

Summer Serendipity Bag

Kathryn Goodman



MATERIALS

- 1 yard of light to mid-weight cotton fabric for the exterior and interior pocket
- 1 yard of light to mid-weight cotton in a coordinating fabric for the interior
- $\frac{3}{4}$ yard of cotton canvas for a sturdier tote -OR- $\frac{3}{4}$ yard of cotton flannel for a softer-bodied tote
- 1 spool of coordinating thread

TOOLS

Scissors or rotary cutter
Yardstick or long straight-edged ruler (needs to be at least 18" long)
Straight pins
Fabric marker or chalk
Turning tool or a wooden chopstick
Blindhem/edge foot (helpful, but not required)

Note Wash and iron fabrics before cutting. Use $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam allowance throughout unless otherwise stated. Seam allowance is included in pattern pieces.

STEPS

Cutting

1. Preparing your tote strap pattern sheet:

First, print out the pattern sheet for the tote bag strap from your computer using 8½" x 11" paper. (The pattern piece will print on two pieces of paper.) Line up the dotted lines on the two pieces and tape to form the full pattern piece. Cut out the completed piece along the solid lines.

When finished, your pattern piece should look like this:



2. From the exterior fabric:

Cut 2 panels measuring 18" wide x 17" long. Cut 2 tote bag straps using the pattern piece provided. Place pattern lengthwise along fabric. Cut 2 pieces measuring 7½" x 7½" for the interior pocket.

From the interior fabric:

Cut out the interior fabric following the cutting instructions for exterior fabric, but omitting the pocket piece.



3. From the canvas or flannel:

Cut 2 panels measuring 18" wide x 17" long. Cut 2 tote handles with the pattern piece, but this time, place pattern piece across the width of the fabric. (Since this fabric is only being used as a stabilizer inside the bag, the direction of the fabric does not have to be followed as with the exterior and interior fabrics.)



Sewing

4. Attach the canvas or flannel to the tote panels and handles:

Place the canvas or flannel panels onto the WRONG side of the corresponding exterior fabric pieces. Pin into place. Machine baste into place $\frac{1}{4}$ " away from edge around the entire fabric piece. Press lightly with a steam iron on the RIGHT side of the exterior fabric facing up.



5. Construct the tote bag strap:

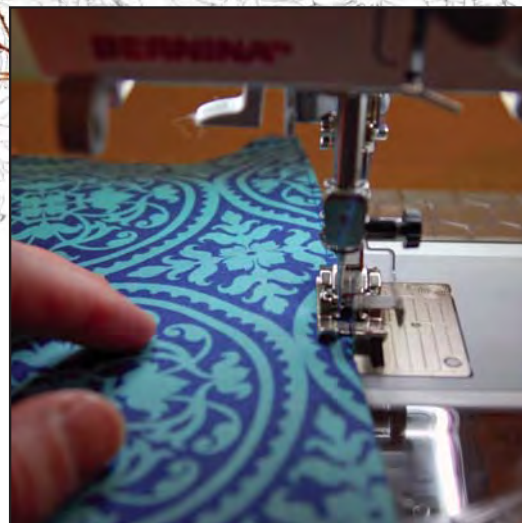
With right sides of exterior tote bag strap pieces together, sew together along the top. Press seam open. Repeat with interior handle pieces.



6. Next, place the exterior and interior handles right sides together and stitch along the sides only, leaving ends open. Clip a notch within seam allowance where the two top edges form a seam. (This will ensure that the handle is nice and smooth when it is turned right side out.)



7. Turn handle right side out through one of the open ends. Press. Next, edge stitch along side edges. (If you have a blind hem/edge foot for your sewing machine, use it now—it makes for a super-neat finish! If you don't have one, just stitch about 1/8" away from the edge!)



8. Press once again!



9. Finally, find the center of the tote bag strap by folding the strap lengthwise. Using a fabric pen or chalk, make a small mark at the center point at each end. You will use this mark later when attaching the handle to the tote.

Set tote bag strap aside.



10. Construct the interior pocket:

With RIGHT sides of pocket pieces together, stitch all the way around, leaving a 3" opening on one of the sides. Clip corners.

Turn pocket piece right side out through the opening and gently push out the corners using a turning tool or chopstick. Slip stitch opening closed. Press. Stitch across the top edge of the pocket $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the edge, backstitching at each end.

11. Attach the pocket to interior panel:

Center the pocket on one of the interior fabric panels, with the top of the pocket about $4\frac{1}{2}$ " from the top of the lining. Pin in place. Stitch along remaining three sides of the pocket, reinforcing the top edges with backstitching.

12. Construct the body of the tote bag:

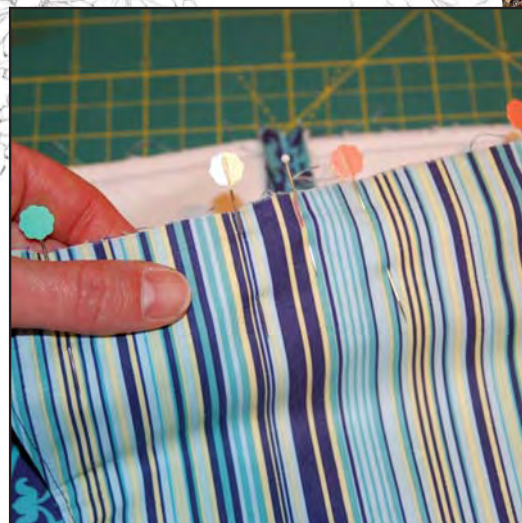
With RIGHT sides of exterior panels together, stitch along the sides and bottom. Clip corners and lightly press seams open using the tip of your iron. Turn exterior bag right side out, gently pushing the corners out with the turning tool. Set aside.



13. Repeat the steps for the exterior panels to construct the lining bag; however, leave a 6" opening along the bottom seam. Do not turn lining right-side out at this point. Set aside.

14. Attach the tote bag strap to the exterior of the bag:

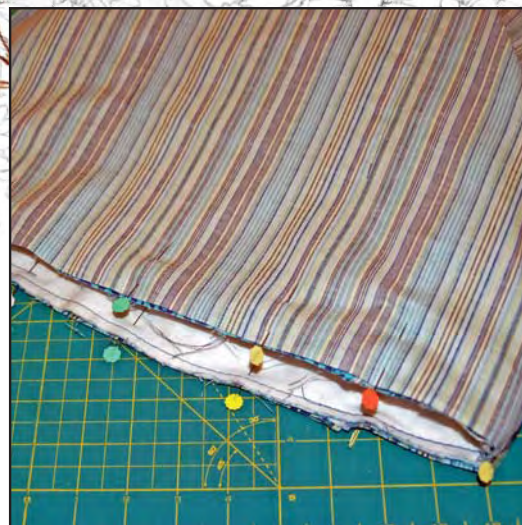
With exterior fabrics together, line up the center point marks on the ends of the strap with each side seam. Pin into place along the top edge of the tote bag body. Machine baste into place $\frac{1}{4}$ " away from the edge.



15. Attach the exterior of the bag to the lining:

Slip the exterior of the bag (with the RIGHT side facing out) into the lining of the bag (with the WRONG side facing out), so the RIGHT sides of the two bags are together.

Match up the raw edges and side seams, making sure the tote strap is tucked in between the exterior and interior of the bag. Pin into place.



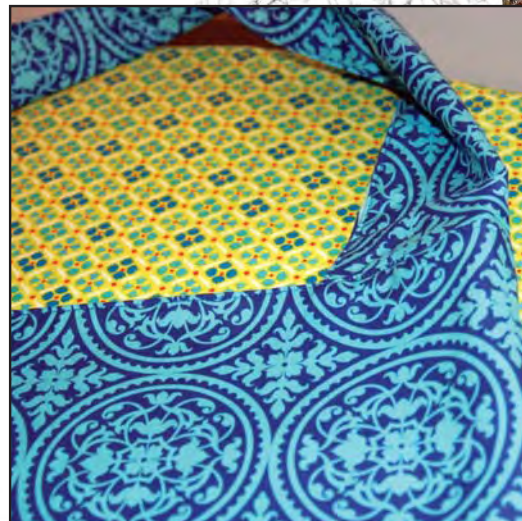
16. Stitch all the way around the top edge. Pull the right side of the bag through the opening in the bottom seam of the lining.



17. Hand stitch the opening in the lining closed. Now, slip the lining down into the bag.

18. Finishing touches:

Press the bag along the top edge and edge stitch along the top. Lightly press the entire bag for a nice finished look!



19. Your Serendipity Tote Bag is finished!



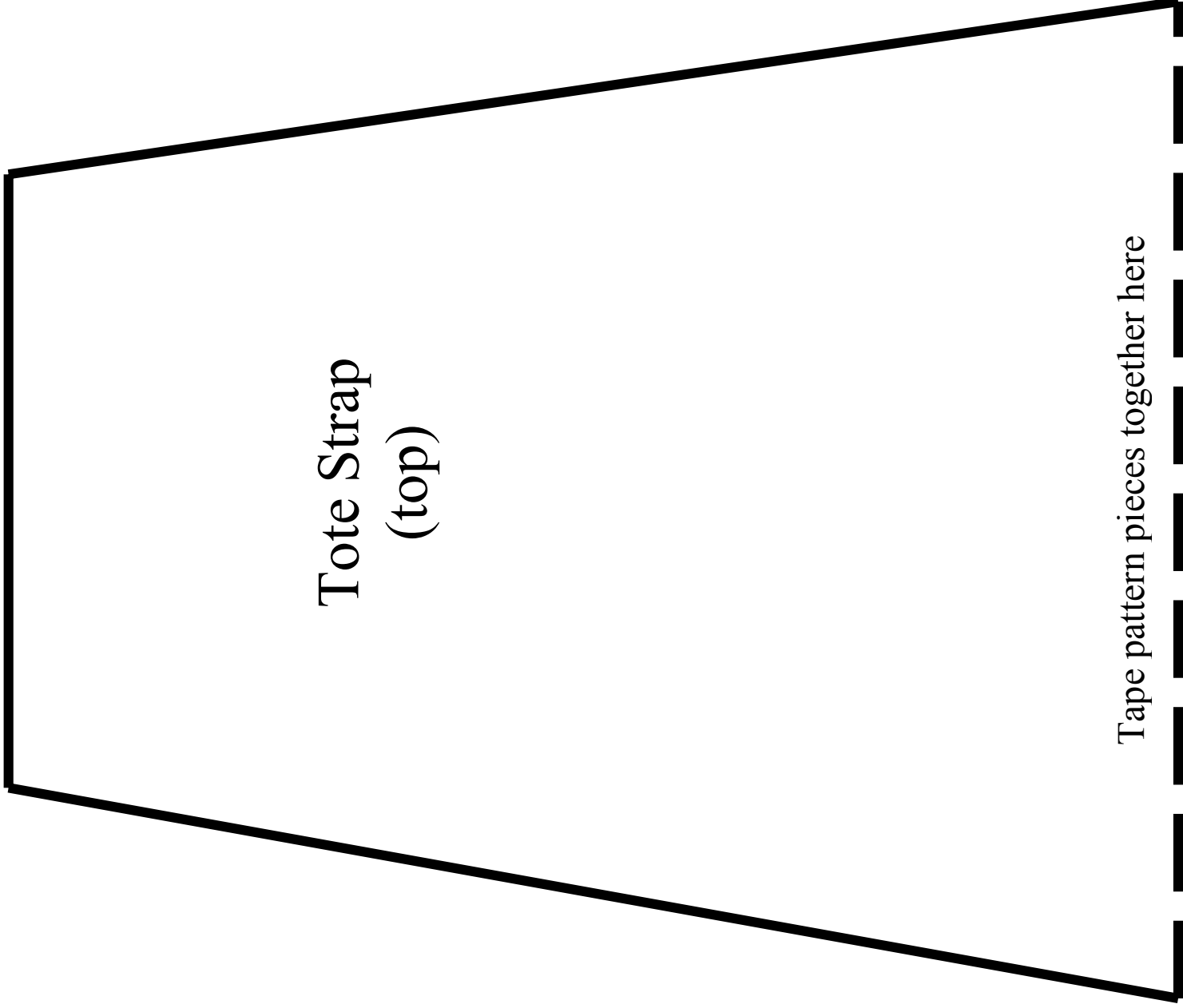


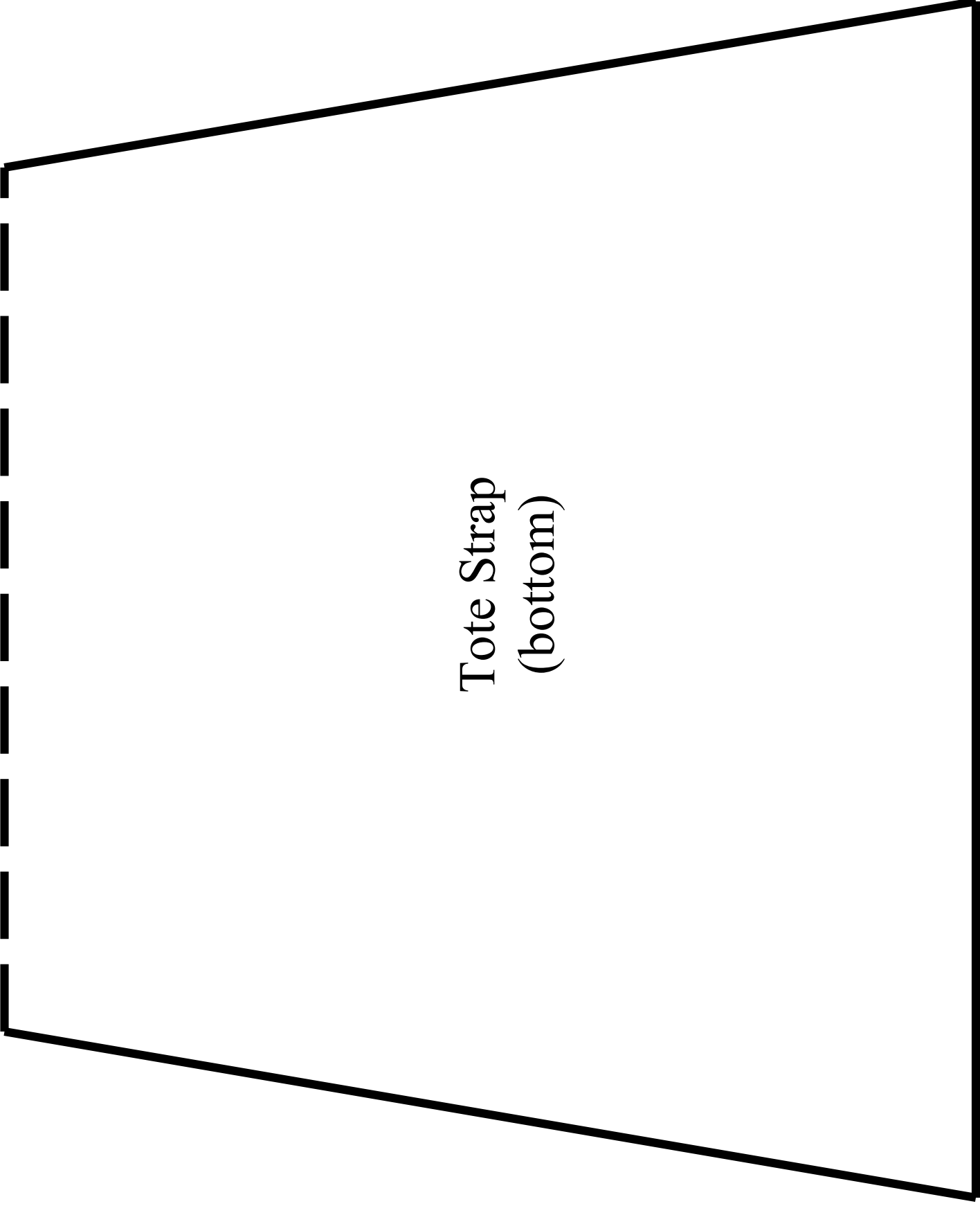
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Tote Strap
(top)

Tape pattern pieces together here





Tote Strap
(bottom)