

Comfort Pillow and Tote Bag Pattern

The pattern for this comfort cushion and tote bag was originally designed by members of the Shenandoah Valley Quilters Guild as a community service project. Cushions such as these are used by those who have had breast or underarm surgery. The cushion is placed between the arm and the torso to lessen direct pressure on the wound area. Machine wash and dry all fabric before sewing. Remove all selvages. Use $\frac{1}{2}$ " seams, unless otherwise indicated. Please read all of the instructions before constructing the cushion or bag.

Cushion:

Cut 1 piece cotton fabric, $8\frac{1}{2}$ " x $11\frac{1}{2}$ "

Cut 1 piece cotton flannel, $8\frac{1}{2}$ " x $11\frac{1}{2}$ "

Cut 2 pieces thin batting or fleece, $8\frac{1}{2}$ " x $11\frac{1}{2}$ "

Stack the pieces in the following order:

 Batting or fleece

 Flannel, right side UP

 Fabric, right side DOWN

Pin securely.

Leaving a 3" opening for turning, sew around the pieces using a scant $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam allowance. Lengthen your stitch to accommodate the bulk of the layers. Use a walking foot or even-feed system to help prevent layers from shifting.

Clip the corners and turn the cushion right side out. Stuff lightly with polyester filling (you want the cushion to be full, but not hard).

CARRYING BAG:

Cut 1 piece main fabric, $2\frac{1}{2}$ " wide from selvedge to selvedge, for the handle.

Cut 2 pieces main fabric, $10\frac{1}{2}$ " x $13\frac{1}{2}$ "

Cut 2 pieces lining, $10\frac{1}{2}$ " x $13\frac{1}{2}$ "

Make handle: Fold $2\frac{1}{2}$ " strip of fabric right sides together to make a long strip. Sew ends together. Press seam open. You should have a long loop of fabric.

Fold both edges in, wrong sides together, to meet in the center of the strip. Press.

Turn loop right side out and flatten it, bringing the folded-in sides together. You should have a strip $1\frac{1}{4}$ " wide by approximately 18-20" long. Press.

Topstitch $\frac{1}{8}$ " from each edge and one or two times down the center of the strip (the more stitching, the firmer the handle).

Place main fabric rectangles together and sew around three sides, leaving one short side open for the top of the bag. Repeat with lining fabric.

Fold top edges of each bag under about $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Insert handle ends at each side seam between the main fabric and the lining.

Topstitch $\frac{1}{8}$ " from edge around top of bag. Backstitch over each handle end to secure. Stitch around the bag a second time $\frac{1}{2}$ " from edge, being sure to backstitch over the handle again.