

# Fish Beach or Laundry Bags

by Caroline Fairbanks-Critchfield  
[www.sewcanshe.com](http://www.sewcanshe.com)

Cute... check! Useful... check! Easy... check! I think these Fish Laundry Bags are a must-make!

See the instructions as a step by step tutorial with pictures at  
<http://www.sewcanshe.com/blog/2016/5/24/fish-laundry-bags-free-sewing-tutorial>

*All seam allowances are 1/2".*

## Fabric and notions:

- 1/2 yard (or 2 fat quarters) of fabric for the top of the fish
- 1/2 yard (or 2 fat quarters) of fabric for the bottom of the fish

OR

- 1 yard of fabric for the whole fish body if you don't want a seam (like my blue fish bag)

PLUS:

- less than 1/4 yd fabric or 2 yards of ribbon/twill tape for the ties
- felt scraps for the eyes
- a bodkin or large safety pin for threading the drawstring

Print up the pattern pieces at the end of this document at 100%. Tape the pieces together as needed.

If you want to cut the fish out in one piece, overlap the pieces by 1" and tape them together.

## Cutting:

1. Cut 2 from each pattern piece on the fold.
2. Cut 2 strips 2 1/2" x 17" for the drawstring casings or fish 'lips.' I used the same fabric as the fish head, but you could use coordinating fabric if you want to.
3. Cut 2 strips 1 1/2" x 40-42" (fabric width) for the drawstrings.



### **Make the Drawstring Casing (a.k.a. the 'fish lips'):**

1. Fold each end of the 2 1/2" x 17" casing strips to the wrong side by 1/4" twice, and press. Stitch close to the fold to make 1/4" hems on all 4 short ends.
2. Fold these strips in half lengthwise, wrong sides together and press.
3. Center a folded strip along the slightly narrower mouth side of a fish head piece with the raw edges aligned and pin.
4. Stitch with a 1/2" seam allowance. Finish the seam with a zig-zag stitch or a serger, if desired. You could also trim the seam with pinking shears to finish it.
5. Press the seam allowance toward the fish head.
6. Topstitch along the fish body 1/4" from the seam.

*Repeat all of these steps to sew a casing to the other fish head piece.*

### **Sew the Fish Body:**

1. Pin each fish head piece to a fish body piece, right sides together. Stitch with a 1/2" seam allowance. Finish the seam as desired.
2. Press the seam allowance toward the head and topstitch.
3. Tail embellishment (if desired).

Topstitching lines are marked on the pattern piece. You may use them or sew narrow pintucks like I did.

To sew pintucks, fold a fish body in half wrong sides together. Place a pin 7" from the end of the tail to mark the top end of the center pintuck.

Sew from the tail to the pin about 1/8" from the edge. backstitch neatly.

Fold and pin 2 more pintucks 3" above and below the first. The second and third pintucks should be only 6" long.

Repeat this embellishment (or topstitching) on the other side of the fish, if desired.

4. Place the two fish pieces right sides together and pin all the way around. Stitch.
5. Cut clips and notches all the way around the seam, or trim 1/4" away with pinking shears. Clip to the stitching at the center of the tail. Turn the fish right side out and press.

**Make the Drawstrings:**

1. Fold the drawstring strips in half and press. Fold and press the long edges to the center. Fold in half again to make a 3/8" wide strip.
2. Topstitch along each strip close to the folded edges.
3. To insert the first drawstring, attach a bodkin or large safety pin to one end. Push it through both casings and tie the ends together.
4. Repeat the same process from the other side of the bag for the second drawstring.
5. Cut out or trace the eye circles from the pattern piece to use as templates for felt eye pieces. Sew in place.