
Sew a Boho Bag with Nicole Mallalieu

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview

(upbeat music) - Hi, I'm Nicole Mallalieu. I'm a designer, pattern maker and teacher. I design sewing patterns. I write books. One's "You Sew Girl." The other one's "The Better Bag Maker." And I teach at a fashion college as well as workshops. I would like to show you how to make this cute little bag. Gonna give you a few tips about working with microfiber suede, how to attach hardware and how to do a nice colorful lining with an exposed zipper pocket for decoration. It's a great little bag for carrying around a few things during the day, and it's a really good step if you've made a few bags already and want to just extend your skills a little bit more.

Chapter 2 - Materials

Materials

- So we're just gonna talk about the materials you'll need. There's quite a few. But, we'll start with a medium-weight fabric in a solid color. For this one, we're using the microfiber suede, 'cause it's got a few extra little tricks to learn. There's one yard of that. There's 24 inches of a lining fabric, and I've just used a quilting weight in a nice print. You'll also need 90 inches of a woven, fusible interfacing, like Pellon Shape Flex. And, I've got some scraps of some pelmet interfacing and some Peltex. Peltex, Timtex, any of these thick kind of interfacings are useful for reinforcing. If you're making a lot of bags, you probably have scraps around anyway. Otherwise, you can get away with using folded up scraps of your main interfacing. You'll also need to print out and cut out your pattern pieces. And, it's a good idea to print out the lay plans as well, so you know which piece is being cut in which fabric. Over here, we've got sticks. There's a dowel here that is about just over half an inch diameter, and I piece of what I call quad. I think it's called molding in America, which is rounded on one side, angled on other side piece that you can get at a hardware store. I use those for pressing and turning tools. You'll also need some pinking shears and some scissors. I use applique, or duck bill scissors, a lot because I like them. If you've got them, use them. If you don't, normal scissors will work. You'll also need quilting roller and mat, and some rotary cutters. I like the small rotary cutter when I'm cutting small curves, the big one for larger shapes. There's clear-drying craft glue. And, it looks strange, but rubber gloves. That's a trick that comes in later. Pins are handy, not always essential. Marking pencils or pens for your fabric. A glue stick pen is handy, again, not essential. A tailor's awl, a quick unpick or a seam ripper is very handy always. Another one that I use all the time is a point cutter. You can use an Exacto knife, or you can get away with just using the scissors if you want to. You'll also need some hand sewing needles. And, the hardware we'll need, I've got inch and a quarter to inch and a half O rings, twist lock, and an inch and a half slide adjuster. You'll also need a six inch zipper. If you've only got a seven inch, that's fine. We can shorten it. Another thing that I use all the time, that if you have with your sewing machine, an edge stitching foot, or something that has this flange here that will allow you to stitch a certain distance from a seam and keep it even. And, you'll need a zipper foot. I've got some quarter inch fusible tape. So, this is the same as fusible webbing, only it's cut to quarter inch. If you don't have this, but you have some fusible webbing, just use your rotary cutter and cut that to size. You'll also need an iron, and an ironing board, and a pressing cloth, and a sewing machine with matching thread.

Chapter 3 - Creating the Body

Prepare fabric

- [Instructor] So now we're going to cut out the lining and the main fabric and the interfacing. There's a lot of pieces. So I've prepared a lay plan for you, which is printed out with your pattern. It's a good idea to just take a look at it and the most important thing to take from this is to look at the strap. It needs to be cut first so you've got the long straight edge of both the interfacing and the outer fabric. Cut your strap first, and then it doesn't really matter how you arrange the rest of the pieces on the fabric or the interfacing. I like to block fuse my interfacing first to the fabric before I cut. I'll show you how to do that in a little while. But first, I'll just walk you through all the pieces that need to be cut. So we've mentioned the strap. So we need to cut the strap and the interfacing. And the interfacing is then fused on with a half inch seam allowance either side of the long edges. And an inch on both of the short edges. You have the flap piece, and that's cut one piece in the outer, one piece in the lining. And both of those have interfacing. There are two of the facing pieces. These are the bits that go around the top edge of the bag on the inside. Two pieces of the center front panel, all interfaced. There's two lining pieces, both interfaced. And then we've got some measurements that are printed on the pattern for all the rectangles. So you're cutting a pocket lining without interfacing, 8 1/2 inches by 12. There's your strap measurements here, and then we've got the o-ring loops. They hold the strap to the bag. So you're cutting two at four inches by four inches in the outer fabric. And then the interfacing is cut at two inches by four inches. So that's fused on lengthwise. The grain of fabric is running down this way. We're leaving the seam allowances free of interfacing, just reduces the bulk. And then we've got the pocket facing piece here. You need to cut one in lining without interfacing. And then we're going to cut another piece in a stiffer non-woven interfacing. So this is a pellon craft fuse, but vilene S320, if you can get it, will do the job as well. The piece that is missing is the side panel piece. And I'm going to show you how to cut that now. It's a good one to demonstrate block fusing on because you know you need to cut four of them. And when there's small pieces like this, sometimes you can block fuse a few at a time and it'll save you some time. With block fusing, you're just going to place your pattern piece right down on the interfacing and cut roughly around the outside. When there's too small of pieces, just estimate how much interfacing you need to cut two pieces and lay them out like that. So we're just going to cut around roughly, around the outside of the shape that the two pieces will make. And you don't have to be careful with that. We've got our two pieces of interfacing that are then going to be fused to the fabric. Now make sure you've got the orientation of your pattern piece correct on the fabric. Especially with things like microfiber, there's an up and a down direction. So you don't want to cut some of them this way and some of them this way. What I do sometimes is just draw an arrow on the back of the fabric to remind myself which direction it needs to be in. Now this one, the curve is at the top, so I'll make sure that I know the orientation on my interfacing and place them against the wrong side of the fabric like that. And I'll fuse that into place. So I have the iron on a cotton to linen setting. And I'm just going to press down. You actually have to press down quite hard and hold it for about five seconds per area. And because this microfiber doesn't really like the iron, I'm trying not to let the iron hang over the edge too much. We've allowed extra around the outside edge of the pattern pieces, so we know that we're going to cut on the fused area. So I'm just going to press that and make sure it's all adhered to the fabric. So position your pattern piece to wherever you want it. I'm going to start over here and then cut the second piece. And if you put your quilting ruler right over the edge of the pattern piece like that, you can then hold the ruler down and follow the straight bit. For the curved bits, you can do the same thing. You can just move

your ruler, following the curve of the pattern piece. And take the rotary cutter down the side of it like that. So you'll get that curve. This is where I like to use the smaller rotary cutter on the finer curves. And again, using the edge of the ruler to cut around there. And go back to the big one for the straighter bits. Make sure that your pattern piece doesn't move. Just keep checking to make sure it hasn't moved when you move the ruler. Now, I'm going to take that off there. There's these little notches here, which need to be snipped and this is where I use the point cutter. So I use the point cutter to cut the notches. You could use an exacto knife. You could come in with scissors I just find that when you're lifting to use scissors, you can lose accuracy. It's better to slice straight through. So I'm just going to cut this one like that. And I'm only snipping about, maximum 1/8 of an inch into that notch. Like that. And then, so that's one mirror pair. You need to cut the other pair exactly the same as the first side panel using the remaining interfaced fabric. And then set them aside and get all your other pieces cut out. And then you're ready to sew.

Assemble flap and adding twist lock hardware

- We're going to start assembling the bag now, and we're going to begin with the flat pieces, so you'll need to get the two cut pieces of your flat pattern, the lining and the outer. We're going to put them right sides together and we're going to stitch around the long curved edge here. We're using a 1/2-inch seam allowance here, normal foot and a little back stitch here to begin and we're gonna stitch around the outside edge. I'm just lining up the edge of the fabric with the seam guide here and I'm going to go really slowly around this corner here, just making sure that we're keeping that curve really even. I don't want to cut those corners, well curved corners off and then along the bottom, and I'm just going to make sure that the fabrics are moving at the same rate through the machine so I'm putting a small twist upwards in the fabric. Putting tension on the fabric like that helps it to travel through at the same rate. And then we're gonna go around this corner again just keeping an eye on that stitch guide. And we'll finish with another back stitch here. I'm going to trim away the seam allowance here so that the flap can turn through to the right side without all of this bulk in here. So at the corners, I'm snipping down about the length of twice the seam allowance width, so about an inch down there. That's a standard measurement for reducing bulk in seams if you go twice the depth of the seam allowance. Then, I'm going to swap over to my pinking shears and trim fairly close, so that's kind of a scant 1/4 inch or generous 1/8 of an inch away from the seam and pink around the edges. This helps the fabric to be able to turn through to the right side without all of this bulk of the seam allowance rippling up and creating strange shapes around the outside edge. This now is turned through to the right side. Run your finger around the seam edge and push it right out to the edge here so that you can get that lining to sit back from the outside of the flap and not poke out from underneath. So you don't want it rolling out and showing. You want to roll that outer fabric over the top. And with microfiber, you can't put the iron directly onto the surface of the fabric, so we need to have the pressing cloth. Get the fabric lined up. You just have to do one piece at a time. Put the pressing cloth over and hold it down quite firmly and then put the iron on and put a gentle steam and that'll sit flat like that. We'll then do the other side. So again, roll that seam right to the edge and make sure the lining fabric is sitting back from that edge. Get it rolled right out. Hold it firmly. Put the pressing cloth over, still holding it firmly. Don't let it move, and then press. Like that, bit of steam. Bit of steam works wonders to make fabric do what you want it to do. I'm just checking the underside there. I might give that another press. We can do that without the pressing cloth 'caus this is just cotton. Now that's ready to top stitch. We're going to top stitch around this curved edge here. We're going to start with a quick back stitch here, a little

one, oops, there we go, and I actually keep my thumb nail against the outside edge of the foot as a bit of a seam guide when I sew. So when you come around the corner here, the curve, just keep that edge of the fabric against the edge of your foot all the way 'round and. There we go and finishing with another little back stitch there. We're going to start adding hardware to the bag now beginning with the twist lock. There's four pieces to the twist lock, the top two, the pieces that go on the flap, are the ones with the oval holes on them. The other two pieces are the twist and the piece that goes on the underside, which will go on the right side of the front center panel of the bag. On your pattern pieces, you've got marks here, a little dot here and a little dot here. You need to punch a hole through that with your with your tailor's awl and then we're going to line that center notch up here and you're notches up here with the outer piece. Of course you can do this before you begin sewing, but often it happens at this point. We're going to mark that placement there, which is where this piece is going to go. It's hard to mark through this piece here because it's elevated. I tend to mark the hole that gets cut from the flatter piece by tracing around the inside edge of the oval like that and then cutting it. This is whatever tools take your fancy. If you're happier with your Exacto knife, use that. I'm going to use a point cutter for a bit to get those long edges there, then I'm gonna get my scissors and cut around the curved bits here like that. So you wanna cut this oval enough so that you don't have any of the raw edge of fabric poking out underneath the hole bit, but you don't wanna cut it too big or it won't hold the twist lock for very long. So you've got a hole there. Just double check that it's going to fit here. So I'm popping that in there and now that's overhanging. I'm just going to trim a smidge more out of that edge there and this edge here, so that it doesn't overhang into the gap in the twist lock. Then there's that bit there. So that should go in there and we should be able to stretch it back. You don't want it to be too wide. I think we should be okay. You should be able to stretch that fabric back around this lip here. So it looks like it's fitting nicely now. There's enough cutaway there that we can pull the edges back around the outside of that hole there. So now we just need to put some glue in here and then put it back on and put the back on. Any clear-drying craft glue will work here. It just has to hold the fabric to the metal and I'm going to squeeze that and just use the nozzle to spread the glue around there. Sometimes I'll get a little match stick and get it into all the nooks and crannies, but I think that's fine. It should just cover the surface of the metal without being too much that it's going to spill over. And then this piece goes onto the right side of the bag through that hole there, taking care not to get glue on the fabric and making sure that it's on straight. And turn it over and this is where that lip that's around the inside of that oval will hold back the fabric there and I'm just using the awl here to make sure that it's being pushed that there. You don't want the threads running over the edge 'cause they'll come out into the hole. Okay, so they're back from there. I'll then put a little bit more glue onto the back plate, but this will just help to secure the raw edges of the fabric where we've cut that hole. This goes down this way and then we'll use the side of the scissors to bend these into those gaps there. Okay, that's one and two. If you wanted to grab a hammer and give that a bit of a bash, you could do that, but that should be enough. So now that clip is in there. At this stage, you might be able to just straighten it if it's a little bit wobbly like that. We also have to add the other side of the twist lock to the front of the bag. So I'm going to get the pattern piece again, look for the dot and poke a hole through there. I'm poking through two pieces of paper there because of the joint in the pattern, but I think I've got it. Line that up. Make sure that your notches match. Make sure the edges of the fabric are flush with the paper and mark the placement there for the clasp. This one, you've got to cut two little snips in the fabric where these prongs will go through, so I'm going to mark those like that and then cut them. I'll use the point cutter. You can use the Exacto knife or if you wanted to, you could

fold the fabric like this and use sharp scissors to do little snips like that. So these prongs will go through from the right side of fabric to the back and we'll turn it over like that. So this back plate has to come over here, but the sharp edges of this will wear through your fabric. It's a wear and tear point on the bag, so we're going to reinforce it. I use scraps. Because I make so many bags, I've got lots of scraps of heavy interfacing around the place. If you don't have something like Peltex or Timtex that's got a bit of structure to it, you can fold up several layers of normal interfacing or fabric and use that. I like this because it's fusible and it's thick and it's flat. So what I'm going to do is just cut some little holes the same distance as the prongs are. I'm going to snip into there, place that over the top, oops, like this. (laughs) They're a bit tricky, these little clips, they keep flipping over. And I've put the Peltex over the back. I'm then going to put the back plate on there and use the edge of the scissors to roll them inwards, not outwards. If you push them outwards, you've just got another surface for the wear and tear on the fabric. So that's in there and the front, it looks nice and sweet. There's your twist lock there. So on the back here, this plate can rub against your lining. It also needs something just to hold that down there. I use any kind of nonwoven interfacing that fuses quite easily and fuse a rectangle over the top. This is Pellon Deco-Fuse. There's also Vilene S520 or you could use Craft-Fuse or any other kind of nonwoven because they're nice and solid and they fuse very well. To fuse the interfacing on, I'm just rolling up the pressing cloth to make a gap for this part of the twist lock to go into and that'll create some support there so that we can press the interfacing into place. I've just cut the interfacing randomly, though slightly larger than the Peltex size. Don't worry too much about that, and I'm going to press that on around the edges like this. If you have a bigger towel or something that you can roll up and use underneath, you can do that. That's fine. Now I'm just going to do something a bit tricky and put this on the edge of the ironing board and fuse it into place. That's a bit better. So that's in place there. That's protecting the lining from the back of the clip. So let's just have a look at how those go together. Putting that over the top, twist, perfect.

Attaching side panels to bag body

- We're going to start attaching the side panels to the center panel of the bag to make up the bag body. I've done one already, and we're just going to do the other side. I'll show you how it's done. We're taking the side panel and placing it right side down on the right side of the center panel. And there's notches on here that show where the pieces match together between the side panel and center. And there's a notch to show you the half-inch seam allowance. So we're just gonna be stitching along that edge there. So I'm lining this up with the half-inch seam allowance and doing a quick backstitch. And then I'm going to stitch around with a half-inch seam matching the notch, matching the notch as I go, keeping that same allowance even as I go around the curve. I'm moving this to where these two cross over and making sure they're crossing over at the half-inch seam allowance level. So there's a V shape there. And I'm gonna hold that there to make sure that these match evenly. And as I come around here, I'm keeping the seam even, and I'm going to end up finishing at that crossover point. I'm now going to remove the seam allowance interfacing here just so we can reduce the bulk in the seam. Because we've got a whole lot of seams coming together, I'm having a bit of trouble getting that apart. There we go. I just need to get a corner sometimes. Because we've got all of these seams coming together on the bag, we don't want that buildup of bulk. We wanna make it nice and flat. If your interfacing is very difficult to get off, you can just get this little bottom bit and this top bit. If it's possible, see if you can remove it the whole way around. I'll get it to here. So I'm just going to trim that off like that. Tear that bit there. It's much easier on

the straight bit. And I'll snip that off and do the same on all sides. I'm going to top stitch along here to show you how to create a nice smooth curve on your bag. I've put on the edge stitching foot. If you have one, put it on. If you don't, you just have to keep a very even distance from the seam, about two millimeters or that's just a little bit over a 16th of an inch. And the edge stitching foot helps people like me who can't see properly to do that without even having to think about it. So I'm just gonna move the needle a little bit to the side right there. So the needle's running down a few millimeters from where this flange is, going right into that seam there. Just keeping on moving the fabric flat in front of the foot. The rest can be scrunched up in your hands, but keep that flat in front of the foot. As you're working to the curve, you have to keep moving your hands and flattening it. You will need to use all fingers. As you move into that tight curve, you're just gonna have to keep maneuvering the fabric to keep it flat in front of the foot bed just with a finger's width and keep readjusting it. I've got my thumbs on the underside flattening the seam allowances towards the center of the bag, and I'm flattening the top with my fingers. So the edge stitching foot takes the thinking out of having to keep an even distance from the seam while you're focusing on all of this. Right down to the bottom. I'm backstitching just because I do. It's probably not essential. You can see the seam allowances underneath this curve puckering and floating, and that's creating lumps in this seam. What you need to do now to reduce that is to pink that edge with your pinking shears, cut that seam allowance away. Put it this way. Allow that curve to move in a smooth line. So I'm just running the pinking shears along the edge, cutting about an eighth to a quarter of an inch from the top stitching line. And I'll cut quite close into where we've begun the seam. So what that does is it allows that curve to sit smoothly. And you're gonna do it exactly the same to the remaining two side panels to make the back of the bag.

Assembling front and back to create the bag body

- Now we're going to attach the front of the bag to the back with the outer seam. So we're putting the front piece to the back piece, right sides together, and aligning the outer edge seam. You can use pins at this point if you like, or you can do what I do, which is just hold a head matching the seams and stitching around there. So we're beginning to stitch around the outside with a half inch seam allowance and a small back tack, backstitch. Keeping the two edges aligned, I'm going to match where the seams join together there. Grab it at about halfway, and that's how I keep it together instead of pinning. If you prefer to pin, do. I just find it takes too much time. And coming around the curve, just keep realigning it. Match those seams there. And then keep going, aligning the bottom edge. And then we're stitching back towards that notch there, which will show us the half inch seam allowance finish and the backstitch. Once again, I'm gonna take the interfacing off the seam allowances. Now, it's not important if you can't get it off all the way, but do try and get it off around at the top here, 'cause this bit here is going to join to the O ring loops, and there's a lot of bulk that can build up in that seam, in all of the seams when they're joined together. This interfacing is coming off okay. So I'm just tearing it away. And if this looks a bit too tedious and you think it'll be easier to cut your pieces without the seam allowance, it actually takes just as long to align it and it's less accurate when you're trying to sew it. So I think it's worth the effort of doing it this way. So you just need to remove the rest of the interfacing from around the outer edge of the bag on both the front and back. I'm going to top stitch this seam open, so we have to turn it and get that seam to sit flat and open on the underside. So I'm going to stitch with the edge stitching foot on. Move the needle a few millimeters, about a sixteenth of an inch or a bit more to the right or the left using the flange in the seam here. And that means that we're gonna keep an even distance from

the seam and stitch along here. If you don't have an edge stitching foot, just line it up with some part of the presser foot so that you can keep that stitch really even. So I'm going to stitch down the edge here using the flange in the seam. Underneath, I've got my thumbs working to open that seam and keep it flat as on the top my fingers are pulling the fabric flat in front of the presser foot. And I'll just continue around the whole seam doing that, little by little, flatten underneath, flatten on top. The good thing about having the edge stitching foot is that you don't have to think about where it's lining up. You can concentrate on what you're doing with your hands in front of the needle. It gets a little bit tighter in the curve there, the bottom of the bag, so just work a little bit at time. We're coming up to where the seams converge at the bottom there. It will be a little bit lumpier. Just take it easy over that point so that you don't go off track. And then keep that stitching action going where you're flattening bottom, flattening top, and stitching to the next point where you realign it. Okay, we're coming up to the end. What I'm going to do is turn around, line it up again with the flange in the seam, and do exactly the same thing down the other side. Top stitching the seam allowances open like that will hold the bag in a smooth curve around the outside edge. And to help that, you just need to pink off the edges of the seam allowances to reduce the bulk. Now we're going to attach the O ring to the bag. We do that with this tab here. I've attached one earlier. I'm just going to show you how to sew it. We're going to be stitching the O ring loop together with the fold going through the interfacing here. So we're stitching along here in a bit that doesn't have the interfacing so that there's no bulk in that seam. It's a half inch seam allowance, and you need to do small back tack or backstitch and stitch to the other end. And backstitch again. We then need to trim the seams. I can do that while we're here. Snip at that same angle that we've snipped a few times already that's twice the seam allowance depth. If you're wondering what the stick was about, it's our ironing board for doing straps. So you can thread it through the middle of the strap, and then you can press this seam open and get it really flat without pressing any creases on the rest of the straps. So we're pressing this open and holding it flat. Because its microfiber and you can't put the iron directly on there, it'll shrink it up, we're gonna hold it flat, put the pressing cloth on top, and then iron through that. And I'll shoot some steam through there. And press very hard, because you want that to be as flat as it can possibly be. So there we have the seam pressed open. And now we're just going to start turning it through to the right side and press it again. So push it through. So just keep fiddling with it 'till it comes through. And now we're going to press it flat with the seam running through the middle here. So get that lined up, nice and flat, hold it flat, put the pressing cloth on top, and again, press it flat with some steam. I might just give that a press from the right side, as well. So once we've done the piece like this, we have to top stitch it, and here's one I've done. So you can see how many rows of stitching are there. What I do is use the edge of the presser foot along the edge of the fabric to keep an even distance from the edge and stitch one row. I do the same on the other side, come back again, using the edge of the presser foot along the previous row of stitching and do another row and do the same again on the other side. So you'll have four rows of stitching across that'll hold the O ring loop very flat. So I'm going to thread that through the O ring, matching the ends and matching it up on both sides here. You need to stay stitch this together before you attach it to the bag so that it doesn't end up going in with the two sides of straps twisting. Sometimes they can end up uneven. So I'm just going to stitch across there. No need to back tack really. I'm going to make sure these are even. I've used the tailor's awl just to hold the fabric in place. So that's stay stitched there. And then that gets sewn to the bag. I'm going to attach the O ring loop centered over the middle of the outer seam there. So I'll line it up, make sure it's centered over the seam, and then stay stitch again to hold it in place. I might just backstitch

there to be extra secure. And that's both O rings on the bag. They're upside down and on the right side of fabric. We're going to attach the facing to the top of the bag. This travels around the top edge of the bag there. So I've already done this one because we've covered all of this before. So there's two pieces. We've put them right sides together. You've backstitched both ends of the seam, clipped those seam allowances, and taken the interfacing off and pressed the seams open. So now we're going to put that inside the bag here. It's usually easier to fit it around the inside of the bag with the bag turned wrong side out. So we're putting the facing on the right side of the bag, with right side of facing together with the outside of the bag. So when matching the seams here to the seam on the outside of the bag, the strap is caught in between there. This is why it was so important to reduce the bulk on that seam, because that's a very, very thick little area there. You don't want anything extra. So I am going to pin that to hold it, and then line up the rest of the top of the bag. We've got a notch that matches the seam on the bag there, so you can pin these points if it makes it easier for you to hold it together. Probably will. There's a center front and center back notch, and then there's another one for the other seam there. So we can just make sure that the bag is coming together at those points. And then again over the other O ring, making sure that those seams match up there. It's hard to pin through all of that thickness there. I'm going to go slightly to the side there, to the corners, making sure the edges are flush. Then back around to the other seams and notches. And that one up there. I might just move that pin. There. It's better to pin it on the thinner area. So I've removed the table from the sewing machine just to give myself a little bit more movement around the free arm of the machine. If you can do that on your machine, do it now. And I'm going to start stitching anywhere. You can start anywhere on the top edge of the bag, and stitch with a half inch seam allowance all the way around. So I'll just start stitching. You don't have to backstitch because you can come back and cover that area when you reach the end of the seam. We're gonna stitch around here. Just taking pins out as I go. Another pivot. I just wanna flatten that bit out. You don't want the seam allowances to bunch up in that point there because it will give you too much bulk. And coming back down there, and I can see I've come in a little bit narrower than a half an inch, so I'm just going to neaten that up. So we have a lot of bulk at this point here where the O ring is inside there. I'm going to try and get enough of this interfacing off the seam allowance to reduce the bulk. It can sometimes be a bit tricky to get off. If ever your interfacing is really stuck, you can shoot some steam through it. Sometimes it just takes a little bit more work with fingernails. So I'm gonna trim that off. Trim that seam allowance down. And a little bit back from this corner, as well. So now we're gonna do that to all four corner points on the top edge of the bag. And then we're gonna turn the facing over the top of the seam allowances and do some understitching. So understitching is when you turn the facing over the seam with all of the seam allowances facing towards the facing. And you stitch very, very close to the seam on the facing side. And that holds the seam allowances in a really sharp, smooth line. It flattens that seam, keeps it nice and open so that we can fold it back and create a very sharp edge on the top of the bag. We'll trim away the excess seam allowance after we've understitched it so that that curve opens up and is a very nice, smooth, sharp curve. I'm going to start understitching the facing. So I've put the bag onto the machine with the facing towards the body of the machine and all of the seam allowances facing towards the body of the machine. To get started, you can't really stitch too far back into the curve that's at the side of the bag, so get as far as you can without getting into any bunched up fabric. You don't want to stitch any pockets in there. So if you can get it flat, pop it down there. Again, I've put the edge stitching foot on because it just takes the thinking out of aligning the needle with the seam. You wanna be stitching about a generous sixteenth of an inch away from that seam. And I've

put the flange of the edge stitching foot into the seam there, and the needle is set just a little bit to the right. And start with very tidy little backstitch, and start stitching, and then, as you stitch along, keep smoothing that seam allowance underneath the facing while you straighten the fabric at the top to open that seam. So understitching a bag means that you don't have to press the seam back first. You just go from stitching straight into understitching. It'll do a better job than trying to press a seam open. So it's starting to get a little bit tricky now. I'll flatten it. And when it gets too hard, I'll just hit back tack, and that's it. So that's the understitched edge there. You can see that the seam allowances are still quite tight in there. So we'll pink those off, and then that curve will sit in a lovely, smooth line, and we'll be able to top stitch around it. So I'm trimming it off to about an eighth of an inch away from that stitch line. Oop! It's a bit hard over the seams. Once that's turned, you can see that smooth line that's made by the understitching. And then we'll do that to the other side. So once these seam allowances are pinked, we wanna press back this facing and you'll see that nice, smooth curve that's happening. Another thing to pay attention to is to poke those corners out either side of the O ring there. Now, to press this, it's easiest to go over the end of the ironing board, and again, just make sure, these little corners will want to keep poking back in. It's the nature of the microfiber to keep wanting to spring back. So hold them down firmly. Use that edge stitched edge to push the seam right to the very top and hold it firmly. Then, again, we can't put the iron on the microfiber, so we're gonna put a pressing cloth over the top, still holding it firmly underneath, and then from the top, then we're going to steam that down, pressing quite firmly and steaming. And that should nice and flat like that. So you just keep moving it around, smoothing that line, holding it down, and pressing. We'll do that all the way around the top of the bag, getting those corners out. They sometimes need to be wriggled a little bit. And then we'll put the pressing cloth over. And nice and flat. I'm pressing from the facing side so that there's no shininess on the outer if there's any. The pressing cloth should stop the shining, but just in case. Okay. So that's pressed. So we're back to the normal presser foot now, and lining up the edge of the presser foot with the edge of the bag, we're going to top stitch around that edge. I'm just gonna grab those threads there so they don't bunch up. On the underside, make sure they're held. A little bit of a backstitch. And then, taking it easy over the lump of the O ring loop there. And stitch to the width of the presser foot from the edge there and pivot and keep that aligned. I'm gonna keep my thumb pressed up against the presser foot there as a seam guide. So you can see how the understitching holds that facing back as you're sewing, and it makes it very easy to keep a really sharp, smooth line there. So stitching up towards that corner point, just make sure it hasn't poked back in there like that one has. I'm going to ease that out using the seam ripper. I usually would use a tailor's awl for that. And again, just keeping that top stitching an even distance from the edge. Turn, and continue around the top edge of the bag. Back to the start. Here we are. So it's starting to really look like a bag now, and we're ready to start making the lining.

Chapter 4 - Creating the Lining and Finishing

Assemble lining

- We're ready to start assembling the lining now, and we're starting with the pocket, so you need to take one of your lining pieces. You'll need the pocket facing pattern piece, the piece of fabric that's cut with that, and the interfacing. And you'll also need your pocket lining piece, which was the rectangle cut from your lining earlier on. This little window shape that's on the pattern piece needs to be traced through onto that, because we're going to cut it out. So, if you put that over the top, use your ruler, and your fabric marker. Or you could use a normal pencil if you like for this. And just

trace that over. Try and keep it as straight and as square as possible, and then cut it out using a rotary cutter. And it doesn't matter if you overshoot the corners on this, because it's going to be fused down. So make sure the whole thing is cut out neatly, and don't worry about cutting into the corners. Just cut straight past them. That should come out there. We're going to fuse that piece to the back of the facing piece like that, and you need to have that area of fabric in the middle there uncut. So once that's pressed, we have to get the lining ready to attach the facing and the pocket. So, we've got some markings on the pattern here. You can transfer them through to the wrong side of fabric on the lining. And, just poke some pins through so that we can see where those markings are on the right side of fabric. Then turn that over, and these pins are going to go in at the very end of this window here. So, we're putting it right in the center of that little short line there. And this one here, is going here. Get it lined up. You can then take the pins out once we know that that's in place. And if you like, you can put the pins in on this side. So that's getting ready. We're going to stitch the window where the zipper is going to sit. So to stitch the facing on, I'm going to stitch on the fabric side of the cut edge of the interfacing. So using the interfacing as a guide to stitch very straight, but we're stitching on the fabric. So get your needle lined up, and make sure it's in the right position. And, it's a good idea to start halfway along one of the long cut edges. Don't start at the very bottom end there, because it's a corner that we're going to be cutting into later. So we're stitching around. (sewing) Take that pin out. (sewing) When you get down to the corner point, just make sure that you pivot cleanly right in the corner. You can adjust it if you need to, just to make sure that you're not crossing over onto the interfacing. And I'm going to put this in needle down position. And pivot. And along the other edge here. (sewing) And again, just slow right down so you can see what you're doing. Use the handwheel if necessary, to make sure you get a really neat rectangle. This window shape is going to be the area where the zipper sits, so you want it to be really sharp and neat. (sewing) And back over where you started. So you can see those stitches are right along the edge of the interfacing there. And, we're now going to cut through that center piece. So you can use scissors for this, but it's easier I think to use a point cutter, or your X-Acto knife, and get the point of the blade right in that corner, so you're cutting backwards from the point, rather than cutting towards the stitches. And that way, you're less likely to cut through the stitches. So we cut it to a V in the center there, and do that at both ends. I'm going to just turn this around so I can see what I'm doing. Rocking that back into the center of the rectangle there. Making sure the blade's not cutting through any stitches. So you cut a little V point here, and now we're going to cut between the tips of those Vs, along through the center. And I'll just do that with the rotary cutter. And straight through the center there. And you can see the little V there, and it's cut all the way through there. We're now going to take it over to the ironing board, and press this through to the other side. And that will be our window for the zipper. There. So we're just going to start by pressing the facing up away from the seam. If you can, fingerpress the seams open on the underside, and put them down on the ironing board. And that will allow you to press that seam very, very flat, which means that it'll turn back from the front with a really sharp edge, like that. I'll just fingerpress that again. And then do the same on the other side. So we're pressing the facing edges in towards the middle of the facing. These seam allowances are pretty small, so if you can't press them open, don't panic too much about it. But, if you can fingerpress them, and get that flat, you can do that. Okay. So now, this piece gets turned through to the wrong side of fabric here. We'll turn it all the way through. Don't worry if the interfacing detaches. We can just press that back on. And now, we're going to fold the facing back from the seam, right at the seam. Having pressed that open makes that a lot easier. So just work with one at a time. Roll that seam right to the edge, and then press. Just gonna

move that a little bit there. Press it along there. And the other side. You need to pull the corners out, because they'll want to pucker up. And, press that flat from the wrong side of fabric, and then we'll turn it over and straighten it up from the front. So again, just rolling the edges. Anything, any of the facing side that's coming to the front, push it to the back, and vice versa. You want that pretty square and clean. So we're going to stick the zipper on at the back there, using the quarter inch fusible tape. I'm going to put this cloth underneath, just to protect the ironing board. You can put paper underneath if you prefer. And, I've got the quarter inch tape here. Gonna make sure that I've got the tape side down, the fusible side down, paper side up. And, just run that along the edge of the opening, following with the iron like this, on both sides. This means we don't have to use pins. It'll hold the zipper into place. And we'll be able to stitch it without it moving. I'll just let that cool for a second or two. And then peel the paper off. And you can see the adhesive is stuck to the fabric there. If it comes off, if the adhesive comes off with the paper, it usually means that it's still a little bit warm. So I'll start with this one, and then come back to the other end there. And, that's that one there. Okay. So now we need to take the zipper, and put the zipper down on the ironing board. And then align this slot over the top of the zipper. Try and get it as straight as possible. I'm using a seven inch zipper in a six inch slot, and that's no problem at all, because it runs off the edge here. We're going to stitch around there, and it's not going to hit any ends there. But on this side, what we wanna do is make sure that the metal stoppers are within the bounds of that little slot, the opening there. So, get it all lined up, and then we're going to press it with the iron. And that fusible tape should stick the zipper into place. So we've got the zipper foot on, and we're going to stitch quite close to the edge, all the way around the outside of the zipper. And I'll do a tiny little backstitch. You don't want a huge backstitch area. And just follow that cutaway area all the way around. Now when you're sewing a zipper, it's a good idea not to sew around the zipper head. What you can do is get that out of the way. And stitch along here without the zipper head being a great big bulk there. We pivot. And around. (sewing) And finish with a really neat backstitch. Just a few stitches. So now the zipper is in place. We can attach the pocket lining. So, I'll turn that over to the wrong side up. The pocket lining is going to be going upside down, inside out, and back to front. It goes extending over the top there. It looks completely wrong, but it's right. So you've got the right side of fabric facing the right side of the facing, and the back of the zipper. And, it's all extending up the top there. I'm just going to use the fabric glue stick to stick that in place. It's more secure than pinning, and then we don't have to think about it. Okay, that's stuck on there. This is so that the pocket will come down like this, and back up like that. For now, we're going to pick it up like this, and flip it over. And this is where we're going to be sewing. Right in here. We've got the zipper foot on, and we're going to stitch right down the full length of the facing. Trying to get in as close as possible to the seamline in here. And, I'm just going to quick backstitch. Now as I'm coming into the part where the pocket's attached, I'm trying to get right into the ditch of the seam. As close into there as I can. So the zipper foot makes that a lot easier. But you really have to pull the fabric back, and get that stitch right into that ditch there. (sewing) If you don't get close enough the first time, you can actually come back and do it again another time. A second time. Nobody will see it. Okay, that's it there. So we're going to press the pocket back from the zipper. And then fold it up. And press the bottom edge into a nice crease, like that. And again, I use the fabric glue stick pen instead of pins, because it's just quick, and very, very secure, like that. I'm going to do exactly the same as I did on the bottom edge, in that I'm going to grab it by the facing, and flip it over, and stitch in along this line here. (sewing) I'm really pulling that fabric back. And stitching in the ditch. (sewing) So while we're at the machine, we've still got a few more lines of stitching, just to stitch up the sides of the pocket. So, I've still got

the zipper foot on there, so I can get in close to the edge. And, I'm going to backstitch across the end of the zipper there. And then I might as well just leave the zipper foot on, because it's quicker than changing it to the other. If you want to change to your normal foot you can. Stitching up the sides of the pocket back. (sewing) I'm going to stitch across the end of the zipper here, before stitching the sides of the pocket. And now, stitching up the sides of the pocket, I can actually flip it around this way. It's probably easier. It doesn't really matter what your seam allowance is here. You can make the pocket as wide or as narrow as you like. So I'm going to do it at about half an inch. But if you wanted to just continue that line down, you could. Whoops, that's not taking off. There we go. (sewing) So there we have the pocket. It's all ready to go. And now it's time to start making the darts, which will create the shape in the bag. So you're pinching the two pieces together like this. And you can see when you line up the dart there, the crossover is matching a half inch in from the edge there, and there's a notch there. We're going to be stitching, backstitching here, and keeping an even half inch right up to here. So starting at the notch, we're going to stitch that dart up. (sewing) Backstitch using the normal foot. And just curving around to the fold, and backstitching on the fold. And do exactly the same thing on the other side. To finish the darts, we're going to press them towards the center of the bag there. I'm just lying it on the ironing board and pressing. Nothing tricky here. And, this one folded towards the center, and pressed. So now you're going to sew the darts on the other side of the lining, and press them in exactly the same way. And then you're ready to put the lining together. I've done the other side here, so I'm going to bring them together. And I'm putting them right sides together, and matching those darts at the bottom there. Just making sure that we've pressed the darts towards the center, that they stay that way. I might actually also just trim those ends of the darts there, just to reduce some bulk in the seam where all of those converge. Again, using that corner rule, where your cutting about an inch down the length of the seam allowance, back to the point, like that. To sew the lining together, we're going to use a half inch seam, and sew all the way around, but then stop just inside this dart here. Start again here, and come up the side here. You need that gap in the bottom of the lining to turn the finished bag through once it's all sewn together. Beginning at the top of the bag, I'm going to do a quick little backstitch. (sewing) And follow that curve. Pin was on the wrong side. So once you cross the dart, just stitch another half inch or so, to about an inch. And then backstitch. So much for pinning, I've put them on the wrong side. And then start again, at the other side. All the way around to the top again. (sewing) And backstitch. While we're at the machine, we're going to edge stitch the lining, because it's quicker than getting up and ironing the seam allowances open. So I've placed the edge stitching foot on, and the lining's underneath it, with all of the seam allowances facing the machine body. With the flange in the middle of the seam there, I've set the needle about just over a 16th of an inch to the right of that. I'm going to backstitch. And just follow that seam as far as it goes down to the bottom of the bag. If you don't have an edge stitching foot, you're just stitching along here, holding all the seam allowances to the bottom. (sewing) This allows the bag to sit on a really nice curve, with the extra support coming from the lining. And I'm going to do a backstitch at the end of that seam, and then continue where the seam begins again on the other side. I'm just making sure that the seam allowances are still facing the body of the machine. And when I'm sewing, I'm going to be using my thumbs to really make sure that they don't flip back over. Some fluff there. So lining up that flange again. Backstitch. And, using my fingers to flatten the fabric, my thumbs to adjust the seam allowance. (sewing) And finishing with another backstitch. That's the lining made. We just have to trim the seam allowances, and it's ready to go in the bag. Using your pinking shears, just trim down to about an eighth to a 16th of an inch away from the stitch line, to get

rid of that excess seam allowance there. You can see it from this side. That will help that to sit in a really smooth curve. Okay, we'll leave the bottom bit. We don't trim that bit off. That's the opening of the bag there. So now it's ready to be sewn to the bag. So we have our bag. We'll turn that inside out. And lift the facing edge right to the top like that. The lining is turned right side out. This zipper goes to the back of the bag, which is the side that doesn't have the clasp on it. So we'll turn that over, and make sure that goes in that way. This is where we start lining up notches. And that's our center notch. It's a good idea to pin. So I'll pin that one there. I then go to the side seam, because these are convex and concave curves coming together, which can be a bit tricky to fit, so we'll go with the side seams first. Match those. And then we're going to match up these curves. You can see they're going in different directions. But you can ease them together. So move them until they match. And then put a pin in. And you'll go around the top of the bag doing that. So start from the center and side seam, and then do the one in between. Back at the sewing machine, I've got the normal foot on, with the needle in the center position again. You're going to stitch around the top edge where the lining joins the facing of the bag, with a half inch seam allowance. And, you don't need to backstitch really, but you can if you have the habit of it like I do. (laughs) It's not essential. Because, you're going to just stitch around the whole top and you can just cover over where you began. Ease those edges together, to keep them flush. (sewing) Although they're different shapes, they do match along the half inch seam line, so it's just a matter of maneuvering the fabric to make sure it matches on the edge, and keeping that seam allowance even. If you're narrower or wider than half an inch, it won't come together. It'll have puckers in it. (sewing) It takes a little bit of maneuvering, but it's not too bad. (sewing) This is my favorite bit, because it begins to look like a bag. So, reach through the gap in the bottom, and pull the whole thing through. And a bag is born. There we go. Now, you can admire it for a bit, and then sew up the lining. You can either hand stitch this closed, or press the seam allowances in like that, and just topstitch them together, along that edge there.

Attach flap and make strap

- We're going to attach the flap now. I'm going to get rid of any little fraying ends of fabric, but here we have to be careful not to cut too much off. So don't cut the fabric, just cut the threads, because we don't have much fabric to play with. If you cut it all off the flap won't fit. Now, on the back of the bag, on the right side of fabric we're putting the flap with the lining side facing out. We're dropping it down about three-eighths of an inch from the very edge of the bag to the edge of the flap there, and centering it between the same lines here. I'm going to pin that now, make sure it doesn't move because we're going to top stitch it on. So I pin it and make sure it's secure at both ends and it's sitting in a straight line. I've taken the table off the machine because it's easier to sew this with a free arm. If you don't have that you can actually turn your bag inside out and sew with this on the flat bed of the machine. I'm going to line this up so that I'm stitching just over an eighth of an inch from the edge. Yeah you want a little narrow seam allowance there. And backstitch. Be careful not to backstitch too far because that will be visible on the back of the bag. We just want to be on the flap of the bag. And backstitch again at the other end. Now it's stitched on. We're going to flip it over and topstitch along this edge here which will encase the seam allowances in there. Just take it easy over that first part because you've got the lumps of seam allowance in the edge of the flap. Okay, now really ease that flap over the top of those seam allowances. Flatten it out. And then back tack at the other end. Now it's time to construct the strap. We've got the interfacing on the strap. And you can see the half-inch seam allowance doesn't have any interfacing. So backstitching at the

beginning, and keeping the edges together, and keeping that half-inch seam. Can sometimes be on top of the interfacing. If the interfacing is moved, it may not be caught, but it mostly is. So I'll stitch to about halfway and then stop and backstitch. That's about halfway. Backstitch here. We'll move it about an inch and a half, two inches, pop it back down again, backstitch, and continue that seam. All the way down to the bottom, and backstitch again. You'll need to reduce the bulk at both ends of the strap. And I'm going to cut that off at that same corner angle, about an inch down the edge of the seam allowance from the end of the seam there. Doing that at both ends will make it go around the O-ring without adding extra bulk. Now, using the stick that we used for the O-rings earlier, the O-ring loops, I'm going to thread that through the strap and this is our ironing board for the strap. The rounded bit goes underneath the seam. Because the iron doesn't like being put straight on microfiber and microfiber's not so keen on the iron, we're going to put the pressing cloth over the top and hold that seam allowance open and steam it and press it quite hard to make sure it sits very very flat. We don't want those seam allowances moving around inside the strap. The good thing about this stick is that you can keep pressing it even over the bit where the opening is, you can still press open those seams. So I take the stick out and we're ready to sew across the ends of the strap, and just make sure that this seam is in the middle of the strap. Try and keep it straight in the middle and we're going to sew across the very end of the seam, half-inching and backstitching on both edges. This end of the strap is going to be visible when it's turned through to the right side. We need it to be as flat and square as possible and to reduce all the excess buildup of seam allowance in here I'm just going to nick the corners off, not right to the seam, but just reduce a little bit of that seam allowance bulk in there before we turn it through. I'll do that at both ends. Turning a strap through can be a bit tricky sometimes, so I've got a few tools to help me. I start by turning the end through and just using my fingers using that short end seam to press against to make a dip in the top of the strap. The next thing to do is to find a rubber glove of some sort. This is a gardening glove. You can use quilting gloves or you can use dishwashing gloves if that's all you've got to hand but it makes a huge difference to how much grip you have. You also need a stick or dowel, and the dowel goes in that dip there and the glove allows you to grip the strap and pull it over the stick. The trick to keeping the strap turning through evenly is to only move a little bit at a time, right near the fold over there. If you try to bring too much down, it'll all jam up on the stick. Once you're a few inches down, make sure you know where the gap in your seam is and the end of the stick comes through there so you keep pulling it down, and you've turned through one end of the strap then you can do the other side. Going through that gap in the seam. Look at it go, it's like magic, it's a strap. Once you've turned the strap through, the seam ends will be poking in at the corner there, so it's important to bring them out and make sure that the end of the strap is very very flat and the seam allowance is flat within there. I use the tailor's all to lift up those corners. Rather than poking something into a corner, which means that you can sometimes be jamming more seam allowance into it, what you need to do is to make sure that there are no pockets or lumps in that seam allowance because this is quite thick and it's going to be being sewn back onto the strap there and it's going to be visible. So I'm using the tailor's all to lift those corners gently, I'm not ripping the fabric, but I'm lifting, lifting and flattening with my fingers like that. And trying to make it as square as possible. Wriggle those seam allowances around til they feel flat. Roll it between your thumb and finger and you should have a nice square end of this strap. We're just going to take this over to the ironing board, use the pressing cloth, and press it flat with the seam in the center in the strap. We're gonna close up the gap in the strap now. I have a needle threaded with matching thread, I put a little knot in the end, and I'm going to come in underneath the seam allowance here, just beyond

where that seam has finished here, like this. I'm going to slip-stitch it, or ladder-stitch it, whichever you call it, so crossing from one folded edge directly across to the other and take in about an eighth to a quarter of an inch off that fold. Cross directly back over to the other folded edge, and do the same on the other side. Keep doing this the length of that gap there. If you keep the two folded edges together, you can see what you're doing, and you can see where the end of the gap is there. When you're coming to the end of the gap, just make sure that any threads from the seam are poking inside there, and we're going to do the last stitch. That's coming from that side, we'll go up here, the last stitch here. I'll come back on the other side. And then I do two little french knots here, which is putting the needle in, tiny stitch, wrap the thread around the needle three times, and pull it through. Tighten it. I do two of those. Then I thread that needle back underneath, pull it a bit tight, and snip it off so that the end of the thread sits inside the strap when it's flattened out. Then that's joining the seam. Make sure the seam allowances inside are still sitting flat in there. You're gonna topstitch the strap now and you'll do that with five rows of stitches, evenly spaced out across the strap using the edge of the presser foot as a stitch guide the same way that you did on the O-ring loops. The only difference is that you've got to backstitch the ends of the strap really neatly because they're going to be visible once it's stitched around the O-ring. I've got mine here. You can see the backstitching here. I've pulled the threads through to the other side. This is going to be going through the slide adjuster. That's the top of the slide adjuster, right side of the strap going through that and that'll be folding around to the side of the strap that has the seam. And we're gonna topstitch this on here. I have the strap lined up here. I've left nearly an inch here to give myself enough space with the presser foot to be able to turn around. We're going to stitch a box on here. Make sure that the edge of the strap is within the bounds of the outer strap there and put it under the needle. You need to stitch very very close to the edge of this here. We're gonna start. Hold your threads so that they don't bunch up on the underside, and do a very neat backstitch. This is an area where the presser foot can push the strap and it can end up poking off over the edge of the strap so use your tailor's all and bunch the strap up just a little bit so that it sits on the inside of the outer strap so you can push it in, ease it in, and then use the tailor's all, little by little, walk it in front of the needle to hold the strap into place. Really hold that down very firmly and stitch right to the edge. Then if you can set your machine to be needle-down when it finishes, that makes it much easier; it's one less thing to do because you need the needle down before you pivot, and then we're going to stitch down about three-eighths of an inch, pivot again. It's easier to stitch across the second time but it's still worth adjusting that. That's just pushed in a little bit from the edge and held down with the tailor's all. So we'll stitch to the edge, pivot again, now if you can't turn this way, if your foot is going to be on there, sometimes it's easier just to reverse out of that. And then a neat backstitch. So that's the slide adjuster on. To put the strap on with the slide adjuster, we've got to make sure that the underside of the strap, the bit where you can see where you've sewn the strap, is facing upwards, and then you'll take the opposite end of the strap and thread that through the O-ring, keeping the wrong side of the strap facing up for a bit, and then threading the strap through with the right side of the strap going through the right side of the slide adjuster so that the wrong side is all inside here. That's the side with the seam on it, inside there. And then this end here comes through the O-ring, and we'll stitch this on with a box in exactly the same way that we did the slide adjuster. So you have a bag. You've got a great little hobo to carry all your things but also you've learned great tips for professional finish. You've learned to use bag hardware, twist locks, you've learnt to make a snappy little zipper pocket on the inside of your bag, and you can tell everybody you made this bag. (groovy music)