Two-Tone Tote instructions by Joanne Banko

Originally created for the Sew-A-Tote Charity Event with finished totes distributed to Providence House in Cleveland Ohio.

Materials and Supplies:

Quilt weight cotton fabric for tote:

- Two pieces measuring 16-inches wide X 20-inches long for **outside** of bag. Use whatever fabric you want to feature as the main fabric.
- Two pieces measuring 16-inches wide X 20-inches long for **inside** of bag. Essentially, this is your lining side of the bag. However, **step 7** of the instructions tells you how this tote could be made to be reversible.
- Two pieces measuring 3-inches wide X 22-inches long for **straps**.
- Strip of medium weight fusible interfacing measuring 1 1/8-inch wide X 22-inches long for stabilizing straps.
- Optional tab closure for top of tote– One piece measuring 3-inches wide X 5-inches long, plus a matching piece of fusible interfacing and one button measuring approximately 1-inch in diameter.
- Notions: Thread to match or blend with fabric, pins, 6" ruler, and a tool for turning straps right side out.

Note: This fully lined tote makes use of ordinary quilt weight cotton fabric and is designed to be easy to care for when finished. Pre-wash and iron your fabric before cutting pieces. If your fabric has a one-way print be sure to cut with the print going <u>lengthwise</u> from top to bottom along the 20-inch measurement. Take care when sewing so your print "reads" from top to bottom. Fabrics can be the same inside and outside, or coordinates. You may opt for a solid color for the inside. This is the perfect opportunity to choose pretty prints and novelty fabrics.

Steps to create tote:

1. Fold straps lengthwise with right sides facing and sew using a ¼-inch seam allowance. Next, fuse interfacing to wrong side of each strap, placing interfacing so it is centered between the seam and the foldline. **Note**: I like to apply the interfacing after the seam is sewn to make sure it's not included in the seam allowance. Having the seam stitched makes it easy to center the interfacing on the strip. Turn straps right side out and press flat, with seam positioned along one edge. Topstitch ¼-inch from each long edge of strap. **Tip:** You can get an accurate ¼-inch seam allowance on most machines by setting your needle position at 5.5 and running the edge of the fabric along the edge of the presser foot.

Note: Sew remaining tote seams with a ½-inch seam allowance.

2. To make optional tab for buttonhole closure, begin by fusing interfacing to wrong side of strip. Next, fold strip in half lengthwise and sew the two short sides. Trim corners near fold to eliminate bulk. Turn tab right side out, press, and topstitch as you did for straps. **Note**: If desired, you can use the cut-out corner pieces from step #7. Fuse interfacing to wrong side of piece, then fold in half with right sides together, having seam at the upper edge. Sew side seams, trim corners, turn right side out, press, and topstitch.

3. Make buttonhole in center of your tab.

4. Select outside tote pieces and mark center point of each top edge. To position straps on each outside piece, line up center of a 6-inch seam gauge with center marking, then place a strap at each end of the seam gauge. Essentially, you are positioning each strap 3-inches out from the center point at the top of the tote. Pin straps in place and machine baste to hold temporarily in place if desired.

5. Select inside pieces. It's time to sew <u>top edges</u> of inside <u>and</u> outside tote pieces together. Place pieces right sides together with raw edges matching and straps sandwiched in between. If adding optional tab, place it at the center of one piece, with raw edges matching. Sew top seam on each piece, catching straps and optional tab in the process.

6. Open out each piece so you have two long rectangles. <u>Press</u> top seam <u>toward outside piece</u>. It's time to sew the side seams. Layer pieces with right sides together, having <u>matching fabrics</u> (outside to outside and inside to inside), facing one another. Take care to make sure seams match where they meet, then sew each long side seam.

7. It's time to sew the bottom seam and box the corners. Begin by cutting away a 2 ½-inch square from each of the four <u>bottom corners</u>. Let's stitch the bottom seam of the <u>outside</u> fabric first. Place raw edges right sides together and sew seam from one end of cutout corner to the other. Next, we'll stitch the bottom seam for the inside fabric. Note that we need a large opening in this seam for turning tote right side out. For bottom seam on <u>inside</u> fabric, stitch just a couple inches at each end, backstitching to secure stitches, and leaving a large opening in the seam. To box all four corners, match raw edges of each cutout corner, having bottom seam and side seam matching. Sew ½-inch seam for boxed corners.

8. To turn tote right side out, reach through opening to grasp bottom seam of outside piece and pull. Close bottom seam of inside piece with a straight stitch, zig zag, or use hand stitches if you want to create a tote that's reversible.

9. Push inside of tote into outside piece. Give tote a final press and topstitch 1/4-inch from finished top edge. Sew button on opposite side of tote.

You are finished!

> **Do you have feedback for me? Questions? Need help?**
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> Feel free to contact me at joannebanko@letsgosew.com