
How to Make a Backpack with Nicole Mallalieu

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview

(lively music) - Hi, I'm Nicole Mallalieu. I'm a designer, pattern maker, and teacher. I design sewing patterns and I've written two books. One of them is *You Sew Girl*, and the other is *The Better Bag Maker*. I teach at a fashion college. And I also teach workshops in bag making. I'd like to show you a backpack that's very simple for beginners. But it's got some nice finishing details that give a professional look to your finished bag. I'm going to show you how to prepare your fabric with interfacing and fleece, how to make a lining with a very simple pocket, and how to make some straps and use hardware like D-rings and snap hooks. Finally, we're going to do some top stitching, which will give your bag a really nice, sharp finish.

Chapter 2 - Materials

Materials

- Let's run through the tools and materials you will need. Starting with our fabric. We're gonna need 20 inches of a quilting weight fabric for your main fabric. You can use any print, I've got a polka dot here. 20 inches of a quilting weight for your lining, and a yard of another fabric for your straps that's a heavier weight like a cotton drill. We've got 60 inches of light fusible interfacing and 20 inches of a fusible fleece. You're going to need your pattern piece printed out, tiled, and taped together. We've got some tools here. A zipper foot is handy, as is a walking foot if you have one. They're not essential but they'll make the job a lot easier. Point cutter, the point cutter is one of my favorite tools. If you don't have one you can use an x-acto knife or just normal scissors, and same with the duckbill scissors. They're a bit weird looking but you can just use regular scissors. I've also got some thread snips, a tailor's awl, an unpicker, a hera marker which is optional but handy, as is a fabric glue stick pen. You'll also need a rotary cutter, a mat, and a long quilting ruler. Fabric marker of some kind, I've got pencils, there's two three quarter inch D rings, three one inch D rings, two snap hooks. You also need two one inch slide adjusters. Quilt pasting spray or fabric friendly spray glue and some fusible webbing. And I've gotta sheet here that's 8 by 12 inches. Pressing cloth or a piece of cotton fabric, it's also nice to have some pins on hand, and you're gonna need a sewing machine, an iron, and an ironing board.

Chapter 3 - Prepare Fabric and Sew Outer Bag and Lining

Prepare fabric with interfacing

- We're gonna begin by preparing our fabric, and I like to block fuse fabric because, by fusing the interfacing and the fleece to the fabric first, we can cut and keep everything very accurate. And the more accurate your cutting, the more accurate your sewing, and the better the overall finish of the bag. In front of me I've got the printed pattern piece, the interfacing, two layers doubled over, and the fusible fleece, and I've got that doubled over as well. I'm going to just cut roughly around the edges here leaving about a half inch around the outside of the pattern piece. And now we're going to move over to the ironing board and start fusing our interfacing to our main fabric. I'm going to make sure that I've got the glue side of the interfacing facing the fabric, and you can usually feel that there's either texture or a shine to this side of the interfacing. That's going against the wrong side of your main fabric. We've got our 20 inches of main fabric here. To fuse the interface into the

fabric, you're going to hold the iron down on the interfacing for about five seconds in each part. Don't move the iron around in a sliding fashion because you can shift the position of the interfacing and get wrinkles in it. So we're lifting slightly and pressing down all over. It could take a little while. If you have a fusing press you can do it in one hit, but a domestic iron we have to just be patient. That looks like it's on. And you just have to check to make sure that there's no bubbles, no areas where it's not fused because, once you have put your fleece on, you can't go back and fuse the interfacing because they require different heat. We're gonna place the fleece right on top of the interfacing and fuse it in place, and change the iron setting to a slightly lighter setting and make sure the steam's on the iron. Put the fleece with the glue side down to the back of the interfacing. And, again, you can usually see or feel that the glue is a slightly textured surface. That's going right over the back of the interfacing there. Because the fleece is synthetic, we're going to use a pressing cloth to protect the iron as we press it on. The iron needs to be quite steamy and we're gonna steam through the pressing cloth. Just give it a good shot like that. And, we'll just quickly check and make sure. Yes, it's stuck on. It should stick. And I'll move that along. Steam this bit on as well. This can shrink the fleece. Okay, that's got one little bubble there. I'll press that out. Look all over and make sure it's fused. If it's not, you just keep pressing it. We're just gonna repeat that fusing the interfacing and the fleece to the other side of fabric. And I'd position it in exactly the same place, parallel to the salvage edge of the fabric. What you should have in front of you now is your main fabric with your fleece and interfacing fused to both sides. We're going to line up both the salvage edges so that the straight grain is kept very, very straight, and line up the pattern piece so that the straight grain is parallel to the salvage. We're going to cut the pattern out now, and lining up the quilting ruler with the edge of the pattern, and keeping firm pressure on the ruler so you don't slip, and cutting with the rotary cutter around the edge. As you move the quilting ruler, just make sure that the edges are still lined up with the paper along the edges that you've already cut. And keep cutting around the edges and, again, check that it's lined up. You can use pins and scissors for this, but it's much more accurate to use a quilting ruler. Feel free to rotate the mat as you're cutting so that you're always cutting away from yourself. And, cutting. That's it. Now, while the paper pattern is still on there, we're going to have to notch the positions of the straps with the point cutter. You can also use scissors for this, but I find cutting directly down gives you a much more accurate, clean finish. And just keep cutting the notches all the way around the pattern template. We're going to punch holes through these marking points on the pattern here, on all five of them. And that's where going to mark the pattern pieces to show the placement of the straps. They're both the same at the moment, but one is going to become the front, and one is going to become the back. We just line the pattern piece making sure that your bottom strap marks are still in the same position, you're lining it up with the edges, and marking through to the fabric. So this is going to become the back piece. I'm gonna double check that I can actually see those marks there, and there. This marking here, which is going to be where the d-ring goes, that's now the back piece. And we're going to mark the front pieces with the dot points that are at the bottom here, lining it up, and marking through the pattern piece like that. so we've got the front and back pieces now, and you'll be able to tell the difference by the position of the dots on them there. We'll put those out of the way, get our lining cut. You're going to have to cut two pieces of lining, and they are 14 1/2 inch by 17 1/2 inch pieces. And there's going to be a pocket piece for those linings as well, and that one is 14 1/2 inches by 7 1/4 inches. In addition to cutting the lining and pocket, you'll also have to cut some straps. To cut the straps, I've cut off the salvage edge because it'll shrink at a different rate from the rest of the fabric, and we don't want that to happen inside the straps. And we've got a nice straight edge to

line the ruler up against. This strap has to be four inches by 34 inches, so I'm going to mark that length in. We've got 24 of the ruler, plus another 10 there. So I've got the length, and I'm going to line up the four inch mark with the edge of the fabric and cut that out using the rotary cutter. And then I'll just slide that ruler up keeping the four inch line on the edge of the fabric and cutting that off. And, just straightening off that edge there. So that's one strap, then use that edge to cut the second one in exactly the same way. Most important is to make sure you don't slip, keep a good grip on the ruler, and just double check that it's lined up all the way along the four inch line. There. We've already cut the shoulder straps here. We also need to cut straps for the snap hooks, for the small loops, and also, on the back, we've got a large d-ring loop strap here. We'll cut that as one and then cut pieces off the end when we've top-stitched it together, and that'll make the d-ring straps like that. For the shoulder stripes you've just cut, you also have to cut interfacing, and that will be fused in exactly the same way as we did the main interfacing, but we're going to leave the seam allowance all the way around here with about an inch on either side. So, for the large d-ring strap, you're going to cut four by 18 inches for the fabric, and then for the interfacing, two by 17 inches. And you'll set that back so that you've got an inch at one end where there's no interfacing, and, at the other end, the interfacing meets the edge of the fabric there. And then, you'll need to cut the snap hook straps. And they're two and 1/2 by 18 inches. They don't need interfacing. The small loop straps from the front, they're two and 1/2 by six inches, and they don't need interfacing either. And that's a lot of straps, but it's all written on your pattern, so make sure they're cut to that size and the interfacing is fused to the straps before we move on.

Make and attach bag straps

- It's time to start assembling the bag. And we're starting with the straps which will be attached to the bag pieces. Now they're in a four fold strap construction which means you're gonna be folding each strap in half length wise and pressing a crease along that center fold line there. And then we'll open it up again and fold the outer edges in towards that crease and press those creases along there. Press again, matching the two edges. We'll fold the edges together and pressing the crease. So it's folded four times. Okay, that's it. I'm going to reduce the bulk at the end of the shoulder strap on both ends where the interfacing doesn't reach the end. Just because there's four layers and by the time the strap is put on the hardware it's folded around the hardware and then the raw edge is tucked under. Without reducing the bulk, you'd be trying to sew through 12 layers which would be just way too bulky. We're going to trim from about an inch, three quarters of an inch to an inch down. Back to about an eighth of an inch from the folded edge. Cut out a little square like that from each side. When we put that strap back together there's only two layers of fabric for most of it. There's a little bit at the edge there but we need that to hold the strap together. That will fold like that and go around the hardware like that and be sewn back onto the strap. So you're gonna have to reduce bulk on all the straps where any strap meets hardware. On the shoulder straps, you're going to do it on both ends of the strap. And on the center strap here you're only going to do it on one end. And that's the end that doesn't have the interfacing. On the smaller straps, they don't have interfacing at all. You're just going to choose one end and reduce the bulk. We're gonna do that a little bit differently on these shorter ones here and the longer ones here. On the smaller strap, you're only going to cut about a half inch down here. And again, quite close to the edge. Which I think is somewhere like a scant quarter or a generous 16th of an inch and cut those edges off there too. So that will reduce the bulk where it's going around the snap hook or the smaller D-rings and they'll come back together like that. We're gonna sew all the straps in the same way. And I'm going to

show you on my largest strap here how it all goes. The first step here is optional. It's just a handy little tip for making sure that all the layers those four folds of fabric that they stay together while you're sewing. And I use quilt basting spray. I first spray a light coat on a piece of fusible fleece just so it's got a nice tacky surface. And lay the strap open on that. And give it a bit of berth. Just ever so lightly. Make sure it goes to the end. And that means that when we line up the edges we can make doubly sure that we match those two folded edges together. You're lining up those edges if you use good quality quilt basting spray it won't stain your fabric. It will come off. That strap will be nice and flat as it goes in under the machine. We just need to keep folding it and matching edges. And the good thing about basting spray is it's re-positionable. So if you get it in the wrong spot you can just realign it and stick it back down again. At the ends, make sure that these little folded edges are well stuck down and stuck together. That there's no raw edges poking out. So I'll just fold that again. Make sure that they're aligned. Okay, so that's now ready for stitching. I've switched to a walking foot on the machine. This is completely optional but it does help to make the strap move through smoothly because it keeps all the layers moving at the same time. Now I'm going to top stitch as close to the edge as I can so that I'm going to catch both edges as I stitch along. We've stuck them together carefully so we know that they're aligned. But you're just gonna stitch along the edge until we reach the end. And then we'll top stitch over the whole strap. Just making sure down at the end that I catch those edges. You don't need to back tack or back stitch here. And we'll just turn it around kinda stitch along the other edge exactly the same distance from the folded edge, although there's only one folded edge on this side. So, stitch it in like that. We're then going to realign the strap and I actually line up somewhere on the strap with somewhere on the foot to try and make sure I'm stitching about a quarter of an inch in from the last row of stitches here. So on this machine that means I'm lining up the stitch with the inside edge of the presser foot. And then flipping it around. And doing the same on the other side. Okay. Now you can also do one row of top stitching down the middle. Basically the more top stitching you do the flatter the strap will sit. So, to stop any puckering we'll just do one straight through the middle of those two. You can be more mathematical about how to space them out. But it doesn't really matter if you don't have them evenly spaced as long as they're symmetrical. Okay. That's the strap top stitched. And you can just see those lines of top stitching there. They'll hold the strap nice and flat. What you should have in front of you are the two shoulder straps and you'll need the two slide adjusters for those. We've got one large D-ring loop. It will be cut into three for the three D-rings. You've got two of the hook straps for each of the snap hooks. And two of the short loop straps for the small D-rings. So take the large D-ring loop strap. We're going to cut the end off to make two loops for the D-rings. So if you measure the strap from the end that doesn't have the interfacing on it down 13.5 inches and snip that end off there. And if you fold that piece in half cut it in half there. I've now got some loops to thread through the large D-rings to attach to the bag. And that's where your shoulder straps will loop through. We have to stitch those together. We're going to attach the D-rings to the loops and I'm using a zipper foot so I can get in nice and close to the D-ring. It's not absolutely essential but it just makes it easier to move close to the D-ring without hitting it with the foot. So a little back stitch. And along the edge of the D-ring. And another little back stitch there. And that's held in place. We've stitched across there. We're just gonna do exactly the same thing to the other one. We're going to start attaching the straps to the bag pieces. Starting with the back piece. And we're going to fuse those on because it saves them from moving around when you're trying to sew them. I've cut seven eighths inch strips of the fusible webbing. Well one seven eighth strip. And I'm going to fuse that centered over the bottom notch on the bag piece there. I'm going to lay that over there.

And set back to about a quarter of an inch down from the dot that you marked on the back piece. I'm just going to trim off the bottom piece there. Depending on how long your fusible webbing is you might have to trim off some more. That will get fused on there. We'll then line up the other end of the long D-ring loop strap to the bottom of the bag. And we'll be fusing it on over the top of the fusible webbing. Snipping off the rough edges there. I'm going to snip off, I don't know, about an eighth. Quarter of an inch, somewhere in there. Just so that it's easier to be neat later on. A D-ring, we looped over that. And folded over so that you can feel the interfacing inside the strap. That needs to go over the rounded bit of the D-ring wire there. And that will be fused on in place here. And then we'll stitch around the outside of that strap. So I'm just going to fuse the fusible webbing centered over that notch. Run the iron over the paper side and yes, it's very, very important to notice which side has the webbing on it and which side has the paper on it. Because it will make a mess with the iron. Okay, so that's fused on there. I'm going to peel that off when it cools a little bit. I'm going to peel the paper backing off. And that's not quite set enough. It has to be a little bit cooler to come off cleanly. So I'm peeling that off. And the adhesive is on the fabric there. All the way there. This stops me from having to use pins and it holds things really, really securely. For the little end of the strap here because we're going to be stitching this on here we don't want it poking out. I'm going to use a fabric glue stick pen just to stick that down. Turn it over, make sure the interfacing is in there. Just to squeeze those a little bit in from the edge. It doesn't matter if there's a little pucker in the middle of the strap. But what you don't want is the raw edges poking out there. And I'm going to turn that down onto the fusible webbing. And press that into place. Now that that's fused on we're going to stitch all the way around the edges here. And on the other side. We're also going to put a re-enforcement of a box and cross at the top here. And that's going to be stitched along. If you can still see where your original dot is that will be where your top line is. So, I'm just going to use the hera marker and crease across there. Actually easier with a ruler. I'm going to mark another one about an inch or so down. So we'll just get those creased in here. It's good to use the hera marker because it doesn't use a line that you have to rub out. It's just a crease. We're stitching along the edge here. Just aligning the stitches with the last row of stitches that you did on the strap. We're using the zipper foot here. You can see, we're gonna come up close to the D-ring. And then turn and you'll be able to get across here without the foot knocking on the D-ring there. So. On here, if you can set your machine to be needle down do it, because it makes it much easier when you're doing all of this turning. If every time you turn the needle is set down. If you haven't got that setting on your machine you'll just have to make sure that every time you turn, it's down. So what I've done here, is I've stitched back across to the bottom corner here of the second hera marker line. I'm going to stitch across the second hera marker line. Turn. Come back to the top. And then I'm gonna stitch again across the top edge there. Over the first row of stitching. It's always better to keep stitching even if you're going over old lines. Rather than stopping and starting and having raw edges of thread poking out and raw ends of thread. So back along the other side. Okay, so another trick you can do is stop a half inch short on these strappings Which will make it easier later on when we're reducing bulk. We're now going to attach the thinner snap hook straps. I've got one attached here. We're going to fuse the straps on. Again, so we don't have to use pins. I cut about six half inch lengths of that fusible webbing. And I'm going to use them with the fusing side down paper side up. Centered between the notch here and the dot that we drew earlier up here. So I'll get them lined up in a straight line. Here and fuse them on. If you like, you can roll this line first. No one will ever see it underneath the strap. I'll fuse that on, wait a few seconds for it to cool down. I'm just gonna pull the paper off. And leave the adhesive on the fabric. And it's a little bit, still a little

bit stuck there. I'm gonna come from this end here. If it does this, if it comes off too much you can just press it back on. Being careful not to get the iron on the fusible webbing. The strap then gets centered over that bottom notch there. Gonna put the strap right over the top of that. Line it up over the fusible webbing. We're going to fold it about a half inch back from the top of the bag there. Fold that strap underneath there. Fuse that into place. Had to shoot some steam through to make sure it sticks. Now at the end here, we've got some little raw edges that when we sew this strap on we're going to poke them in a little bit from the edge there. So we can actually start that task now by poking them in like that. And fusing it into place. They may move but at least they're steamed in place. There's a good chance that they won't. We're going to stitch this all the way up here. Stitch across here. About three quarters of an inch back from the fold here. So I'm just going to put a hera marker line back from that there. I'm gonna stitch up there across that line and back down the other side. To stitch the hook strap on we don't actually need the zipper foot so I've swapped over to the normal presser foot. We don't have to get up close to the ring so we can actually make use of the fact that it's a wider base and it gives you more grip and it's easier to control. We're just going to start stitching a half inch in from the edge which will make it easier later on when we're reducing bulk in the seams. We'll do a small back tack there. And stitch along the edge following the line of stitching that we already had. The trick when we get closer to the end of the strap I'm going to have my tailor's awl in my hand. Okay, so coming towards the end of the strap what I'm going to do is make sure that these raw edges of the strap are tucked well in underneath the outer edge of the strap there as we sew. So you can start getting that lined up. A tailor's awl is like a pin that you can hold in place and move around as you're stitching. It's like a long, pointy, hard finger you always wished you had. And so I'm going to just go slowly. There's no reason to go fast. You just double check that that edge is underneath there. And stitch towards the hera marker line. And again, if you can set your machine to be needle down when it stops by all means, do it because it will make it easier. So now I'm going to stitch over the hera marker line and again, use the tailor's awl to poke the end of the strap in under the outer edge of the strap. And again, use that tailor's awl to hold it down as we're stitching. So that it's all held into place. There's nothing worse than raw edges poking out on the front of your bag. So we're just gonna make sure they're in there. Use the tailor's awl to hold the fabric down. And you can keep that tailor's awl in there right until you're right up against the needle and then move it and then realign it. Okay, and then it's just a matter of following the same line of stitches that you put on before with the top stitching. And follow that back down to the other end. Okay and again, just stop about half an inch shy of the end and do a little back tack there. A back stitch. This is what it will look like when you're finished. You'll have the two long straps each side and the wide strap in the middle. We're then going to attach the straps to the front of the bag in very much the same way. You'll get your smaller loop straps. Always have the end that doesn't have the interfacing toward the side that has the hardware on it. What we've done here. These have already been attached but what we did was take the strap and put the D-ring on it and folded it back about an inch and a half down there. That then got fused in place onto the bag front. And when we stitched it we're only stitching up the side here and across level with the dot that was on the front of the bag and back down again. So that this edge here, this end here folds up like that.

Assemble outer bag

- We're going to start assembling the bag, beginning with the D-ring loops. You can put them on either the back or the front, it doesn't matter because we're lining them up between these two

notches that we've marked on both the front and the back. You're going to put the strap in between those notches, and we're going to stay stitch it into place about $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch in from the edge along here, so that the stay stitch is hidden within the $\frac{1}{2}$ inch seam allowance. So we're gonna do a little back-tack just to be super secure (machine whirring) and at the other end like that. And you do exactly the same on the other side. (machine whirring) And there we go. And then we're ready to put the two pieces together, and they're right sides of fabric together facing. And just making sure that you haven't swapped one side around the other way, the short straps with the rings should be down one end, and the hooks up the other. So we're gonna put those together, line them up, and we're going to stitch around the bottom and the sides with a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch seam allowance. Start sewing the side seam from the top of the bag with the snap hooks here, and it's a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch seam allowance. And I'm going to back-tack here and sew forward. Now I'm using my Walking Foot, but if you don't have one it doesn't matter. It's just helpful to pull all of these thicknesses of fabric and fleece through at an even rate. And we're gonna stitch down the side. I don't use pins here, but you can if you like. Keep that (machine whirring) an even $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the edge. Where I'm stitching past the stay stitching here, I'm stitching just along the inside edge there. Oh I might have to go over that again with my Zipper Foot later on, but that's okay. (machine whirring) With the Walking Foot's a bit wide. And I'm going to pivot at the point that's $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch up from the bottom and stitch across the bottom of the bag. See where I stitched the straps on before and I stopped that $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in? We're going to be stitching right past the end of that there. (machine whirring) Over the bit where the D-ring is it might be a bit hard if your foot is wide. Stitch it anyway, we can come back and neaten it up with the Zipper Foot if necessary. (machine whirring) And when you get to the end, you're gonna back-tack or backstitch there, just to secure the end of the seam. So these bits over the D-ring felt a bit weird when I was sewing them, but it's actually fine looking at it now. I thought it had gone off course. If yours is more than about $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch out, I'd just come back in with my Zipper Foot and stitch over that area there, not hitting the D-ring and straighten that out. I'm going to reduce the bulk in the seams here so that they press open nicely and that's there's not too much bulk coming in at the top when the other seams join together. So I'm lifting up the fleece, and this is where these duckbill scissors or applique scissors come into play and that they hold back the seam allowance while you snip. You can do this with any scissors. Often the fleece doesn't stick down too hard, and you can just slice it off like that. This is why I left it at the bottom edge here, why I didn't stitch all the way down here because now we can snip that off too. And don't worry too much if you don't get all of it off, it's more important to just get the bulk of it off so that the seam allowances can be pressed open. This is one of those things that can be a bit tedious, but it makes a big difference. By block-fusing and cutting it first, you get the accuracy in your seams, which is more important than if you had fused this on without seam allowance. It does a better job. Okay I'm going to see if I can pull this interfacing off a bit too. Now you can take this off all the way along the seam, if you can, or if you can be bothered. But most important is to get it off the top and bottom inch or two, like that. So even if you're only taking off that much, it'll make a difference where the top of the bag is sewn to the lining, and you've got all of this bulk of seam going into the seams at the lining top as well. So I'm just gonna chop those off there. And we'll take that wadding off in a sec, but I'll just take it off at the bottom as well here. It sometimes can be a bit tricky. If you have trouble getting the interfacing off, sometimes shooting a bit of steam through will help to soften the glue there. And that'll help to release it. It's important around this bottom point here too because we're gonna turn that through, and it's going to have all of that bulk in that corner if we don't get it snipped out first. So you can actually take a little bit more off there. Just do that on all four corners

on front and the back. Just snip away til it's gone. I'm going to reduce a bit of bulk at the bottom corner, here, so I'm going to snip a few millimeters out from the corner to about twice the seam allowance depth. So if this is 1/2 inch seam, it's about an inch down from that corner, up, to there. And then I'm gonna take it from the same point to about an inch down this way here. The reason I use this angle, and I call it the corner rule, is that you can press this seam open, and it'll stay flat all the way to the end of the seam, but it'll reduce enough bulk so that this bulk of the seam allowance doesn't go into the corner there. And you can turn it out and make a nice sharp rectangular bag instead of one with bit stuffed in the middle there. So you're gonna use that same angle to cut all four corners of the bag from the end of the seam down to the edge of the seam allowance, then press the seam allowances open. We're going to press open the bottom seam of the bag by running the iron in between here. Now if you have a pressing ham or a rolled up towel or something, you can shove it inside, but it's not essential. Shove it inside and use it to hold the bottom of the bag open, but I'm just gonna turn it over and give that a bit of a press that way, just to try and keep the bottom of the bag flat when it's turned through to the right side. To press the side seam, it's easier to slightly finger press the seam open like that and put it down on top of the ironing board. We're going to iron inside the bag so that the iron doesn't have to go onto the fleece because that can stick to your iron and ruin it. So I'm just pressing the seams from the inside. That will make them stick nice and flat. Back down this side, inside the bag, can shoot a little bit of steam through, and there you have it, seams are pressed open.

Sew lining

- We're going to make a lining pocket now, which has got compartments in it to fit all the little bits and pieces that you might like to carry around. To start off with, we're going to double turn the top edge of the pocket. This involves folding the top edge in about 3/8 of an inch. Now this fabric doesn't have a right and wrong side, but if it was a print, you'd have the wrong side facing up and it'd be folding toward the wrong side. So we'll fold that about 3/8 of an inch and press it and then fold it again and that'll be just a little bit wider and press it again, and then we'll just sew along that edge there. I'm just going to back stitch first and then stitch along the edge quite close to the folded edge of that double turning to hold that right down and back stitch the end as well. To finish the bottom of the pocket to attach it to the lining, we're gonna use a little trick using fusible webbing. So I've cut the fusible webbing in 1/4-inch strip. You can buy this as a tape in 1/4 inch and it's a very handy thing to have. We're going to pop it down on the very bottom edge on the right side of the pocket piece. If this was a print, the print would be facing up and we're going to fuse it in place and then use the paper that's on the fusible web as a sharp line to fold the fabric back against so we'll get a really nice, neat 1/4-inch turning. This is the turning. Okay, and I'm just going to press creases in here so that we know where to stitch the pocket divisions, so I'll just put those in there so they can be pressed out later. It means we don't have to draw a line on the fabric. I'm just eyeballing where they're going. About thirds is fine. We're just gonna take the lining now and attach the pocket. Both the lining pieces are the same, so just pick one of them, and lie the pocket piece about two, two and a half, three inches from the bottom. It doesn't have to be accurate here. Nobody's really going to be looking inside the bag. It's just really to make sure they're in the right spot for you to use, and then take the paper off here, which will leave a fusible strip that will attach the pocket to the lining so you don't need pins and it's not going to move. So we'll press that down and then top stitch it into place. We're going to stitch along the bottom edge to attach it very firmly across the bottom and then follow, using the width of the presser foot as a guide, stitch about 1/4 of an

inch in. Turn up the crease, come back down again, again using the edge of the foot, the presser foot as a guide, back down, up, down, across. And those double rows of stitching will make sure the pockets are nice and secure. Just pressing across. And that's stuck. I'm just going to stitch quite close to the edge here and do a small back stitch and I'm following the fold on the edge of the pocket, stitching as close as I can to it, keeping it as neat as possible. And another back stitch just here. Okay. So that's the first row. I'm going to use the edge of the presser foot along the edge of the pocket to keep an even distance from here. If you have trouble eyeballing this, you can draw it in with a Hera marker and follow a line. So I'm coming up the crease. I'm going to stop there, pivot and follow that line. And again, if you can set your machine to be needle down when it stops, do that here because we'll be doing lots of pivoting. About three or four stitches usually does it. You'll get to know your own machine. I'm just using the width between the outside edge of the foot and the needle and running that foot along the stitch line. And I'm going to stop level with the first row of stitching here and pivot. Right up to the next crease and pivot and it's the same old again. One more pivot and turn this lot. Don't worry if you go a little bit wonky because really nobody will be inspecting this bit. And make your back tack. You could stay stitch the sides of the pockets into place or you can use a fabric glue stick pen. I prefer this because it's really quick. You just run that down there and stick that there and it'll hold. We'll do the other side, so that will hold. We're going to complete the lining now. So you just take the other side of the lining piece and place it face down onto the right side of the other pocket piece and lining. So if you've got a print, prints are facing one another. We're then going to stitch with back tack at the top. Make sure that it is at the top that the lining pocket is down the bottom, back tack and stitch with a 1/2-inch seam all the way down, pivot to the bottom and then stop and leave a gap of about six inches so that we can turn the bag through the lining when it's sewn up. Then start again at the other side and stitch, pivot and back up to the top edge. Back tack up there. I've got mine done here so you can see the top edge is open, the bottom edge is sewn up, but it's got this gap here and it can be six, eight inches. It doesn't really matter, just so you've got enough space to turn through. So what I've done here is I've clipped the corners with the corner rule the same as I did before and at the bottom, trimmed away and I've pressed the seams open. So that's now ready to go inside the bag and be attached around the top edge.

Chapter 4 - Finishing

Finish backpack

- Now we're going to assemble the bag with the lining. You're going to have your lining piece turned right side out and the bag piece wrong side out. Just make sure that the pocket side of the lining is facing up, and the side of the bag that has the straps on it is towards the top. So that way we know that when we're putting the lining inside, you've got the bottom edge there, the pocket going in against the back of the bag. So that will go all the way in, then line up the side seams here, and the top edge of the bag. This is one of the few places where I actually use pins. I'm going to line up the side seams, and pin them. And always put the pins in at a right angle to the outside of the bag. If you put them in parallel to the outside, the movement between the lining and the outer is different, and it may not fit if you do it that way. So I'm going to pin both side seams, and then pin the halfway mark between those. Make sure that it's running smoothly between those points, and then pin it. And there. Stitching around the top of the bag here, we've got a 1/2 inch seam. Doesn't really matter where you start, and you don't really need to backstitch here because we can just keep sewing when we come back to the start again and stitch over the beginning. So we're going to

stitch. Just following the top edge 1/2 an inch in. Now when you're getting past these rings, just push them out of the way like that and keep the fabric flat. We can get rid of the pins as we go. I'm coming up to another little hook there, just push it out of the way. I'm just stretching the bottom edge of the fabric, pulling it up from the bottom, and putting a twist on the fabric just to make sure that it feeds through at the same rate as the top. Otherwise, your lining can push up here and you can get these puckers. I'm working at getting the lining to fit flat against the bag. And we're coming back to where we started. And I'm going to just stitch back over the top of where I started here. Oh, I nearly went to back-tack. It doesn't matter, you can backstitch (laughs) if you like, if you've got a habit of it like me. There we go. To make a really nice, clean finish at the top of the bag, we're going to reduce bulk by taking this fleece or wadding away from the seam allowance. It just reduces that little bit of bulk and springiness at the top, which will allow us to press and topstitch and get a nice, clean sharp edge. So that just comes off like that. And the same on the other side. Then we're going to press this seam open, so that it lies nice and flat. And then when we fold the lining to the inside, we don't lose a whole lot of fabric down into the seam line. I'm going to show you how to press this. It's a good idea, just put a pressing cloth over the fleece, so that your iron doesn't get sticky stuff on it. And then turn the seam allowance back, so that the right sides of fabric are visible on both seam allowances here like this. And then what we're gonna do is press in that bit there. So that's nice and flat. And we'll do the same on the other side. Alright. Pressing cloth again. Now we're gonna turn the whole bag right through to the right side through the bottom of the lining. This is where it all looks a bit magic because it starts to look like a bag. What I'm going to do is try and get these corners through sharply. So I'm turning them over my finger. And a good way to do it is to have your finger on both sides of the corner. Turn them through. Well, we've got the outside of the bag, and then the lining drops down inside the bag. Like that. We'll bring the top edge up there. And we're going to roll the edge of the bag to bring that seam right to the top all the way around. Press it, and then topstitch all the way around. So I'm going to put the bag over the edge of the ironing board, so we can iron one side at a time, not two. And work at rolling that edge and pressing all the way around. And turn, turn, roll, press. It's another opportunity to press your side seams nice and flat, too. Okay, so rolling. Just make sure that none of the lining's poking out. You shouldn't see that lining. Okay, so that's ready to topstitch. It's often easier to do this bit if you've got a free arm on your machine. So if you can remove the table from the machine, do that. And then we're gonna use the edge of the foot to line up about, it can be 1/4 inch to just a little bit more generous than that from the edge. Don't go too deep or too shallow. It just doesn't look balanced. So I'll start with a very little backstitch, and then stitch all the way around. Just pull those hooks out of the way as you go past. And keep rolling that lining in underneath. Don't let it poke out. And just coming back to the beginning, we're going to do another tiny little back-tack, or backstitch. Now you'll have to close the bottom of the bag up, where we turned it through. I've just gone ahead and done that. So I've pressed the seam allowances in with a nice, crisp edge, lined them up, and topstitched them together. And I've done them about two millimeters from the edge, which is in my language. In your language, it's somewhere just a little bit bigger than a 1/16 of an inch. And just backstitching at either end. The last thing we need to do now is to add the straps to the bag. I'm going to thread the strap through the slide adjuster here to show you how to do it. We've got the right side of the strap, where you've topstitched, going through over the right side of the slide adjuster, threading through here towards the back. Now this bit folds over. It doesn't really matter how far, about an inch-ish of the interfacing. And then this end that doesn't have the interfacing folds in underneath like that. We're gonna topstitch this on. So we're going to stitch close to the edge there. And starting with a

tiny little back-tack, or backstitch. And you can use the awl to push the strap and make sure that it stays within the bounds of the outer edge. And you can hold that down with the awl 'til you're really close to the needle, and keep that as straight a line as you can. And again, if you can set your needle to the down when the machine stops, it'll be much easier for you. So making sure there's no raw edges poking in and poking out there, we're going to stitch about four or five stitches down this way. Pivot. And again, just poke any raw edges in, and hold it down with the awl, and stitch towards the edge. Now sometimes it's hard to stitch forward if you've got the slide adjuster there. It's sometimes easier to go backwards with this part. And a little bit backstitch there. To attach the shoulder strap, we've got the wrong side of the strap facing upwards. And we're going to thread that other end through the D-ring here. Fold it over and thread it over the top of the other side of the strap, and through the slide adjuster. And then we're going to thread this end through the D-ring. And pretty much the same as at the other end, we're leaving about an inch, and then folding under the area that doesn't have the interfacing, and that's the bit that's going to be stitched on. I'm going to do a little backstitch, and stitch as close to the edge as I can here. And I'm going to use the awl again. Always use the awl to control the strap, to make sure that it doesn't run off the edge of the outer strap, and to make sure that no little raw edges are poking out the side. So again, I have my needle set to be in the down position when I stop. If you can do that, do it. And I'm turning and stitching about four or five stitches. I might do another one just for luck, in case the raw edges are poking through. And again, I'm going to poke those raw edges in before I start stitching. Hold it with the tailor's awl. And stitch down to that point there, to the edge of the strap. Swing it 'round, and finish up where we started. There it is attached. You'll just make the other strap exactly the same as the first, and then it's a finished bag. You can fold it over. Make sure it's all tucked up underneath the fold there, and then you can snap those snaps onto those D-rings. Even if you're a beginner, you have made a bag that's very simple, but very structured. And you've learned the proper way to make very nicely finished straps with hardware. So you can pop it on and wear it with pride.