

Bag-Making Basics

Extra notes about supplies to bring:

- **Fabric:** A half-yard (or 2 fat quarters) of quilting or shirting cotton plus a coordinating quarter-yard or fat quarter of quilting or shirting cotton. The half-yard is for the upper/main part of the exterior of your bag, and the quarter yard is for the base of the exterior and some construction details. The upper and the base can be the same or different, and some people like to use solid-color fabric for the base.
 - Of course other weights and kinds of fabric work for bags, but for the purpose of this class, **please bring quilting-, shirting-, or lighter-weight cotton so we can all use similar construction materials and methods.**
 - **Optional:** If you want to piece the upper part of the exterior, make a flat rectangle measuring at least 14" by 28" (or two 14" squares). If you want to piece the base, make a flat rectangle at least 14" x 14". Abstract improv piecing, stripes, and charm-square patchwork will all work great, and traditional patchwork can work, too, if you are flexible about where the center of the pattern ends up on your bag. You will cut your pieces to size. Bring solid (un-pieced) leftovers for construction. Don't quilt your pieced fabric yet.
 - **Suggestion:** avoid bringing your favorite, one-of-a-kind fabric that you've been saving for something special. You will likely want to tweak the construction or size before you make your perfect bag with your favorite fabric.
- **Thread** for construction and quilting: The construction thread can match or coordinate with your exterior fabrics, and the thread for quilting can match or coordinate or contrast with the exterior as you like. You can use the same thread for construction and quilting if you like. The thread can be cotton or poly-cotton or, for quilting, rayon—it doesn't need to be special.
- **Your machine**, if you're bringing your own: For construction, you need only a straight stitch on your sewing machine. Make sure your needle is new—size 80/12 will be sufficient. A Sharp or Microtex needle may give you the best results, but a Universal needle can work too. A zipper foot can help but probably won't be necessary. If you like, you can use decorative stitches from your machine for quilting.