

How to make Kangaroo Bags

This is to make a kangaroo bag that can be hung off door handles, hooks etc. Please read the instructions through to the end before commencing. Any queries can be directed to Rose Best on 0438 924 842.

The size of the pattern can be modified to make small, med or large bags. Pilbara Wildlife Carers Association (PWCA) recommends making a medium bag and filing it out with towels and blankets or clipping the insert closed at the back for when the joeys are small. This way the one bag will suit the joeys' requirements the whole time they are in care.

A good quality fabric is required. You need a fabric that can handle a decent weight and will stand up to being washed often. I recommend an embossed curtain fabric, without any loose decorative treads in the pattern that can be lifted up and chewed on, or a heavy cotton drill. Choose a fabric that your sewing machine can handle.



Firstly, note the difference between the right and wrong side of the fabric.

To get started, lay out the pattern and mark or pin before cutting out. You will need two sides and one insert. If using patterned fabric, you will need to flip the side pattern to end up with the same pattern on the outside round the whole bag.

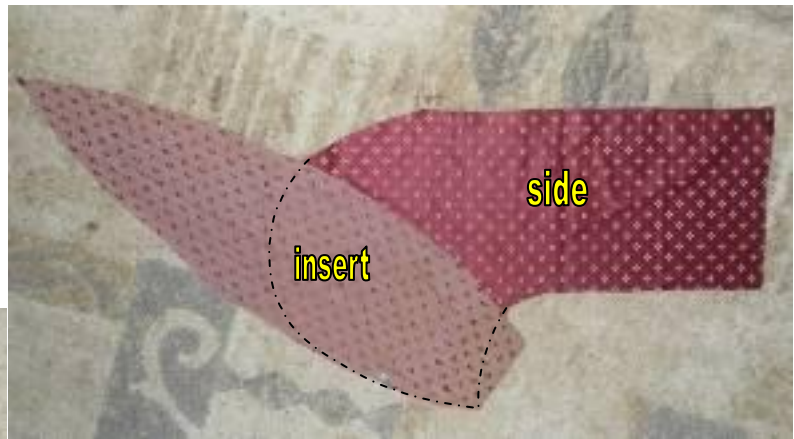
Cut out the pattern, keeping the off cuts for straps and binding. Cut the straps out before the binding.

It is recommended that the bag is either flat seamed, seams firmly stitched to the bag, seams are concealed or the bag is made with the seams on the outside, to avoid the joeys chewing on them and possibly ingesting them, causing blockages and other problems.

In this example, I will be stitching the seams firmly to the bag.



Join the front of the insert panel to the front of one of the side panels, with the right sides of the fabric together. Pin through to the back and sew the pieces together using your choice of seam.



Repeat on the other side, joining the front of the insert panel and the front of the second side panel, with the right sides of the fabric together. Pin through to the back and sew the pieces together.

The joining point of insert with the two side panels can be tricky to sew down. I stitch the first side of the insert to the side panel then flatten/fold before joining on the second side panel, ensuring that the raw edges match and that you did not catch the first side panel in the seam. Pin and sew the pieces together using your choice of seam.

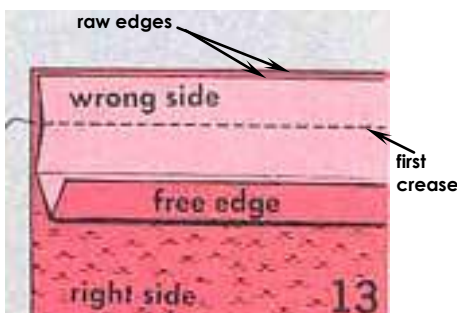


That is the bulk of the bag completed. Next you need to cut out the straps and bias binding. The binding provides a lot of strength to the front and edges of the bag, helping to prevent them from stretching. It is recommended that you make the binding out of the same material as the bag. Commercially brought binding tends to be thinner and will wear through quicker with use.

With the binding, fabric grains run across and up, so you want to cut the binding on the diagonal so it stretches.

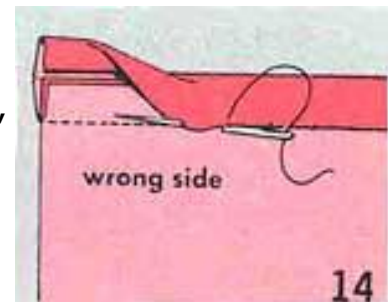


Next make the bias binding and attach. Cut the fabric on the bias where possible, so that it can stretch and curve with the bag. It needs to be a decent width, preferable 4 to 6 cm wide, cut the strip approximately 4 times wider then the desired finished width. You can cut out smaller lengths from the leftover fabric and sew them together to make one length.

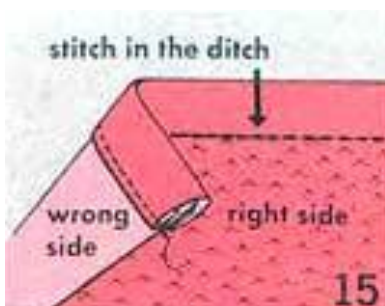


Pre-crease the strip for easy application. Fold it in half lengthwise, wrong sides together; steam-press firmly; fold in half again, press.

Pin the right sides of the fabric and binding together, with the raw edges even. Stitch along the first crease (Pic 13).



Fold strip up and over to wrong side of the fabric, tucking in the free edge and covering the raw edges in the process. (Pic 14)



Sew along the edge of the binding on the wrong side of the fabric, this will appear on the right side also, firmly securing the binding in place.

Pictures from - Sewing from A to Z by Coats & Clark

With the binding in place you can now make the straps. The straps need to be able to hold the weight of a 12 month old Joey, approx 15kg at the most.

I cut mine approx 10cm wide and then fold them in thirds before sewing them down, tucking the raw edge in to avoid threads. Two or four straps are required for each bag depending on how you hang them.



You can also fold the straps in half, with the right sides together. Straight and zigzag stitch the edge and then turn them the right way.

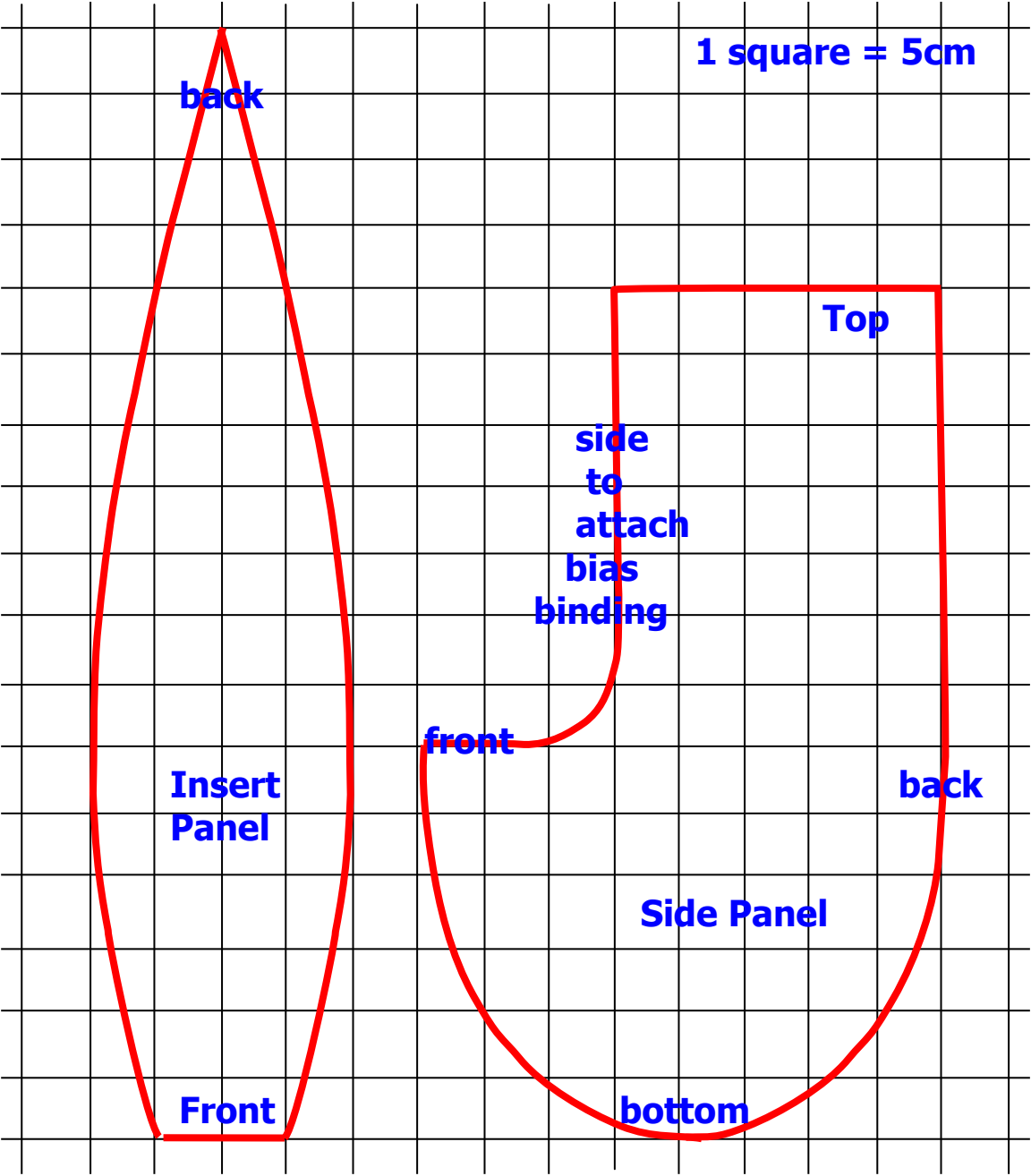
How long the straps are is up to you and quite often depends on how much fabric is left over. I cut mine long at 70cm for medium bags, longer for the small bags and shorter for the large bags. There needs to be enough length in the straps so that the bag can be tied approximately 1 inch off the floor when finished, utilising the different equipment used, such as door handles, saw horses, hooks etc.

To attach the handles,

1. Turn the bag inside out.
2. Flatten out the top half.
3. You want to bring the two sides with the binding into the middle.
4. The straps are then placed inside the bag against the fold made in Step 3.
5. The top is then sewn several times, making sure you go over the straps. This section holds a lot of weight and needs to be very well sewn in order to hold the straps firmly in place.
6. Neaten the top before turning the bag back the right way.
7. A row or two of stitches can be placed across the top of the bag on the right side of the fabric to cover the work done in Step 5



Trim any loose threads and you're done!!



How to sew Flat Seams - Copied from <http://www.sewneau.com/how.to/flat.felled.seam.html>

Step 1

Make note of the difference between the "right" and "wrong" side of the fabric. It will help you orient yourself as you follow the steps.



Step 2

With the wrong sides facing out, pin material together, pinning entire length of edge where the flat felled seam will be.



Step 3

Stitch a 5/8" seam allowance (or the amount specified in your pattern) along the entire length of the edge pinned in Step 2, back-tacking at the beginning and end of the seam. Remove pins after the seam allowance has been sewn.



Step 4

Cut one side of the seam allowance (sewn in Step 3) to within 1/4" of the stitches. Although you may use pinking shears, they are not required. The cut edges will be protected (and hidden) by the completed flat felled seam.



Step 5

On the wrong side of the fabric, press seam closed to short side of seam allowance. Be sure to use a setting on your iron that will not damage the fabric.



Step 6

On right side of fabric, thoroughly press seam to ensure it is flat. Use a pressing cloth to help prevent damage to fabric.

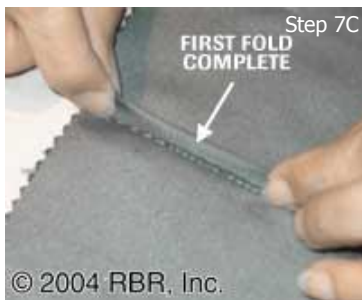


Step 7

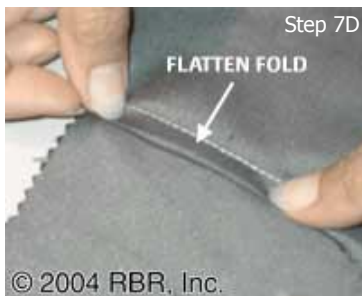
(A) Grasp the wider (un-trimmed) side of the seam allowance, folding it over the top of the narrower (trimmed) side...



(B) ...continue folding until the edge of the wider side meets the seam's stitching line, concealing the narrower side as shown below.



(C) Grasp the folded, concealed seam and continue folding in the same direction...



(D) ...until the folded seam lies flat against the opposite side and is ready for pinning.



Step 8

Pin entire length of flattened fold in place.



Step 9

(A) Stitch Line (a) - Stitch 1/8" in from folded edge along the entire length of the flattened fold pinned in Step 8, back-tacking at the beginning and end of the seam. Remove pins as they reach the presser foot.



(B) One of the two finished top stitch lines can now be seen on the right side of the fabric. Stitch Line (a) is now complete.

Step 10

(A) Stitch Line (b) - Stitch 1/8" in from and parallel to the original seam along entire length of flattened fold, back-tacking at the beginning and end of the seam. Both finished top stitch lines can now be seen on the right side of the fabric (below).



(B) Stitch line (b) next to original seam is now complete. Note here that three stitch lines show on the wrong side and only two show on the right side. The raw edges are now completely concealed within the flat felled seam.



Step 11

Press the completed flat felled seam on the right side of the fabric. Be sure to use a setting on your iron that will not damage the fabric. You're done!