

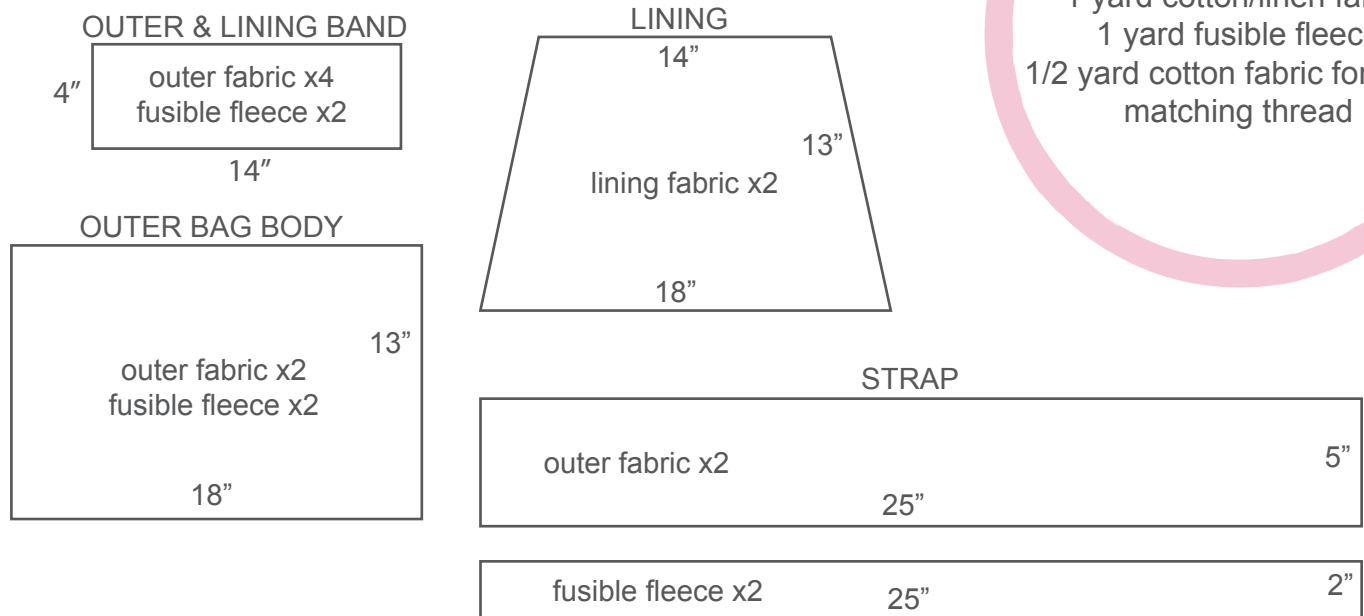
# PLEATED TOTE

by Ellen Luckett Baker

## Instructions:

### 1. Cut fabric and fusible fleece.

Cut the fabric and fusible fleece according to the following dimensions:



## SUPPLIES

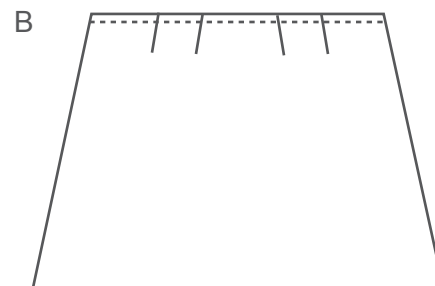
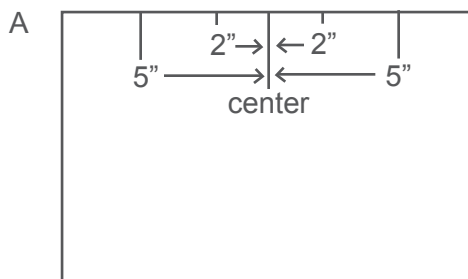
1 yard cotton/linen fabric  
1 yard fusible fleece  
1/2 yard cotton fabric for lining  
matching thread

### 2. Fuse fleece to back of outer bag fabric.

On the wrong sides of the four outer bag pieces (two bag body pieces and two of the band pieces), fuse the fleece pieces according to your fusible fleece instructions. Then take one strap piece (cut from the outer fabric) and fold the long raw edges of the fabric in by 1/2" on both sides towards the wrong side of the fabric. Then fold the entire strap piece in half lengthwise. Fuse the 2" x 25" fleece piece to the inside of this folded piece, tucked under a fold. Repeat with the other strap piece. Set aside the strap pieces for a later step.

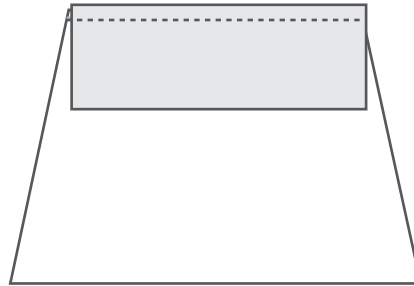
### 3. Mark and stitch pleats.

Next, using chalk or a fabric pen, you will make pleat marks on the top edge of the outer bag body pieces (with fusible fleece attached). With one outer body piece, find the center of the top by folding and marking it. Then mark the fabric as shown in fig. A below. Using the marks as a guide, fold the fabric in towards the center by 1", making pleats. Pin and baste in place, by sewing 1/4" from the edge as shown in fig. B. Repeat with the other body piece.



#### 4. Sew band pieces to bag and lining pieces.

With right sides facing, sew one outer band piece to an outer body piece, as shown below, using a 1/2" seam allowance. On the back of the piece, press the seam towards the band piece. Then flip it back to the front side and topstitch, 1/4" from the seam. Then stitch again 1/8" from the seam. Repeat with the remaining outer bag and band pieces. Then, sew the lining pieces to the remaining two band pieces. Do not topstitch. Press the seam towards the darker fabric.

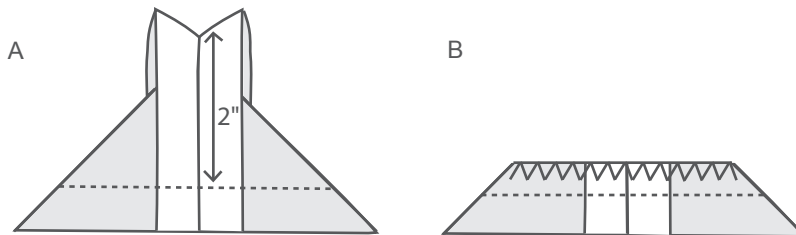


#### 5. Sew bag pieces together and sew lining pieces together.

Sew the two outer bag pieces right sides facing, sewing around the three sides with a 1/2" seam allowance, leaving the top open. Repeat with the two lining pieces, but this time leave a 5" opening in the center bottom for turning the bag right sides out in a later step.

#### 6. Make boxed corners in the outer bag and lining.

With the outer bag piece wrong sides out, pull out the seam at one bottom corner so that it forms a triangular shape as shown in fig. A below. Using a fabric marker or chalk, mark 2" from the tip of the triangle and sew across this line, being sure that the seams are aligned on the right sides of the fabric. Cut off the excess triangular piece of fabric and sew an overcasting or zig-zag stitch along the raw edge as shown in fig. B. Repeat with the other corner, then follow the same process for both corners of the lining piece.



#### 7. Finish straps.

With one of the two strap pieces that you set aside in step 1, stitch along both long sides, 1/4" from the fold, then topstitch 1/8" from the edge. You should have four rows of stitching. Repeat with the other strap.

#### 8. Baste straps to bag.

On one right side of the outer bag, pin the ends of the strap, 3" from each side seam, with the raw edges of the strap aligned with the top raw edges of the outer bag. Be sure the strap is not twisted. Use a zig-zag stitch to sew the strap in place on both ends. Repeat on the other side of the bag with the remaining strap.

#### 9. Sew together lining and outer bag.

With the outer bag right sides out and the lining wrong sides out, place the outer bag into the lining, with the straps tucked in, and sew along the top raw edges with a 1/2" seam allowance.

#### 10. Turn right sides out and topstitch.

Pull the bag right sides out through the opening in the lining. Push out the corners of the outer bag, then topstitch along the opening in the lining. Push the lining into the bag and press the seam at the opening flat. Topstitch 1/4" from the edge, then again 1/8" from the edge.