

Chinese Lantern Bag

by Rebecca Kemp Brent

Materials

- 1/4 yard of 45"-wide fabric for bag
- 1/4 yard of 45"-wide fabric for lining
- 1/4 yard of 22"-wide interfacing
- 1 1/8 yard of 1/8"-wide cord or ribbon
- 1 decorative ring

Cutting

From each of the fabrics, cut:

- 1 square, 6 1/2" x 6 1/2"
- 1 square, 6" x 6"



Seam allowances are 1/4".

Instructions

1. Fuse the interfacing to the wrong side of each bag-fabric square. If your fabric is delicate or heat-sensitive, fuse the interfacing to the lining squares instead.
2. Find the centers of each 6 1/2" square and draw lines on the wrong sides to mark the horizontal and vertical centerlines.
3. Cut a 4" length of cord. Thread the ring on the cord. Fold the cord in half, matching the raw edges. Position the loop of cord on the right side of the 6 1/2" square of bag fabric, with the raw edges at one corner and the ring positioned toward the center of the square. Baste 1/8" from the raw edges.
4. Cut the remaining cord in half. Position one end of a cord on top of the ring cord's ends and baste. Place the other end of the same cord at an adjacent corner of the square and baste. Fold the center of the cord into a loose bundle and tape it to the center of the square where it will be out of the way.
5. Position the ends of the remaining cord in the two empty corners of the square. Baste the ends and bundle the center of the cord.
6. Place the 6 1/2" lining square on the bag square, covering the cords, and pin the outer edges. Sew around all four edges; you do not need to leave an opening for turning. Trim the corners diagonally to reduce bulk, but don't trim the cord ends.
7. With the lining side on top, cut the lining fabric along both centerlines. Be careful not to cut the cords or the bag fabric.
8. Using the lining as a guide, cut the bag fabric along its centerlines, again being careful not to cut the cords. Remove the tape holding the cords and turn each of the four pieces right side out, smoothing the corners into shape. Match the raw edges and press the stitched edges.
9. Position two square segments that share a cord side by side with the cord corners side by side. Be sure the stitched and turned edges abut and that the cord is not twisted. Place a pin 1" from the raw edges. Set the machine for a multi-step zigzag stitch and sew from the raw edges to the pin. Be sure to backstitch at the ends of the seam; you may also want to reinforce the seam with a bartack.
10. Repeat Step 9 with the other two small squares.

11. Place the two-square units side by side and join their edges as in Step 9, forming a square for the top of the bag.
12. Place the 6" bag square on the 6" lining square, wrong sides together. Baste 1/8" from all four edges.
13. Set the machine for an overcasting stitch 7.0 mm wide; this will make a generous 1/4" seam. Place the assembled bag top on the 6" squares, right sides together. Stitch around all four sides, positioning the overcasting stitch to enclose the raw edges.
14. Turnend the bag right side out and finger press. Slip the ring over the long cords to close the bag.