

Transformer workbag

This clever bag is ideal for taking
along to workshops



Skill level



Finished size

Approx 32cm (12½in) height x 44cm (17½in) wide x 15cm (5¾in) deep

Materials

Based on materials 102cm (40in) wide

- ◆ 50cm (¾yd) light fabric for blocks – fabric 1
- ◆ 70cm (¾yd) dark fabric for blocks and base – fabric 2
- ◆ 40cm (½yd) medium fabric for front and back of main bag – fabric 3
- ◆ 20cm (¼yd) medium fabric for sides of main bag – fabric 4
- ◆ 50cm (¾yd) backing fabric for the quilted sections – muslin is fine as it won't be seen
- ◆ 80cm (¾yd) lining fabric such as calico
- ◆ 80cm (¾yd) wadding
- ◆ Toning thread
- ◆ Eight fastenings; Chris used the 'hammer in' rivets for a very secure bag, but buttons are an alternative

Note: The bag can be made from four fat quarters of fabric, as Chris has done, but you will need to join fabrics to make some of the pieces

Where to buy

Similar fabrics are widely available from quilt fabric shops, or see our advertisers for mail order services.

Preparation

All measurements include ¼in seam allowances, unless otherwise stated. Wash and press all fabrics before cutting out.



Designed and made by
Chris Hammacott



The idea that an item can have more than one use is always appealing, and Chris has been playing with this concept and bags for a while now. The transformer bag here has been designed for workshops, although it has also been made by students for carrying babies' bits and pieces.

In this clever design the exterior pockets carry threads, cutter, scissors, pins, needles and so on, and the inner bag holds fabrics, lunch, a bottle of water etc. On getting to the workshop, the exterior pockets unfasten to form a large receptacle to sit by your workstation, which is simply refastened to the bag at the end of the day – no more hunting for scissors or wondering what happened to that new packet of needles...

CUTTING INSTRUCTIONS

1 From fabric 1 and fabric 2, cut the following pieces:

- ◆ Four 1¼in squares for blocks
- ◆ Eight 1¼ x 1¾in rectangles for blocks
- ◆ 16 1¾ x 3¾in rectangles for blocks
- ◆ Eight 1¾ x 6½in rectangles for blocks
- ◆ Two 3 x 14in strips for handles

2 From fabric 1, cut 2½in strips to give a total length of 47in for binding the exterior pocket.

3 From fabric 2, carefully cut the following:

- ◆ One 6¼ x 17¾in rectangle for the base of the exterior pocket
- ◆ Two 6¼ x 17¾in rectangles for the exterior pocket lining (back and front)
- ◆ One 6¼ x 29¼in rectangle for the exterior pocket lining (base and sides)

4 From fabric 3, cut two rectangles 12¾ x 14¾in for front and back of main bag.

5 From fabric 4, cut one rectangle 4¾ x 39¼in for sides and base of main bag.

6 From backing fabric, carefully cut the following pieces:

- ◆ Two pieces 12¾ x 14¾in for front and back of main bag
- ◆ One piece 4¾ x 40¼in for sides and base of main bag
- ◆ Two pieces 6¼ x 17¾in for front and back of exterior pocket
- ◆ One piece 6¼ x 29¼in for base and sides of exterior pocket

7 From the lining, cut the following pieces:

- ◆ Two pieces 12¾ x 14¾in for front and back lining of main bag
- ◆ One piece 4¾ x 40¼in for sides and base lining of main bag



- 8 From the wadding, carefully cut the following pieces:
- ◆ Two pieces $6\frac{1}{4} \times 17\frac{3}{4}$ in for front and back of exterior pocket
 - ◆ One piece $6\frac{1}{4} \times 29\frac{1}{4}$ in for base and sides of exterior pocket
 - ◆ Two pieces $12\frac{3}{4} \times 14\frac{3}{4}$ in for front and back of main bag
 - ◆ One piece $4\frac{3}{4} \times 39\frac{1}{4}$ in for sides and base of main bag
 - ◆ Two $1\frac{1}{2} \times 14$ in strips for handles

COURTHOUSE STEPS BLOCKS

1 For the external pocket you need to make eight Courthouse steps blocks including four of block 1 and four of block 2. See Fig 1.

2 For block 1: Take a fabric $1\frac{1}{4}$ in square and two fabric $2\frac{1}{4} \times 1\frac{3}{4}$ in rectangles. Stitch the rectangles to the top and bottom of the square. Press seams outwards.

3 Take two fabric $2\frac{1}{4} \times 3\frac{3}{4}$ in rectangles and stitch to the sides of the unit made above. Press seams outwards.

4 Take two fabric $1\frac{3}{4} \times 3\frac{3}{4}$ in rectangles and stitch to the top and bottom of the unit made above. Press seams outwards.

5 Take two fabric $1\frac{3}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$ in rectangles and stitch to the sides of the unit made above. Press seams outwards. Repeat steps 2–5 so you have a total of four block 1.

6 Follow steps 2–5, but reverse the fabrics, to make four of block 2.

EXTERIOR POCKET

1 Take one of block 1 and two of block 2. Alternating the blocks, join into a set of three. Repeat so you have two three-block units, one each for the front and back of the pocket.

2 Take the two remaining block 1 and join to either end of the fabric $2\frac{6}{4} \times 17\frac{3}{4}$ in rectangle. This forms the base and sides of the pocket. See Fig 2.

3 Sandwich each of the units made in steps 1 and 2 above with wadding and backing fabric (cut out above) and quilt as desired. Chris simply zigzagged over each stitch join.

4 Join the front and back units to the base/sides unit; Chris overstitched the seams to prevent the pieces from ‘flopping’.

5 The pocket now needs to be lined; take the fabric 2 pieces cut out from above and join them together to form a gusseted

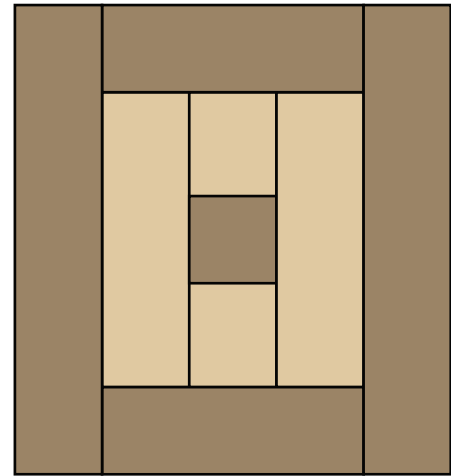
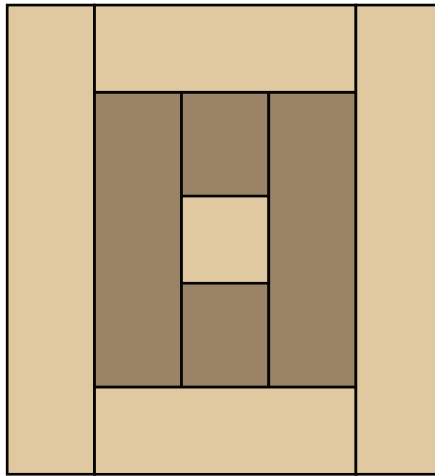


Fig 1 Courthouse steps blocks – make four of each

Courthouse steps	$17\frac{3}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$ in	Courthouse steps
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Fig 2 Exterior pocket base and side unit

Handy hints

◆ “Hammer in” rivets are readily available from specialist patchwork shops and haberdashers. If you’re not too handy with a hammer then you can use buttons or press studs as an alternative

◆ To see the *Popular Patchwork* version of this bag, made up by our web editor Katy Purvis in a different colourway, visit the gallery pages of our website at www.popularpatchwork.com/transformer-bag

◆ Watch out for next month’s issue of *Popular Patchwork* where we show you how to make a quick and easy rotary cutter case, bookmark and notebook cover. Designed by Pat Stone, these projects will make ideal companions to your new bag and will also use up some of your leftover fabrics.

lining that sits in the exterior pocket section made in step 4.

6 Take the fabric 1 binding strips and bind the top edge of the pocket. The exterior pocket is now complete.

MAIN BAG

1 Take the two fabric $3\frac{12}{4} \times 14\frac{3}{4}$ in rectangles and the fabric $4\frac{4}{4} \times 39\frac{1}{4}$ in rectangle cut above. Sandwich each piece with wadding and backing fabric (cut out above) and quilt as desired. Chris used a free-motion vermicelli quilting pattern.

2 Join the front and back units to the base/sides unit.

3 The bag now needs to be lined; take the lining pieces cut out above, stitch together and insert into the main bag.

4 Using leftover fabrics 1–4, cut $2\frac{1}{2}$ in strips to give a total length of 38in for binding the top edge of the main bag.

5 To make the handles, take the two 3×14 in strips; fold each over a $1\frac{1}{2}$ in wide wadding strip and stitch in place with a zigzag stitch. Attach to the bag with several rows of stitching on the inside of the bag.

6 Finally, referring to the photograph for guidance, secure the ‘hammer in’ rivets or buttons in place. ◆