

Monkey's Diamond Tote Bag for Friends/Freinds



A great bag for transporting diamonds, new quilt books, hand piecing, chocolate.
Monkeys not included.



The pocket is a little quilt, about 8 x 13 inches. Once the quilted pocket is made and bound, the tote only takes about 30 minutes!

I like this tote so much I think I will have to make another one for me.

Monkey's little friend is "Kiki," une petite bébé singe from Holland, who laughs en français when you press his tummy. The instructions are so simple (and clearly written!) that I don't think you will need illustrations. See what you think. You can make this tote any size. This one will hold a ring-binder, books, a Quilter's Cut n Press, or more chocolate than is good for you.

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Supplies a little quilt about 13 x 8 inches for the pocket and 3/8 yard Ultrasuede (13.5 x 44 inches)

1. Cut the Ultrasuede into four pieces, with your rotary cutter. Try not to moan or stroke this sensuous fabric excessively.

13.5 x 19 front	13.5 x 19 back	3 x 13.5 handle	3 x 13.5 handle
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There are now on Webshots for steps 2, 3, 4 and 6. See <http://community.webshots.com/user/homebays> in the album "Monkey." (There are some very cute photos there.)

2. Position the little quilt on the right side of the front, centering it from side to side, with top edge about 2.75 inches from the top edge of the Ultrasuede. Pin and then attach the pocket by top stitching along both sides and across the bottom, just inside the binding of the little quilt.

3. With front and back pieces aligned right sides together, pin baste and then stitch a 0.25 inch seam down the sides and across the bottom of the bag, pivoting at the corners.

4. Pause for chocolate while you read this part. It might help you visualize this step without an illustration. Sew two triangles to shape the bottom of the bag by sewing across the corners a scant 2 inches from the points. To create the points: with bag inside out, work from the corner to finger press the side seam and bottom seam open for a few inches, and use a pin to align the seams exactly with each other. Create the triangle flap by stitching a scant 2 inches from the point through all layers, edge to edge, with side and bottom seams lying open. "She said all that was reasonable and proper on the business." (Jane Austen, Persuasion, Chapter 12)

5. Turn bag right side out. There will be a thick triangle inside each bottom corner, giving the tote a box-y shape.

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6. To make a firm top edge, fold in a scant 0.75 inch, and then fold in another 0.75 inch, creating a three-layer band on the inside of the bag. Pin baste and then stitch close to the top and bottom edges of the band all the way around (through 3 layers, plus side seams, which should be finger pressed open).
7. To define the edge of the front and side, with the bag right side out, fold the Ultrasuede from the top edge of the bag to the lower front corner formed by the triangle you made in step 4. The folded edge should be an even, scant 2 inches (approx) from the side seam. Top stitch 0.25 inch from the fold, from top edge to about 0.25 inch from the bottom corner. Repeat for the other side of the front, both sides of the back, and across the bottom edges (front and back). There will be a short gap (0.25 to 0.5 inch) at each of the four bottom corners that you cannot stitch through properly, but the tote will have a pleasing finished look, and a firmness that makes it almost stand up by itself.
8. Fold the Ultrasuede strips for the handles into three layers about 1 inch wide by 13.5 inches long, pin baste, and then top stitch close to the edges along both sides (through 3 layers).
9. Position the handles with the ends on the inside of the bag, overlapping exactly the width of the top band, and with the outer edge of each handle 3.75 inches from the corner.
10. Stitch each handle securely to the bag along the two stitching lines of the top band.

That's it! The bag is ready! Fill it up with hand piecing projects, novels by Jane Austen, new quilt books, and chocolate.



Notes:

You may prefer longer handles (18 inches?) made of purchased braid or heavy ribbon.

I get good results sewing on Ultrasuede with my ordinary machine needle (Pfaff Universal 130/705 80/12).

You may want to stiffen the shape by putting matt board or foam core in the bottom, cut to fit snugly (about 3 by 14.5 inches).

Monkey says, "Go wild with embellishments and decorative stitches."

You can make this tote any size. If you have a smaller quilt for the pocket, you can use this pattern anyway!

Or, if your little quilt is bigger, adjust the dimensions of the bag to fit. It works every time.

If you make a tote from these directions, please let Monkey know! <monkey @ lindafranz.com>