

RECYCLE A SHIRT INTO A TOTE BAG



Materials:

- Shirt
- cotton fabric (lining)
- Sewing thread
- Scissors or fabric cutter
- Pins
- Ruler
- Iron
- Needle
- Sewing machine

1 Cutting the pieces

For this tutorial I used a simple cotton fabric for the inside lining because the fabric of the shirt was too thin.

Draw a rectangle of 40 cm high x 34 cm wide on the front of the shirt and cut adding 2cm on each side. Cut the same size rectangle from the lining fabric. Cut 2 strips of 7cm wide by 50cm long either from the back or from the sleeves of the shirt. Cut two more of the lining fabric (this last ones can be a few mm thinner).



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2 Front & Pocket

Sew up the strip for the front buttons of the shirt to fix them together.

The easiest is to do it on top of the original stitch.



I cut out the front pocket and re sewed it to cover a stain at the front of the bag.

Leave a few cm of extra fabric to fold
Use the iron to fix the folding towards the back.

Ideally you can do a zig-zag stitch all around the edge (except for the top part) in order to avoid fraying with use and washings.

Pin it where you want it to be and sew it following the original stitch.

Be sure not to sew the pocket close.



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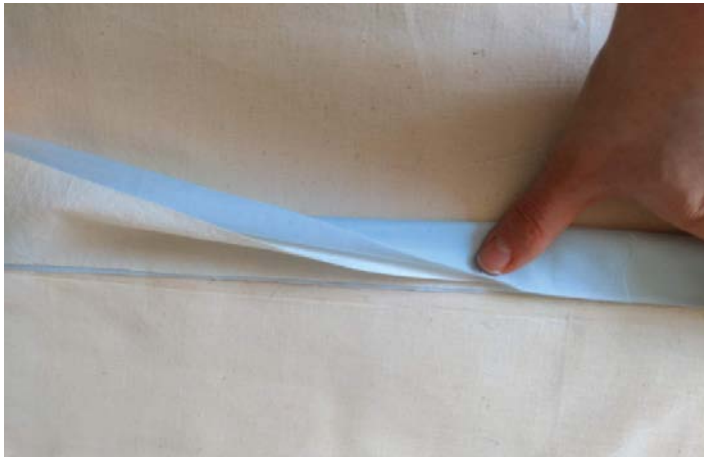
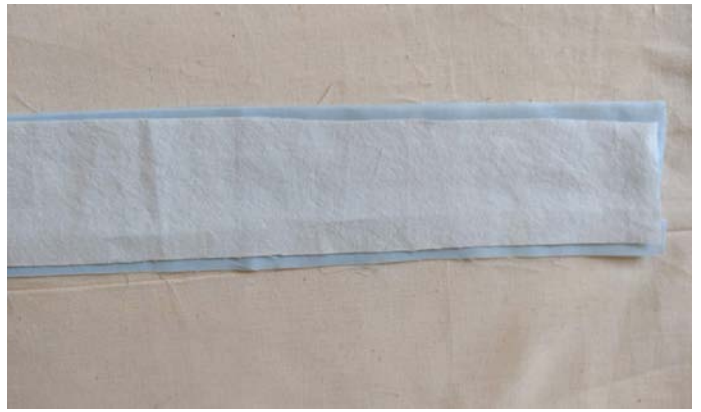
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3 Making the handles

Pair the strips for the handles, shirt fabric with lining fabric.



Fold the handles in half lengthwise and press.



Open up the handle and press both sides folding them inwards.



Fold again in half and press.



Top stitch down both sides of the handle piece right at the edge to make it sturdy and to give it a nice finished edge.

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4 Assembling the bag

1/ Attaching the Handles :

- Pin the handles at the front/top side of each rectangle of the shirt, make sure that they are symmetrical and of the same length.
- Place together the shirt and lining rectangles facing each other (the handle must remain inside between both layers).
- Sew the two pieces together at the side where the handles have been pinned.



As a result, you should get two rectangular pieces (as shown in the picture)



2/ Assembling :

Place the two resulting rectangle pieces facing each other right side to right side, always matching the seams. Sew around the perimeter, leaving an open area at the bottom of the lining big enough to reverse the bag through it (in the photo I placed a pair of scissors to show this point)



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Cut the corners (before reaching the seam), so they do not bristled when reversing.



Press the seams open

Invert the bag through the opening we left on the lining and then iron it well.



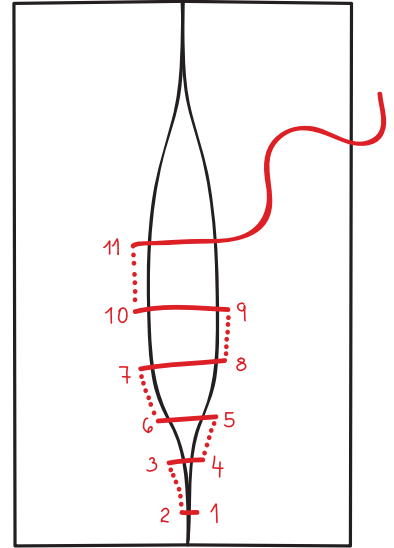
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5 Finishing Touches



Close the opening we left for reversing the bag using an invisible stitch. To go faster, you can also do it with the sewing machine just using a regular stitch very close to the edge as this is in the inside and it won't be seen.



Top-stitch around the top edge of the bag. This will help secure the handles' attachment and give the bag a finished look.

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And your bag is finished!



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