

# bag of tricks

COMBINE GORGEOUS OILCLOTH WITH CUTE GINGHAM TO MAKE A STURDY CARRY-ALL

With smart piped edges and a wipe-clean outer fabric, this pretty tote bag from Corinne Bradd is perfect for all your day-to-day essentials – and we bet your little ones will love it too! The simple construction lends itself to any sturdy fabric but we've used a beautiful oilcloth from Viva La Frida to add extra strength and stability. Make a cute matching purse to complete the look!

## sew supplies

Printed oilcloth, four 21cm x 30cm rectangles, one 21cm square;  
cotton gingham, 60cm x 84cm  
For purse: two 10cm x 12cm pieces of oilcloth

Thick cord or wool: 3.4m

Zip (for purse), 10cm

## measurements

Bag: approx 43cm x 19cm x 19cm  
Purse: 10cm x 8cm

## Drawstring bag

**1 Lay out your gingham fabric,** and cut it in half lengthways. Trim one of these pieces in half again, so that you are left with two pieces measuring 15cm x 84cm for the straps and piping and one measuring 30cm x 80cm for the bag top.

**2 Cut one of the 15cm x 84cm pieces** into four equal strips. Fold each in half lengthways (right sides facing outwards) and press. Slip thin cord or thick wool into the fold, so that the fabric can be used as piping.

**3 Carefully tack the four pieces of oilcloth** together along the long edges, sandwiching a length of piping between each seam and working with a 5mm seam allowance. Do not join the oilcloth into a tube – leave one seam unstitched but tack a length of piping to one long edge in preparation.



**4 Create the bag top; fold the 30cm x 84cm piece** of gingham in half lengthways (right sides out) and press. Open out the fabric and fold the two short edges over to the wrong side by 2cm, then fold over again by another 2cm, to make a hem.

**5 Making sure that the tacked gingham fabric measures 80cm** in length, sew the hem with a straight machine stitch, then refold in half (right sides out). Sew a line of machine top stitch 3.5cm in from the fold, to make a channel for the straps.

**6 With the fabric still folded double**, tack the two raw edges of the folded bag top to the oilcloth pieces (right sides together), with a 1cm seam allowance. Place one hemmed edge in the centre of the first rectangle of oilcloth, so that 10cm of fabric overlaps the last piece.

**7 Stitch the two long edges of oilcloth together** to form a tube (with right sides together), and tack the remaining gingham to the other half of the first rectangle. Work a

machine stitch all the way round, and press the raw edge of the gingham towards the oilcloth (making sure not to melt it with your iron!). Run another line of stitching all around the tube to hold this in place.

**8 Make the straps.** Cut the remaining piece of gingham in half lengthways, to make two 7.5cm x 84cm strips. Machine stitch these together along one short edge, fold in half lengthways (right sides out) and press.

**9 Fold the raw edges of the strip** into the fold (as if you were creating bias binding) and press once more. Machine stitch down the length of the fabric, 3mm in from the double folded edges. Thread the strap through the channel of the bag top and tack the two opposite ends to the bottom corners of the first oilcloth rectangle.

**10 Tack a length of piping around** the base of the bag. Turn the work inside out and tack the remaining square of oilcloth to the base. Machine stitch together, making sure

the ends of the strap are caught in the stitching - clip the corners if necessary to make them turn easier.

**11 Turn the bag right sides out** and pull the straps to close the bag top and create two shoulder straps. Use a spare piece of oilcloth or gingham to make a wrap that will hold the drawstring tight. To do this, fold a 5cm x 10cm piece in half lengthways (right sides facing) and stitch together down the long edge. Turn to the right side, wrap around the two straps and stitch the ends together through the centre, to leave two channels that run up and down the straps.

## shopping inspirations



Viva La Frida's Mexican oilcloth is absolutely beautiful, with a variety of bright, bold shades and designs to choose from. With plasticised fibres it's perfect for bags and other outerwear garments. Priced £12 a metre, it's available now from [www.vivalafrida.co.uk](http://www.vivalafrida.co.uk)



## designer ideas



*"Why not make a simple matching purse by cutting two pieces of oilcloth, measuring 10cm by 12cm. Sew one short edge of each to a 10cm zip, open the zip a little way, and fold the pieces (right sides together). Sew all the way round and turn out through the gap in the open zip!"*

**Sew Designer, Corinne Bradd**

