

Black Sheep Strippy Patchwork Tote Bag

You will need:

10inx13in pieces of 7 print fabrics in coordinating colours

0.5m fabric for base and main body of the bag

0.5m fabric for bag lining

5in by 21in fabric for the handle outer

5in by 21in fabric for the handle lining

0.75m iron-on medium weight interfacing

0.5m fusible fleece

freezer paper

baking parchment

Cutting list

For the patchwork panels:

Select 7 different fabrics complementary fabrics and cut pieces measuring 9in-10in wide by 13in from each fabric. Sub-cut each of these pieces into 6-8 strips measuring not less than 1in wide by 13in.

From the main body fabric cut:

2 pieces measuring 7in by 16.5in

2 pieces measuring 2.5in by 16.5in

From the lining fabric cut:

2 pieces measuring 16.5in by 17in (16.5in is the width of the bag, if you have fabric with a directional pattern)

From the handle outer fabric cut:

2 pieces measuring 2.5in by 21in

From the fusible fleece cut:

2 pieces measuring 17in by 17.5in

From the medium weight iron-on interfacing cut:

2 pieces measuring 16.5in by 17in

2 pieces measuring 2.5in by 16.5in

1 piece measuring 5in by 21in

Pattern notes:

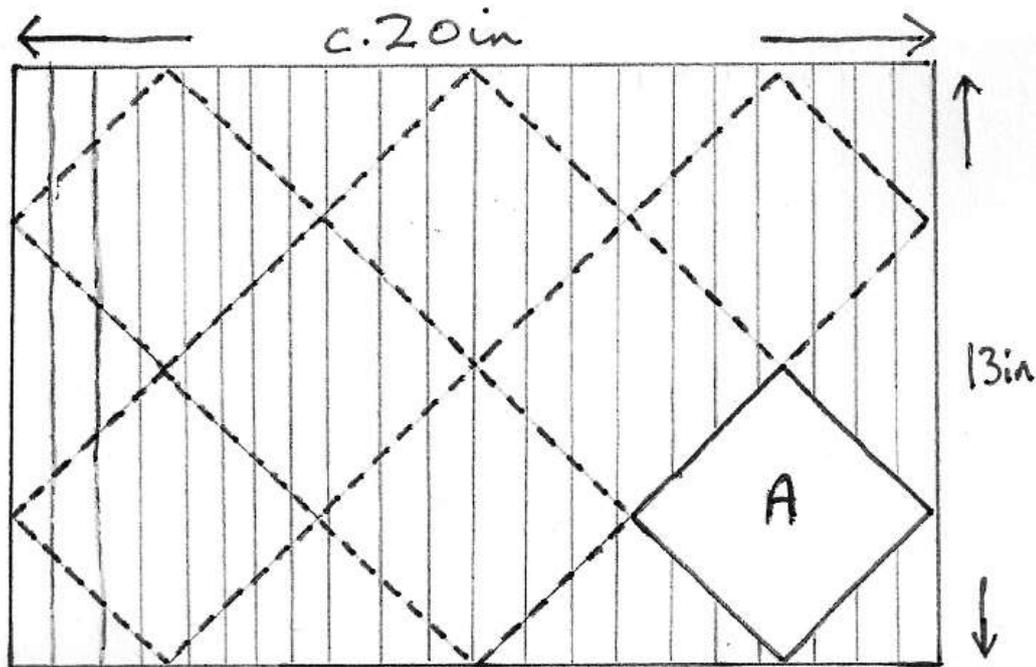
The finished bag is 16in wide and 16.5in tall.

The seam allowance is 0.25in unless otherwise noted.

Step 1: Make the patchwork panels

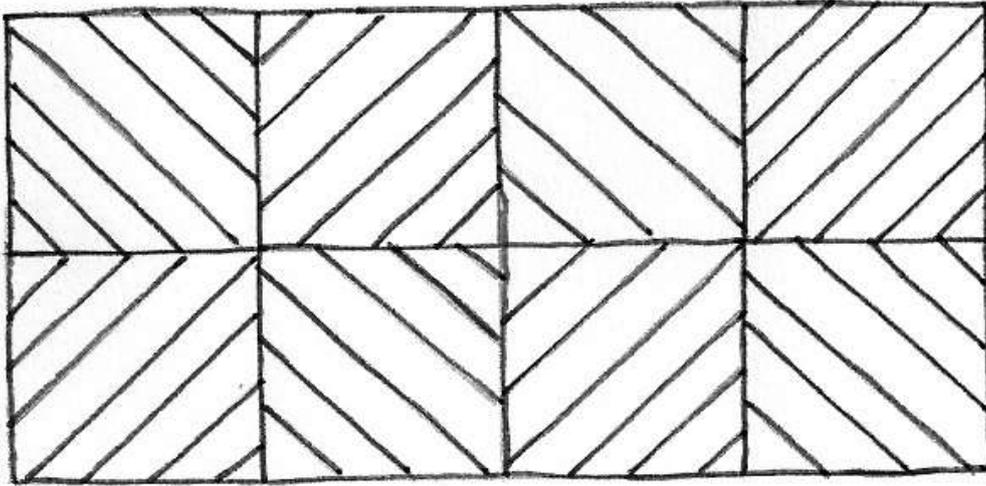
Stitch the cut strips together in a random order to create 2 pieces, each measuring 13in by about 20in (no less than 19in). Press the seams to one side - don't skimp on the pressing!

Cut a piece of freezer paper measuring 4.5in square and iron it, shiny side down, onto one of the strippy patchwork sections, in position A, as indicated in the diagram. Using a rotary cutter and ruler, cut round the freezer paper, to create a square with diagonal stripes. Peel off the freezer paper and then repeat – following the dotted lines are the diagram for guidance.



Continue by cutting 16 squares in total from the 2 fabric pieces.

Arrange 8 of the squares as shown below, on your work surface.

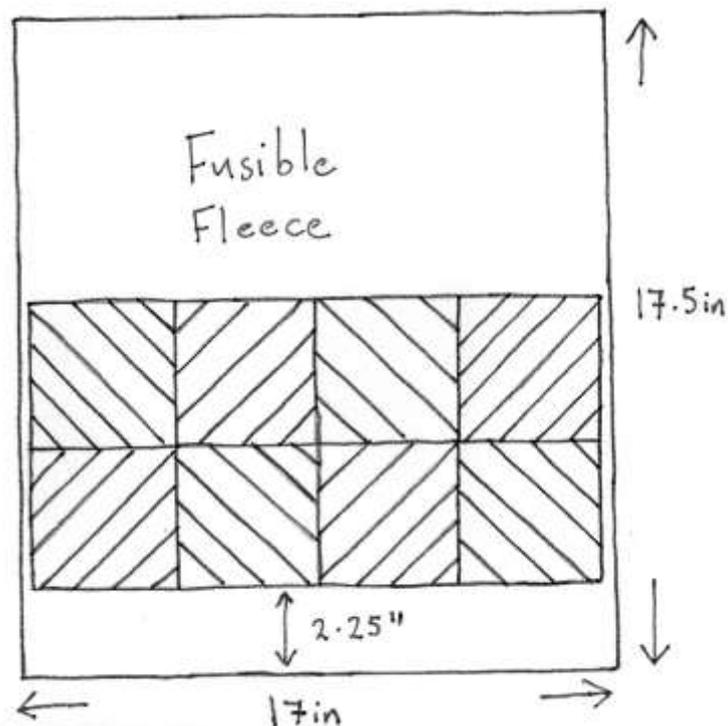


You can then join the squares however you like - joining into 4 columns of 2 blocks and then stitching the 4 columns together, or you can join into 2 rows of 4, then stitch the 2 rows together. Repeat with the other 8 squares.

Step 2: Creating the 2 outer pieces

Take the 2 smaller pieces of the main bag fabric and interface with iron-on interfacing.

Take one of the pieces of fusible fleece and lay it on your work surface, fusible side up, with the 17in edges at the top and bottom, and 17.5in edges at the sides. Measure 2.25in from the bottom edge of the fleece and lay one of the patchwork panels at this point, as shown in the picture.



Fuse into place, using a piece of baking parchment to protect your iron. If you want to quilt this section -

do it now!

Next take one of the 2.5in by 16.5in pieces of main bag fabric and place it right sides together with the bottom edge of the fused patchwork section. Stitch together, and then fold the bottom piece right side up, press and fuse it to the fleece. You can top stitch this seam if you want to.

Next take one of the 7in by 16.5in pieces of main bag fabric and place it right sides together with the top edge of the patchwork panel. Stitch, press and fuse as you did with the smaller piece. You can top stitch this seam too if you want to. Finally, to complete the first outer section, trim away any excess fusible fleece and fabric to create a piece that is 16.5in wide and 17in high. Repeat step 2 for the other side of the bag.

Step 3: Completing the bag outer

Stitch the 2 completed outer sections together round 3 sides. Trim fusible fleece/batting out of the seam allowances to reduce bulkiness. Press the outer, pressing the seams open.

Keeping the outer section wrong sides out, pull the sides of the bag apart and pinch the side seam and base seam together, aligning them at one of corners. You will create a triangle shape with the seams running down to the point.

You will see a line of stitching where you sewed the base section earlier. Mark a line just above this line of stitching, perpendicular to the seam, pin, then stitch along the line, reverse stitching at either end. Cut off the little triangular corner piece, leaving a 0.25in seam allowance. Repeat for the other corner of the outer bag, then press this section.

Step 4: Making the lining section

Interface both the bag lining pieces. Pin the 2 pieces right sides together and stitch the 2 17in sides and the 16.5in base. Leave a turning hole measuring 5in-6in in one side of the lining, reverse stitching at either end of the gap. Create the flat bottom in the lining following the instructions in the last part of step 3.

Step 5: Make the handles

Take the 5in by 21in handle lining fabric and interface with iron-on interfacing. Cut this piece in half to create 2 pieces measuring 2.5in by 21in.

Take one of the interfaced pieces and one of the corresponding pieces of outer handle fabric and pin right sides together and sew down one long edge. Press this seam open. Fold the long edges into the middle and press, and then fold closed down the middle (just like making binding). Stitch the open edge closed and then top stitch the other side to match. Repeat for the other handle.

Step 6: Finish the bag

Turn the outer section right side out. Measure and mark 3.5in from the left hand and right hand side

seams. Place the outer edges of either end of one of the handles on these marks, right sides together, with a 0.5in overlap with the raw edge of the bag. Pin and baste or zigzag the handle ends in place (keep the stitching within the 0.25in seam allowance). Repeat with the other handle on the other side of the bag.

Keep outer section right side out, and put it inside the lining, right sides together. Pin together round the top edges, matching side seams, and making sure the handles haven't been moved out of position. Stitch round the top edge.

Pull the bag through the turning hole and check everything is ok. If you are happy, stitch up turning hole with a ladder stitch. Press the bag, then top stitch the top seam. Finally, reinforce the handles by stitching a crosses in boxes at the bag/handle joins.

