

Walking Frame Tea Towel Bag

Materials required:

2 cotton tea towels – plain cotton (as in not towelling, no pattern within the fabric, - pattern printed on the tea towel is fine).

30cm (12 inches) of Velcro / hook and loop tape (you could use more)

Sewing machine

Cotton or polycotton thread

Ruler

Scissors

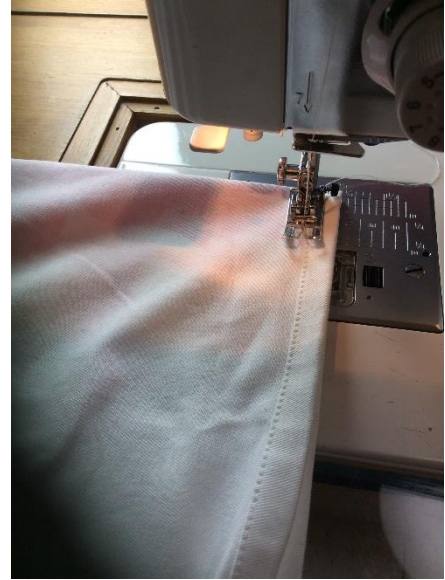
Rotary cutter

Stiff cardboard, or plastic canvas



These came as part of a pack of three – and were bought at a cost of £2 – in a sale. The best sort of tea towels are those you may buy as a souvenirs from places of interest, or from local emporia. They can also be found in well-known supermarket chains.

1. Take one tea towel, fold in half right sides together – bringing the short edges up to meet. Sew down either side, to create a basic bag. Sew down the side of the existing seam, rather than sewing on the seam; sewing on the seam will make it more difficult for yourself, and will make the machine work much harder, as it will have to work through at least 4 layers of fabric.



2. Cut a piece of Velcro / hook and loop tape, about 5cm long (2 inches) – position them in the middle of the open section, - on the inside of the finished bag (this will be on the outside currently) - one piece on either side. Pin them in place, and then sew them on. You can either sew them on the turned over edge (this will make it a bit more difficult to sew), or sew them just under the turned edge.

3. With the bag still the wrong way out, bring the seams you have sewn together in the middle – as per the photo:



This will create a triangle at the bottom of the bag. Flatten this formed triangle at either end, ready for the next step. You do not need to press or iron this triangle, just flattening it with your hand will suffice.

4. From the tip of the triangle, measure 2.5 inches along the seam, and mark the position. Draw a line across at right angles to the seam line. Do this for both ends of the bottom of the bag, and then sew along the line you have drawn.



5. Measure the line that you have sewn, and make a note of it. Then measure the distance between the two lines you have sewn (along the seam line is best), and make a note of it. You need to cut a piece of card this size. In my example, the measurements are 5 ½ inches by 12 inches. Put this piece of cardboard to one side – you will need it later. You can now turn the bag the right way out.
6. Using the second tea towel, position it so that you are cutting across the width of the tea towel. Cut 2 pieces across the width, each piece being 3 inches wide.



7. Fold the strips in half along the long edge, right sides together. Sew down the long edge, on both strips – $\frac{1}{4}$ inch seam allowance is enough for this. Turn the strips inside out – so that the right sides are outside.



8. Manipulate the strips so that the seam is in the middle, and press the strips, to keep the seam in the middle of the strip.

9. Fold the strips in half, and cut across at the halfway point. Turn in the cut edge, and press the turning. Topstitch all the way around the edge of each of the strips – this will secure the edge that you turned in.



10. Pin Velcro to the ends that you turned in – and sew all the way around to secure it to the handles. The order for doing this: keep the strips that you have cut in half together. Put the fluffy piece of the Velcro on the top of the strip (the side without the seam), and on the other strip put the rougher piece of Velcro on the bottom of the strip (the side with the seam).

11. Putting the handles together with the Velcro you have just attached, pin the handles to the opening of the bag, the ends of the handles being attached to the opposite side of the bag. Try to place the handles evenly, either side of the Velcro closing. My handles are placed 2 inches away from the closure, and about 4 inches from the side seam. NB – pay close attention to which way you put the handles – the opposite sides need to have a fluffy and rough Velcro piece each, and the same sides also need



to have a fluffy and rough Velcro piece each – see the photos below. Note how the handles do not look the same both sides – that the piece on top is not on the same side for both handles. This is really important for the multi-use aspect of this bag, as it allows the handles to have two configurations.



To give strength to the handles, I stitched a square shape, and then also stitched a diagonal cross.

12. Refer back to the measurements you took in step 5. In my sample, the seam is $5 \frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the distance is 12 inches. You need a rectangle that is the distance x twice the seam, and then add $\frac{1}{2}$ inch for the seam allowance. For my sample: 12 inches x twice $5 \frac{1}{2}$ inches – and then add seam allowance, so $12 \frac{1}{2}$ inches by $11 \frac{1}{2}$ inches. Cut a rectangle from the second tea towel the size that you have calculated.
13. Fold the rectangle in half, right sides together so that you have a rectangle that is $5 \frac{3}{4}$ inches by $12 \frac{1}{2}$ inches. Sew down one short side and down one long side, and then turn this sleeve the right way out.
14. Using the measurements and cardboard from step 5, put the cardboard inside the sleeve. Stitch the sleeve closed, using a whip-stitch (you could use the sewing machine to close the opening, - be careful not to sew the cardboard as well). Put this sleeve in the bottom of your bag.



Your finished bag is now ready to use! I hope that you find it useful!

