

HOW TO MAKE A FOSTER KIDS DUFFEL BAG

Materials needed:

1 yard of 42" wide fabric (you want a tight weave cotton or light-weight denim in a print that kids would like.)

1/2 yard of 42" wide coordinating fabric for the ends (see instructions; you can use fabric scraps for this)

2 yards of drawstring (shoe laces or ribbon are possibilities for this)

Cutting Instructions:

Using the 1/2 yard of fabric, cut a rectangle that is 36" long by 6" wide. This is the top piece of the bag. *Note— you can eliminate this step by just turning the top of the bag down 6". I made my bag this way because the print on my fabric would have been cut off if I had turned it under.

Also out of this piece, cut one circle that is 10 3/4" diameter for the bottom of the bag. I used a Correlle dinner plate as my template.

Using the 1 yard of fabric, fold the fabric in half lengthwise. Measure 18" from the fold and cut lengthwise. This makes a 36" tube for the body of the bag.

On the selvage side of that piece of fabric, cut a piece through both layers that is the length of the fabric by 3" wide for the carry strap. Also cut another piece from the 1/2 yard of fabric that is this same size. That will give you a little heavier weight for the strap. I wanted it to be sturdier.

Sewing instructions:

Top drawstring end— (the piece that is cut 36" x 6") Fold fabric longwise and press in half. Open up the fold and measure down 9" from each end and mark. Sew and open a buttonhole at these two marks that is big enough to put your drawstring through (I cut a couple of small scraps of fabric and placed it underneath the buttonhole to make it thicker and stabilize the fabric). *Note- I am going to try putting two buttonholes about an inch apart on each side of the next bag I make, and knot the drawstring over the bag between these two buttonholes. That way there will be no chance of the drawstring getting lost inside the bag.

Finish the other long side by either serging or turning under and sewing. With right sides together, sew the long side with the buttonholes on to the body of the bag. Fold the piece back in half and sew the serged (or turned under) side to the bag.

Carry Strap— Using the 3 long pieces that are 3" wide, lay the two main pieces right sides together. Lay these



overtop of the third piece. Pin them so that they don't move. Sew or serge down the long sides to form a tube. Turn tube right side out and press flat. Top stitch along both side to reinforce your seams.

Body of the bag- Fold right sides together. Pin the strap into the seam that you will sew. I placed the lower side of the strap 1" from the bottom of the bag and 6" down from the top. Pin the two sides of the bag together, being careful to catch the ends of the straps into the seam. Sew or serge the length of the bag. Sew again over the part of the seam where the strap is to reinforce. I went over it a couple of times to make sure.

Bottom- Pin the circle to the bottom end of the bag. To get it in fairly even, I folded the circle in half and marked it, then in half again and marked at that point. I did the same with the bag. My bag was slightly wider than my circle, so there are a few little tucks in the bag. Sew or serge around the circle, putting the little tucks in if necessary. If you sewed this, you may want to zigzag over the edges to finish them.

Finishing the bag- Turn right side out. Press if necessary. Cut two drawstrings 36" long. Using a bodkin or a safety pin, insert drawstring into the bag top through one of the buttonholes. Pull the whole way around and bring out the same buttonhole. Tie the ends of the drawstring together with a knot. Singe ends of drawstring with a lighter to keep it from fraying if necessary. Repeat with the other drawstring, using the buttonhole on the other side of the bag. Pull each of the drawstrings to cinch the bag shut.