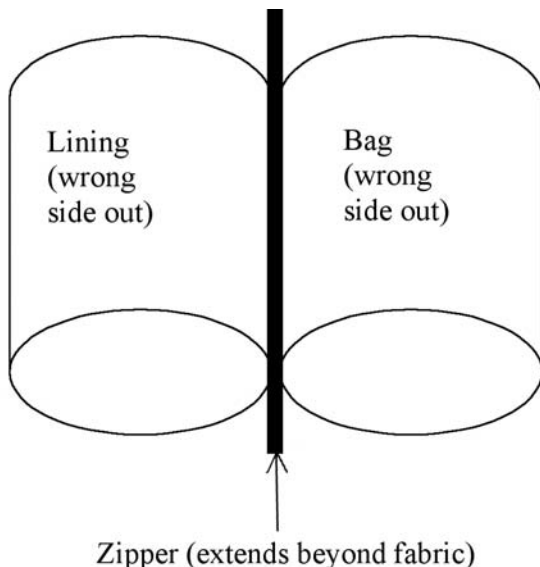


Illustration 7

19. Press the fabrics away from the zipper teeth. Edgestitch through all layers beside the zipper flap seam.
20. Overcast or zigzag the side edges to attach the lining to the bag fabric and create a neat finish.
21. Partially open the zipper so the zipper pulls are roughly parallel with the purse straps. **CAUTION:** Be sure both zipper pulls are between the bag side edges before continuing. Stitch back and forth across the zipper teeth and tape just inside the bag raw edges. Cut away the excess zipper teeth and tape.
22. Turn the bag wrong side out and fold along the zipper teeth and center bottom, matching the raw edges.
23. Mark each side seam 4" from the top and bottom folds. Bring the center bottom fold up, between the other fabric layers, to meet the lower mark (Illus. 8). This creates a W-shaped pleat. Repeat, folding the zipper to meet the upper mark.

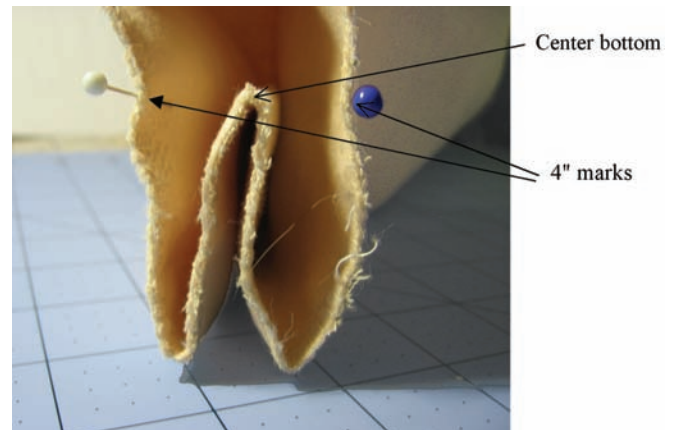


Illustration 8

24. Stitch the $\frac{1}{2}$ " side seams through all layers. Switch to a larger needle (size 100/16) and sew slowly, being especially careful when stitching across the zipper teeth.
25. Turn the bag right side out through the open zipper. Smooth the corner miters into position so each pleat forms a neat triangle on the bag ends.