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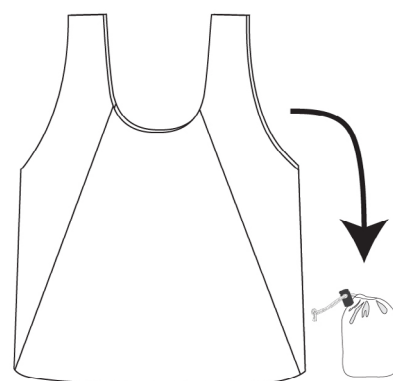
Intermediate



# Carry Everywhere Shopping Bag

A PDF Sewing Pattern by Lisa Neri

#carryeverywhereshoppingbag



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# The Carry Everywhere Shopping Bag!

Thank you for downloading the Cucicucicoo Carry Everywhere Shopping Bag PDF sewing pattern!

Plastic bags blowing in the wind may seem poetic at times (as in the film *American Beauty*), but there's nothing pretty about them littering our towns, floating in the oceans, and killing animals, nor about how they are produced in the first place. Likewise, it drives me crazy to see cheap broken umbrellas abandoned on the side of the street in rainy weather. The logical solution? Make **reusable shopping bags from umbrellas!**

There are loads of free shopping bag sewing tutorials out there on the internet, but I wanted to create the most useful shopping bag possible: the one that **you will never forget at home**. This pattern is inspired by the wonderful [Chico Bag](#), a nylon bag that can get stuffed inside an attached drawstring pouch. It's so much more simple to stuff the bag inside a pouch instead of trying to fold it up perfectly so that you can snap it shut, like you have to with many other reusable shopping bags. This bag is so wonderfully light and compact that you can keep it inside your purse, backpack, or glove compartment so that you will have it on hand at all times- even when you weren't expecting to need it.



The fabric removed from discarded umbrellas is perfect for this type of bag because it's **lightweight** enough to squish into the little pouch that is so small and light that it won't bother you if you carry it around wherever you go. ([Read here how to remove fabric from umbrellas.](#)) That way you're always ready to carry unexpected purchases or collect found treasures. When we're out for the day, my children often decide that they want to bring sticks or shells home, and luckily I always have one of these bags ready for them! And the added bonus is that, by upcycling umbrella fabric, you are giving **new life to discarded post-consumer waste**, instead of buying unethically and unecologically produced bags.

These bags can be sewn completely with a **standard sewing machine** and, once you understand the construction process, they can be sewn together in a couple of hours for such a stylish and sturdy product. All the seams except one are self-contained by turning, French seams or felled seams, making them stronger and more professional-looking. The finished bag measures **55 cm (22 inches) high**, including the handles.

Don't have any old umbrellas on hand? You can use other fabrics, too! (See the "Fabric" section on page 3.) Do you have extra umbrella fabric scraps hanging around after making a few bags? Why not patch them together to make a [waterproof picnic blanket](#)?

If you need help with sewing techniques, check out my [Learn to Machine Sew course](#). And if you have any questions at all, I'd be more than happy to help you out! Just send me an email at [lisa@cucicucicoo.com](mailto:lisa@cucicucicoo.com)! Happy sewing!

## Materials:

- The fabric removed from one umbrella (or 90 cm [35"] of 120 cm- [47"-] wide lightweight fabric) - see [this post on how to prepare umbrella fabric](#)
- 50 cm (20") of thin rope, cording, ribbon, etc. for a drawstring
- One [plastic drawstring cord lock](#) (optional)

You will also need the usual sewing tools, including matching or contrasting thread, straight pins (preferably [silk pins](#) or other pins for thin fabrics which will not make holes in the fabric), and [microtex](#) or [universal or sharp 70/10](#) sewing machine needles (or needles appropriate for chosen fabric).

(Some of the above materials have affiliate links. This changes nothing for the person clicking on it, but it does help me fund the Cucicucicoo website and offer more free tutorials and patterns! Read more [here](#) for more information on why I use affiliate links.)

## Fabric:

This pattern has been developed with the idea of upcycling the fabric from old umbrellas to be **ecologically sustainable**, however it can be sewn with any type of fabric, either upcycled or new. The bag can be stuffed inside the drawstring pouch if it has been sewn from umbrella or another very lightweight fabric. If you use a quilting weight cotton, you will probably have to make the pouch larger to accommodate the extra bulk. This bag can also be sewn with heavier-weight fabric, however it will be too bulky to fit in a pouch. If you want to leave out the pouch, skip steps 6, 8-15, and 32.

## Sizing:

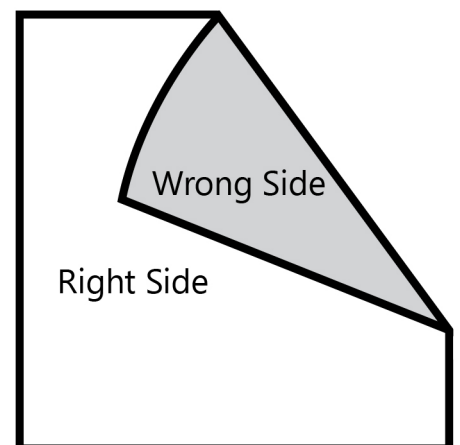
This pattern fits perfectly on a **large-sized rain umbrella** when laying out the pieces as instructed. It will not fit as is on just one **compact-sized rain umbrella**. If your umbrella is too small, I suggest you print the pattern pages resized to a smaller dimension so as to retain the same bag proportions. Alternatively you could cut the pieces out of two compact umbrellas. In this picture you can see the difference between a full-sized bag and one made with a pattern printed at 75% with the usual 1 cm (3/8") seam allowance.



If the umbrella fabric is just a little too small, you can simply cut the bag pieces slightly less long and/or wide. If you alter the bag width or handle height, make sure to make the same alterations on both the bag body and bag top pieces. If the pattern pieces fit on the fabric except for the very tips of the bottom outside corners, it's not a problem as those will be trimmed eventually anyway.

## Diagram key:

The right and wrong sides of the fabrics are represented throughout the instructions by the following the key to the right.





## seam allowance:

Seam allowance is **1 cm (3/8 inch)** throughout the instructions unless otherwise indicated. Seam allowance is **already included** in all pattern pieces.

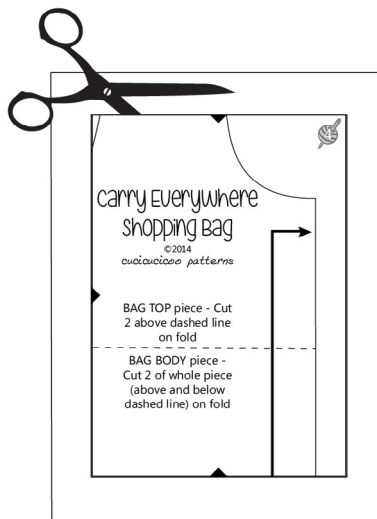
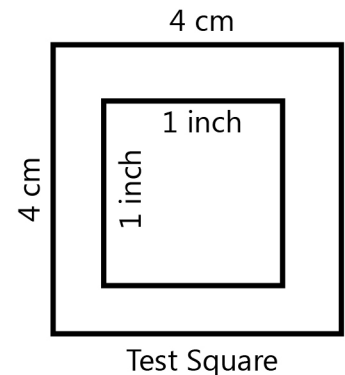
You might need to adjust your machine's tension to accommodate the lighter weight fabric, so test the tension on an umbrella fabric scrap before sewing the pattern pieces.

## Printing and Assembling Instructions:

Save paper by reading these instructions from your computer or tablet screen instead of printing them out.

Print the pattern pieces (pages 14-19) at **100% (no scaling)**!

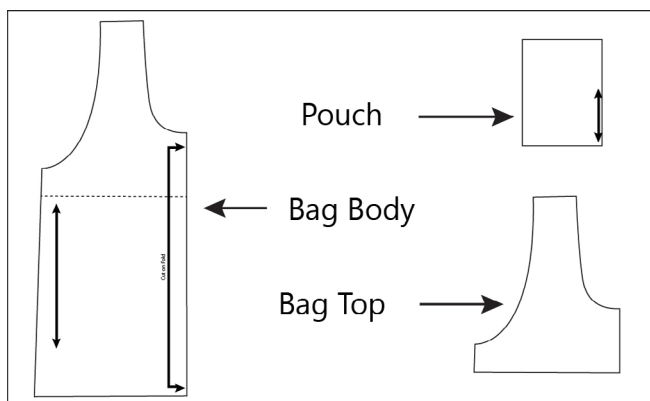
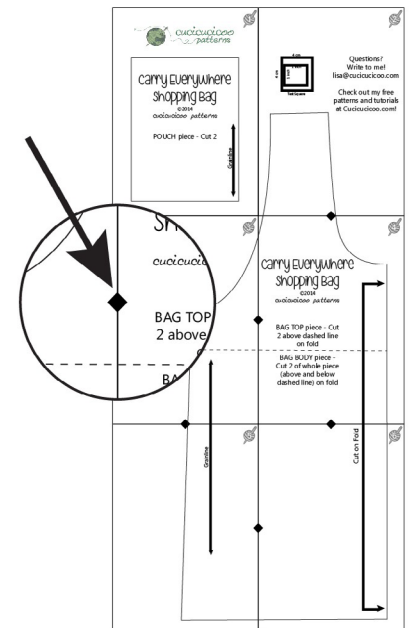
First print just the second pattern page to make sure that the test square measurements are correct. If you have printed it at the correct size, print the remaining pages (1, 3-6), then print pages 2, 3 and 4 once again.



Cut out the Pouch piece on page 1. Then cut the margins off of all the remaining pages. (See image on left.) If using fabric yardage, add 1.3 cm (1/2") to all sides of the pouch so as to fit the extra fabric bulk. If using heavier fabric, omit the pouch.

Tape together pages 2-6, matching up the triangles to create diamonds (see image on right), and cut out the shape of the pattern.

Repeat with the additional pages 2-4, but cut along the dashed line (going across pages 3-4) so as to have only the top portion of the piece.



In alternative, skip printing the second copy of pages 2, 3, and 4 and simply trace the top of the bag body piece down to the dashed line on another piece of paper.

In the end, you will have three pieces: Pouch, Bag Top and Bag Body.

(More info and tips on printing and assembling PDF patterns can be found [here](#).)



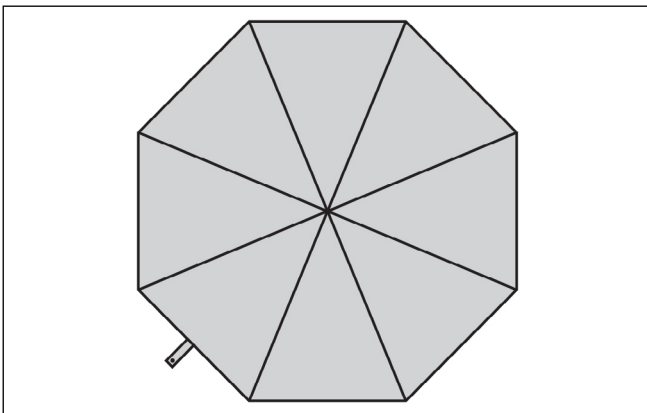
## Before starting:

Remove the fabric from your umbrella, wash it on a delicate cycle or by hand, and hang to dry. If you are using a different fabric, wash and dry it accordingly. Iron your fabric before cutting. See [this post](#) for information on removing and washing umbrella fabric.

## Ironing:

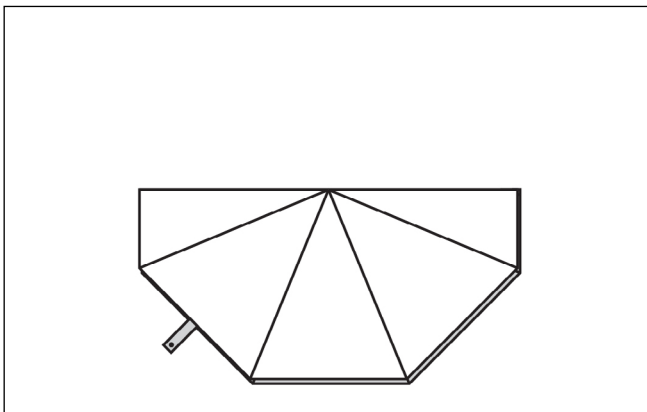
Throughout the instructions I mention ironing and pressing the fabric. A fabric such as that from an umbrella should normally be ironed at a low heat without steam, or not at all. You will get better results, however, when using high heat and steam along with an **ironing cloth to protect the fabric** (I like transparent ones like [these](#)). It hasn't been shown if ironing umbrella fabric releases fumes or not, so feel free not to iron it at all (in this case, just finger press the fabric) and, if you do, make sure you do so in a well-ventilated area.

## Cutting the Fabric

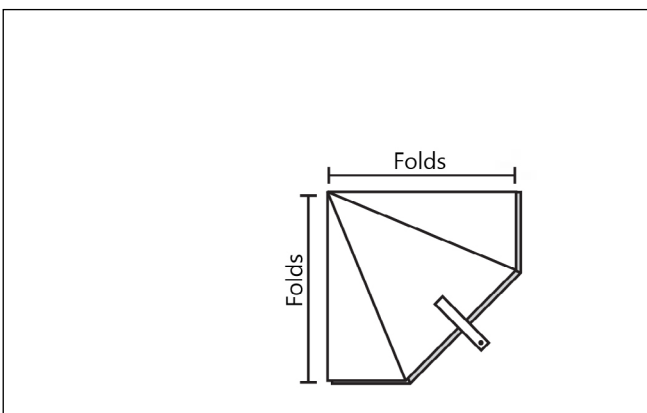


1. Open up the umbrella fabric, wrong side up. Rotate the fabric around until flat sides (not points) are at the 9:00 (left) and 3:00 (right) positions and the velcro or snap strap (underneath) at the 7:30 position. (If using fabric yardage, go directly to step 7.)

**! Note** The umbrella fabric will not lay perfectly flat before cutting into it.



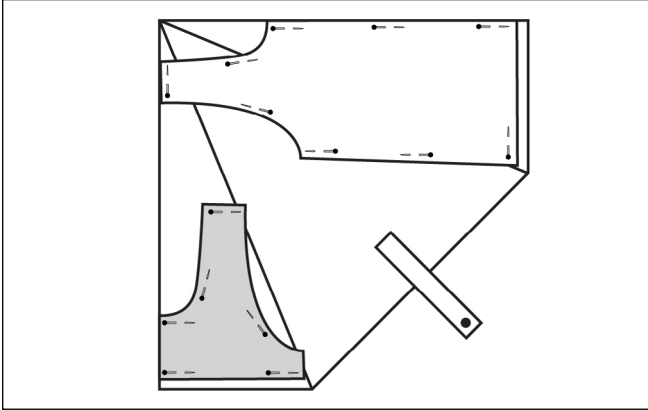
2. Fold the top half of the fabric over the bottom half, matching up the flat sides and points.



3. Fold the left half of the fabric over the right half, matching up the flat sides and points. The fabric is now quartered.

Make sure that all four fabric folds at both the top and side are flush. The inner folds can easily slip slightly out of place.

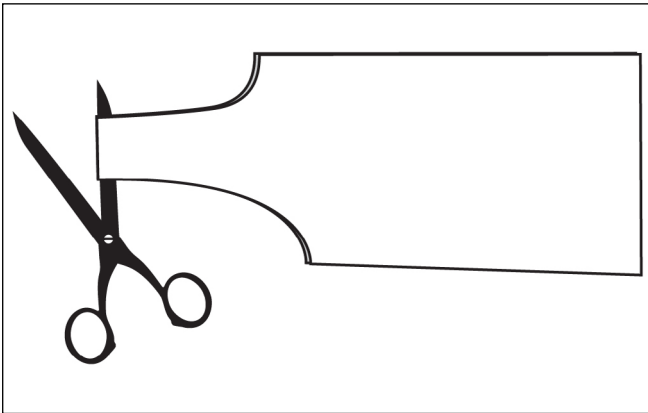
## Cutting the Fabric (cont.)



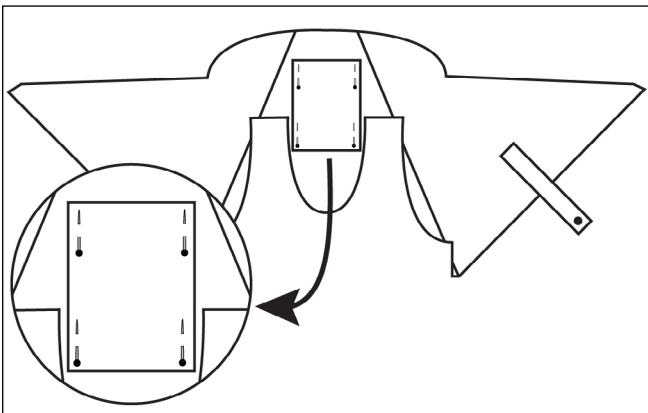
4. Pin the Bag Body pattern piece along the top and side folds as shown. If the pattern piece is slightly too big, position the bottom of the piece beyond the end of the fabric, not the handles.

Pin the Bag Top pattern piece wrong side up along the side fold as shown and pin in place. Cut both pieces out.

Remember that the 1 cm (3/8") seam allowance is already included in all pattern pieces.



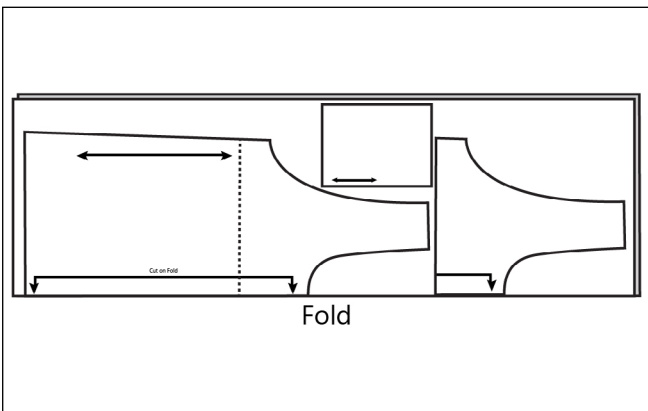
5. Cut through both folds at the top of the Bag Body piece's handle, as seen here.



6. Open up the remaining fabric. Place the Pouch pattern piece over two layers of fabric with the bottom parallel to the umbrella flat side as shown. Pin and cut out the pieces. Iron all the pieces so that the seams and folds are flat.

Save larger scraps of umbrella fabric to make a [waterproof patchwork picnic blanket](#).

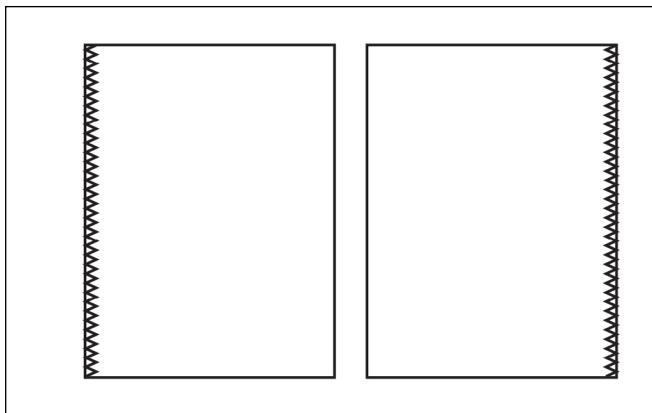
Proceed to step 9.



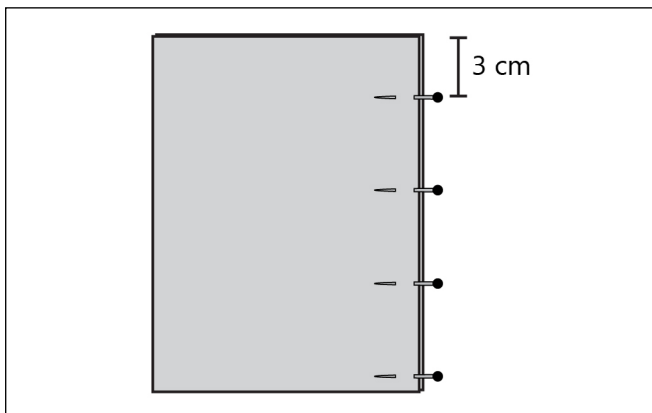
7. If using 120 cm (47 inch) wide fabric yardage, fold the fabric in half lengthwise, iron the fold crisply, then fold and iron again so that you will have four layers of fabric with the outer fold on the bottom. Arrange the pattern pieces as shown.

**! Fabric saver:** Cut out only the bag body and top pieces at first. Then unfold the remaining fabric once to have only two layers, and then cut out the pouch pieces.

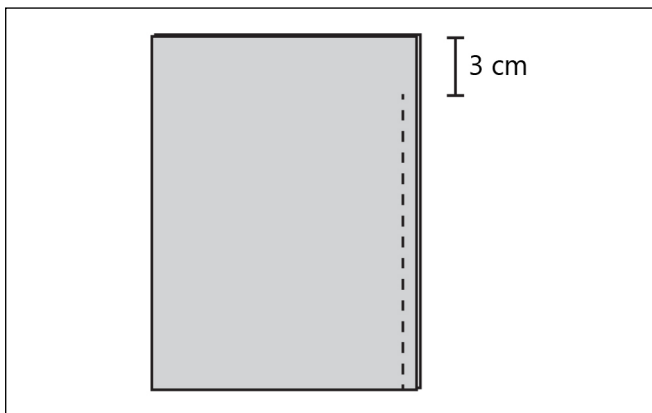
## sewing the pouch



8. If you are using a fabric that frays, overlock or zig zag the right long side of one pouch piece and the left long side of the other. This is not necessary for umbrella fabric.

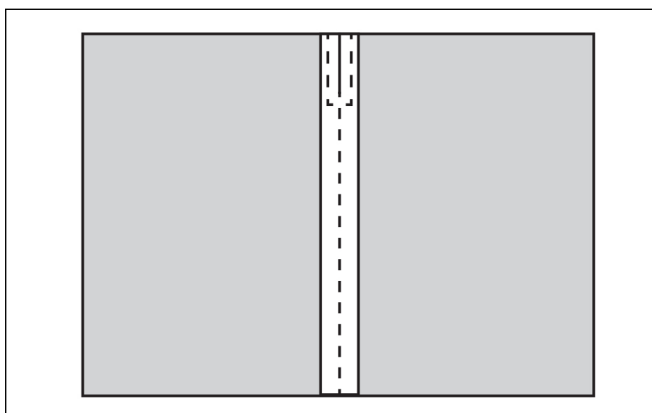


9. Place the pouch pieces on top of each other, right sides facing, and pin one long side (the one with the overlocked/zig-zagged sides, if you followed step 8). Mark 3 cm (1 1/4 inch) down from the top with a pin or pen marking.



10. Sew down the pinned side starting at the marking from step 9, backstitching at the beginning and end.

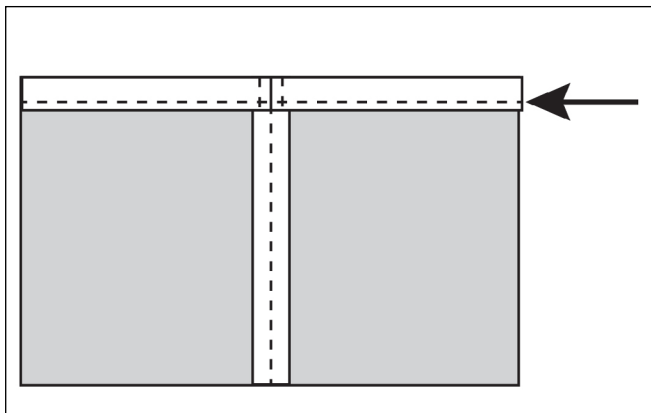
(Need help with backstitching? Read [this tutorial!](#))



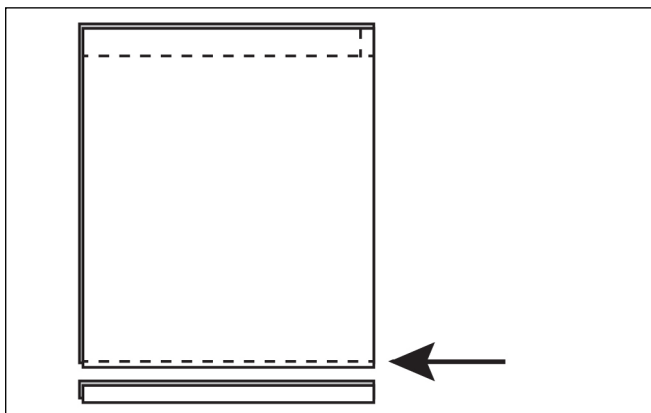
11. Iron open the seam from step 10, including the top unsewn portion and stitch a U shape around the unsewn portion with a 1/2 cm (1/4 inch) seam allowance.



## sewing the pouch (cont.)

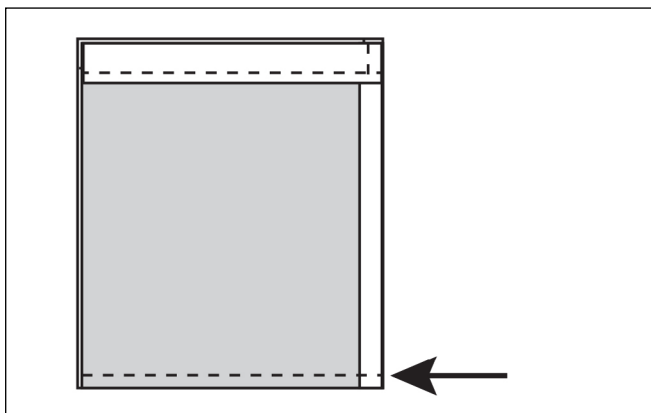


12. Press down the top of the fabric by  $\frac{1}{2}$  cm ( $\frac{1}{4}$  inch), then again by  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cm ( $\frac{5}{8}$  inch). Stitch across the entire top, through the center seam, with a seam allowance slightly wider than 1 cm ( $\frac{3}{8}$  inch). To do this evenly, I sew at the 1 cm ( $\frac{3}{8}$  inch) seam allowance marker with my needle moved to the left.



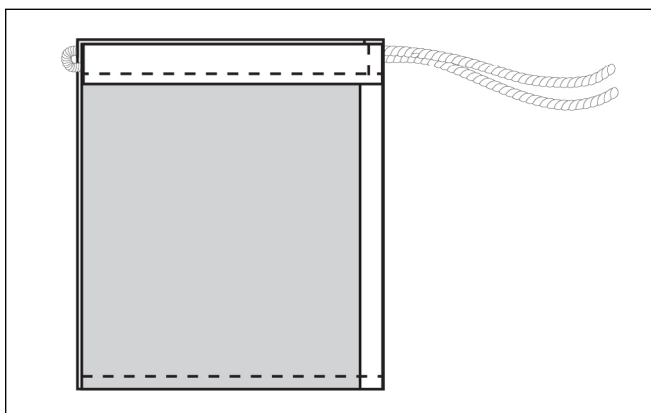
13. In steps 13-14 we will create a **French seam**, when the fabric edges are enclosed within the seam itself.

Fold the pouch at the center seam, wrong sides facing and press. Sew across the bottom, then trim the fabric close (about 2 mm) to the seam.



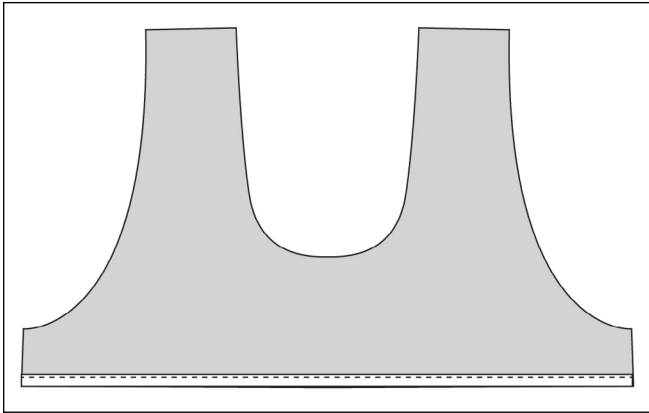
14. Flip the pouch open, right sides facing and center/side seam opened. Open the bottom corner of the center/side seam (indicated here with an arrow), flipping the top layer of the seam allowance to the other side, so that it lies flat.

Press and sew across the bottom again.



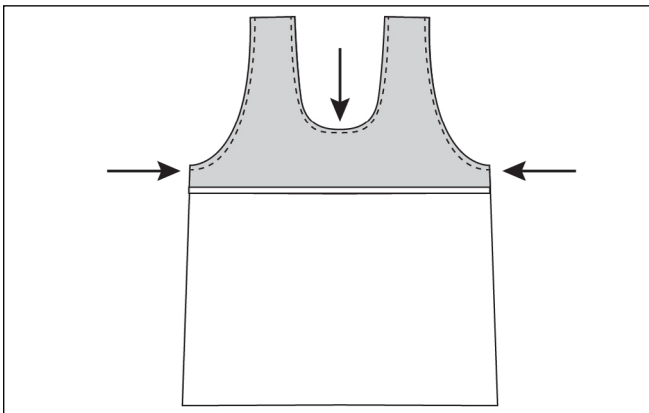
15. String the piece of cord through both sides of the drawstring casing with a safety pin, entering one sewn opening, passing through the unsewn openings to the other side, and exiting the other sewn opening. Position the center of the cord at the unsewn openings.

## sewing the Bag Top



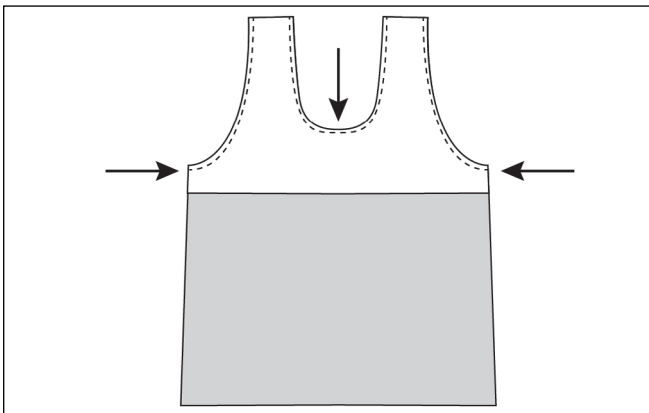
16. Lay one bag top piece flat, wrong side up. Press up the flat bottom edge by  $\frac{1}{2}$  cm ( $\frac{1}{4}$  inch), then again by 1 cm ( $\frac{3}{8}$  inch). Stitch the fold down with slightly less than a 1 cm ( $\frac{3}{8}$  inch) seam allowance. To do this evenly, I sew at the 1 cm ( $\frac{3}{8}$  inch) seam allowance marker with my needle moved to the right.

Repeat with the second bag top piece.



17. Position one bag top piece on top of one bag body piece, right sides facing, matching up the curved strap edges and flat sides. Stitch along the three curved edges as shown. Trim the fabric close to the seams.

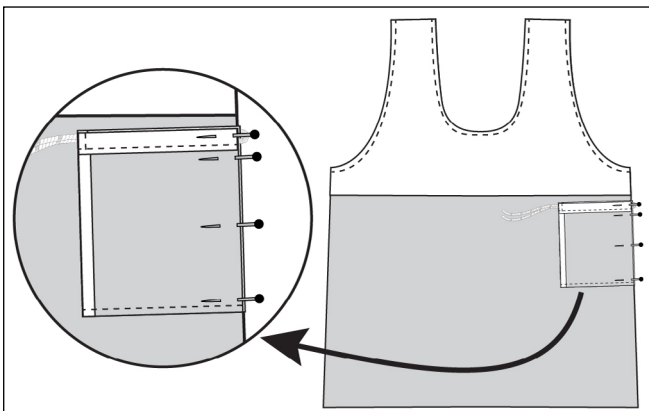
Repeat with the second bag top and body pieces.



18. Flip the pieces right side out through the openings in the tops of the straps. Press seams flat and topstitch close to the folded fabric edge.

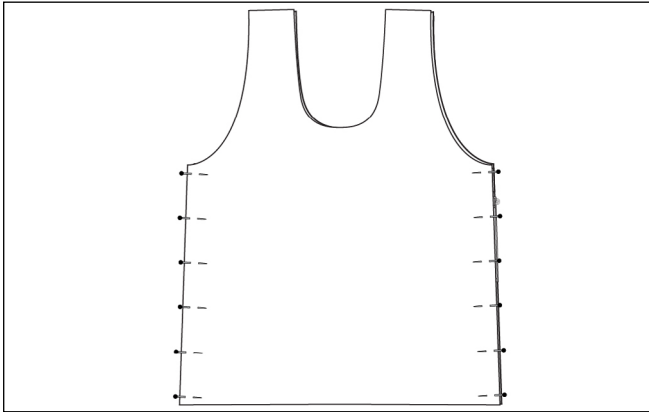
Repeat with the second bag top and body pieces.

**Tip** Want help with topstitching close to the fabric edge? Read [this topstitching tutorial](#)!

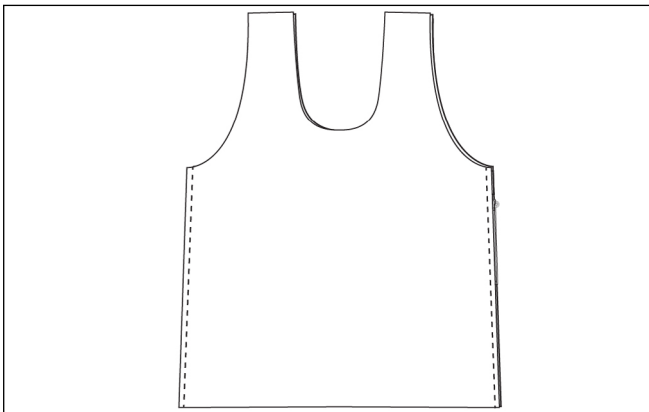


19. Place one bag body piece flat, wrong side up. Position the pouch (still turned inside-out) on the bag body piece with the unsewn edges of the pouch lining up with the right side edge of the bag body piece. The pouch should be positioned just below where the bag top piece ends. Pin the pouch in place.

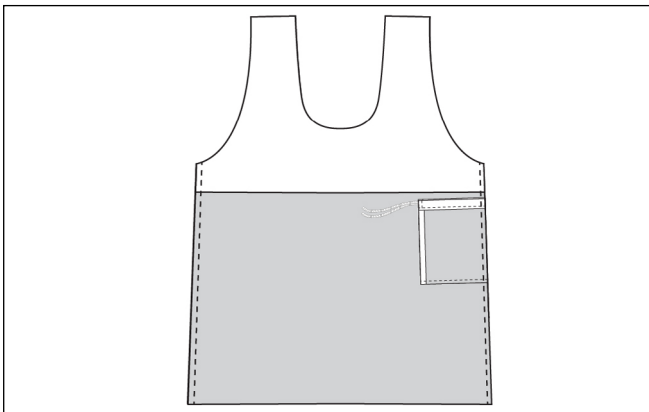
## sewing the Bag Body



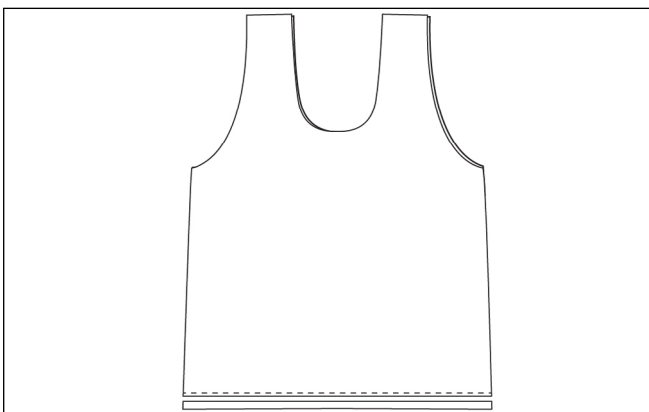
20. Place the second bag body piece on top of the other, right side up, covering the pouch. Line up the two side edges, making sure that the tops of the sides line up, and pin the right side in place. Then line up and pin the other side, again starting from the top of the side.



21. More French seams! Stitch both sides, then trim the fabric close to the seams.



22. Flip the bag wrong side out, press the side seams flat and stitch the sides. When ironing the side with the pouch, I find it easier to first press the seam flat with the pouch sticking out, and then fold it over (as seen here) and press again with it flattened down.

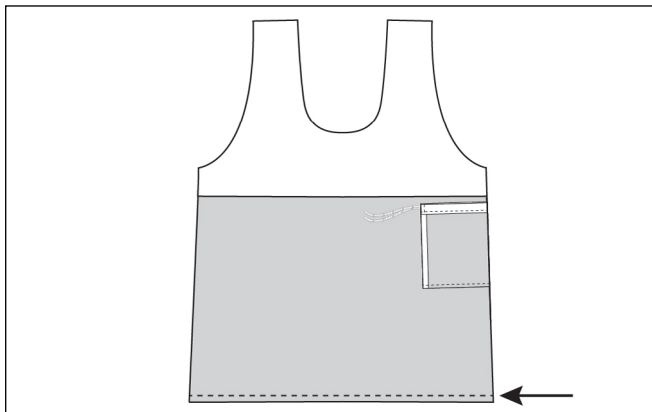


23. Flip the bag right side out again and pin the bag bottom edges together. Stitch the bottom, then trim the fabric close to the seams.

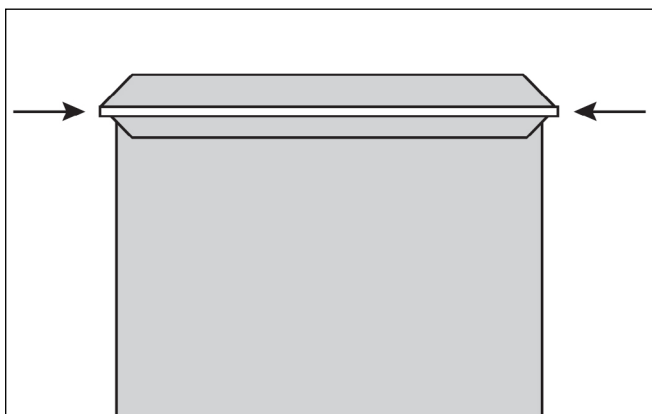
Don't worry if either of the bottom corners aren't a perfect corner. Just imagine where the edge of the fabric would continue to the corner and stitch as if the bottom were perfectly flat.



## sewing the Bag Body (cont.)

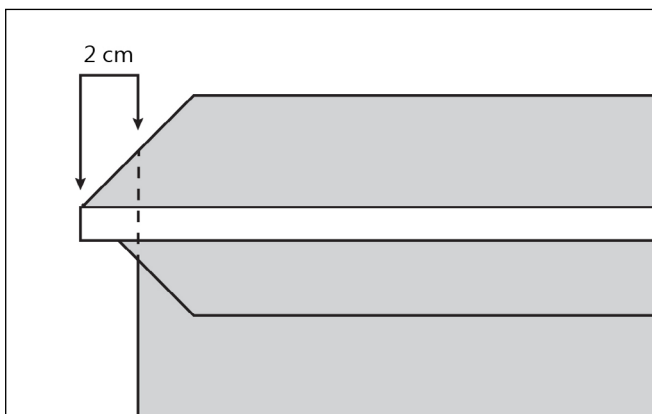


24. Flip the bag wrong side out again, press the bottom seam flat and stitch the bottom.

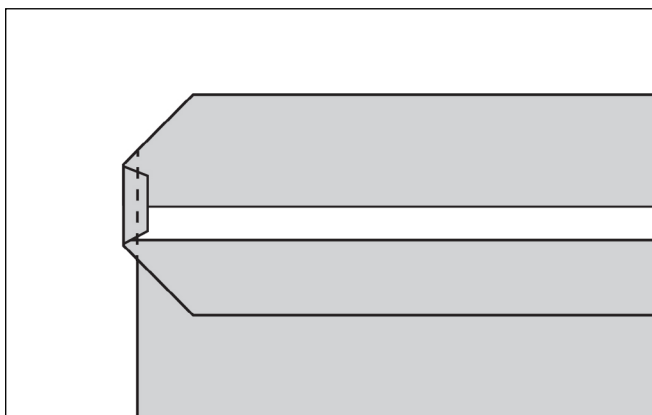


25. **Boxed corners:** Stick your finger inside one bottom corner (wrong side out), opening it up. Flatten the corner, matching up the seams so that the side seam lines up below the bottom seam. Press flat. See [this tutorial](#) on boxed corners.

**! Tip** An easy way to line up the seams is to flatten each seam to a different side and hold the corner up to a light source, making the edges of each visible through the fabric.



26. Measure 2 cm (3/4 inch) in from the bottom seam, marking a straight line across with a permanent marker. Stitch on top of this line.

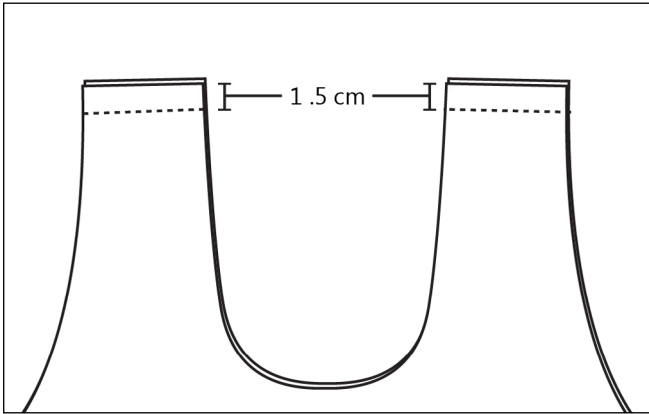


27. Optional step: Fold the corner in twice by about 1/2 cm (1/4 inch). Hold in place with your finger and thumb, turn it over and sew directly over the stitching from step 26, which will keep the corner tacked down.

You can also just leave the sewn corner sticking out or, if using umbrella or another non-fraying fabric, just trim it.

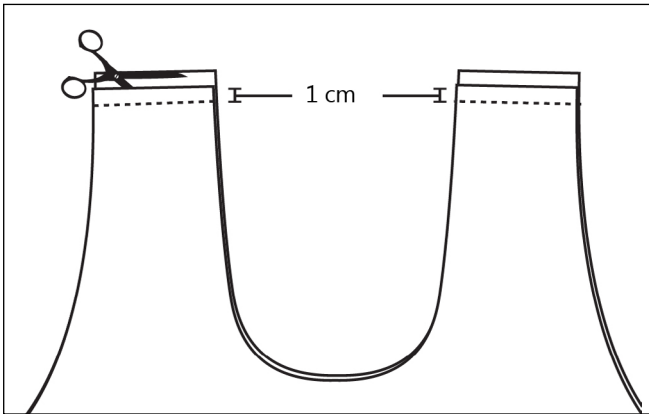
Repeat steps 25-27 with the second corner.

## sewing the Handles and Finishing the Bag



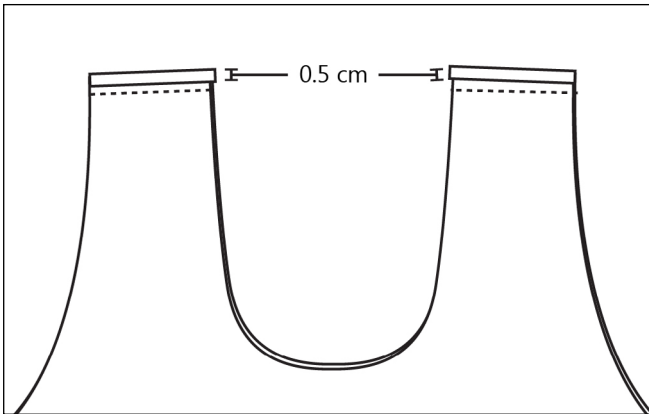
28. **Felled seams.** With the bag inside out, line up the tops of the handles and pin. Stitch with a 1 ½ cm (5/8 inch) seam allowance.

**! NOTE** that the bag must be inside out in steps 28-31, even if the diagrams show the color of the right side of the fabric. This is because the top of the bag is double-sided and therefore has the right side of the fabric both inside and out.

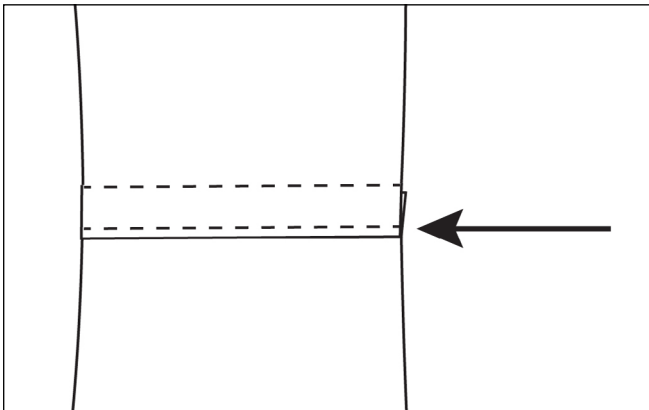


29. Trim the excess fabric from just one bag body piece (the shorter one, if they're not perfectly even) 1 cm (3/8 inch) from each new handle seam.

Seeing as each handle top has four layers, you will be trimming **ONLY TWO** layers from each handle, leaving the other two long.

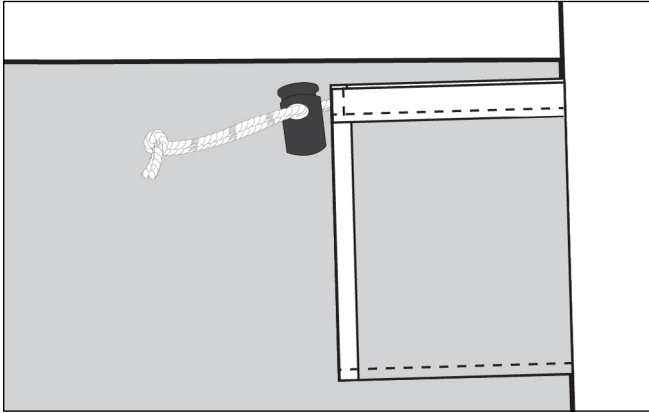


30. Press the longer excess fabric in by ½ cm (1/4 inch), covering the edge of the trimmed fabric.



31. Press open the handle seams, pressing the longer excess fabric across to the other side of the seam. Stitch in place close to the edge of the fold from step 30.

## sewing the Handles and Finishing the Bag (cont.)



32. Insert the drawstring cord ends into the cord lock, if you're using one. Tie a knot in the pouch drawstring and trim the edges. If using a synthetic cord, pass the cut ends over a flame to slightly melt the ends to prevent unravelling.

## And you're done!

When you're not using the bag, turn it inside out and stuff it inside the pouch!

Did you enjoy this pattern? Then take a look at the instant download **PDF sewing patterns** available in my [shop](#) and the **free tutorials** on my website, [Cucicucicoo.com](http://Cucicucicoo.com)!

And don't forget to take some pictures of your bags and share them on the [Cucicucicoo Creations Flickr group](#)! You can also share them on other social media with the hashtag **#carryeverywhereshoppingbag** so that your work will inspire other crafters and sewers. I'm really looking forward to seeing your creations!







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# carry Everywhere Shopping Bag

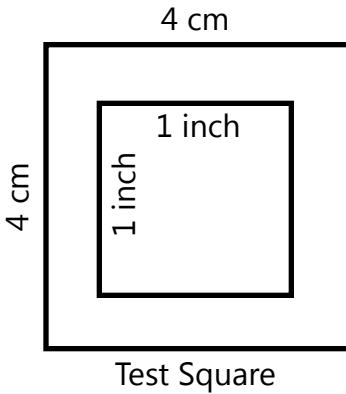
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POUCH piece - Cut 2

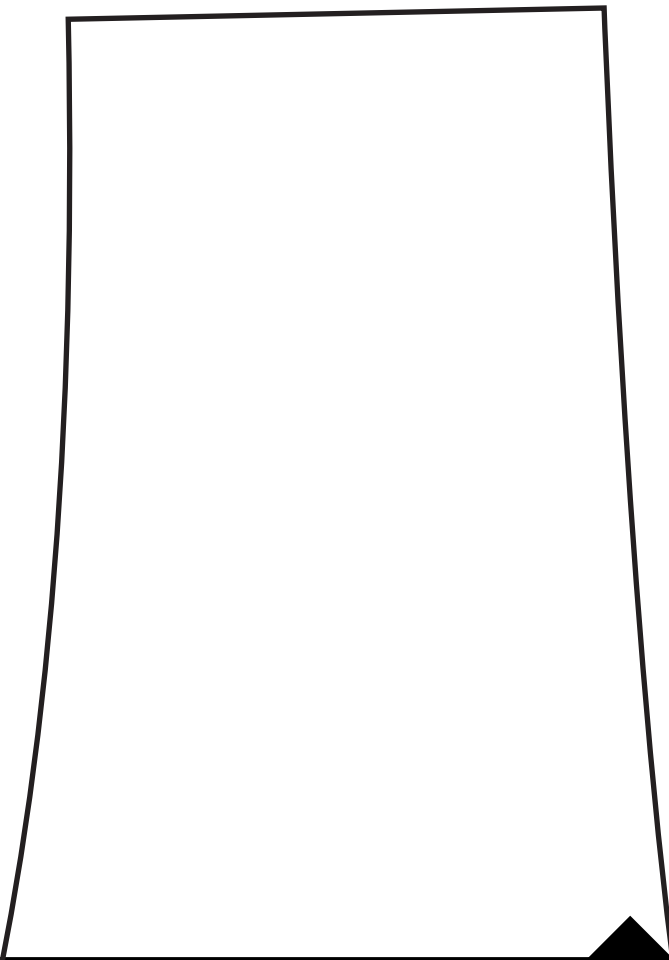
(1 cm [3/8"] seam  
allowance included)

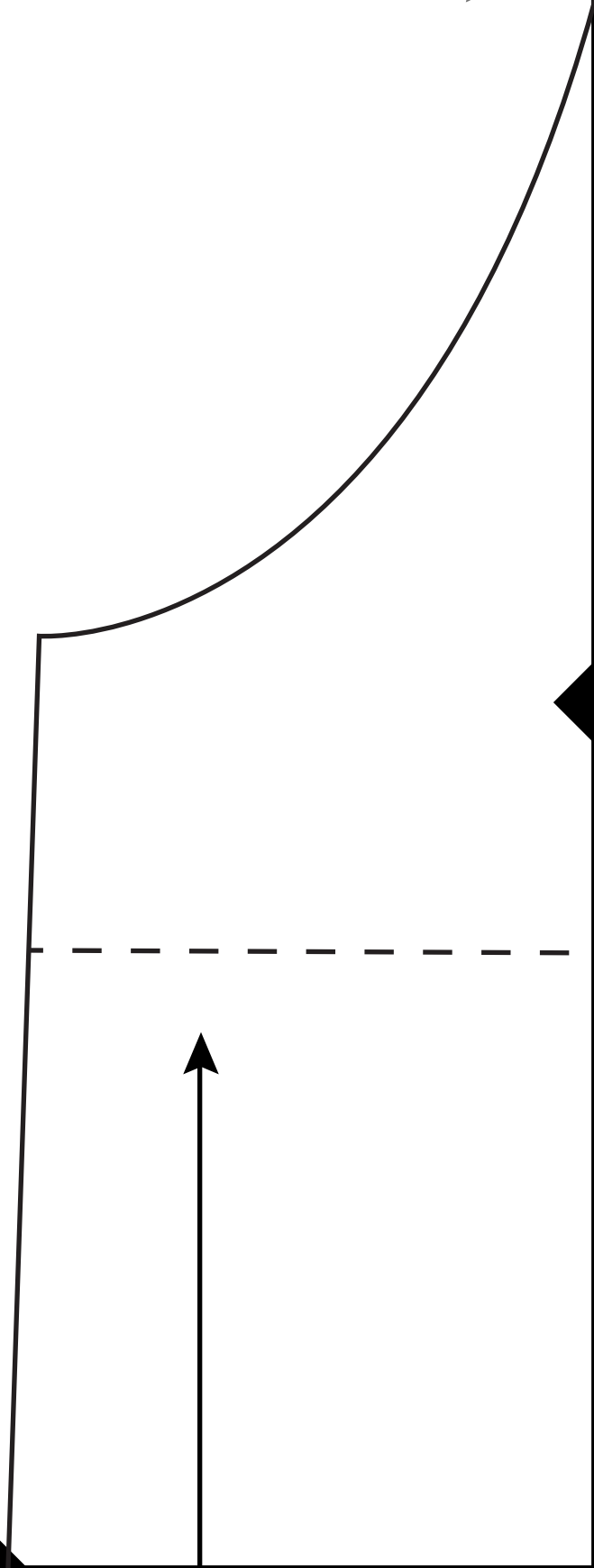




Questions?  
Write to me!  
[lisa@cucicucicoo.com](mailto:lisa@cucicucicoo.com)

Check out my free patterns  
and tutorials at  
[Cucicucicoo.com](http://Cucicucicoo.com)!









# carry Everywhere Shopping Bag

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BAG TOP piece - Cut 2  
above the dashed line on  
the fold of the fabric

BAG BODY piece - Cut 2 of  
the whole piece (ignoring  
the dashed line) on the fold  
of the fabric

(1 cm [3/8"] seam  
allowance included)



Grainline





Cut on Fold

