



Hearts in Unity

Sewing School Bags for Children in Tanzania, Africa

Pattern for School Bag with TWO Handles:

For each fabric school bag you will need:

- **ONE** piece of fabric 13" x 30" (bag)
- **TWO** pieces of fabric 3" wide (handles) (The length of each piece of handle fabric should be no shorter than 13-inches each, but the children prefer longer handles (up to a maximum of 30-inch each) so they can carry the bag over their shoulder.

Please use fabric made of sturdy cotton or cotton/polyester blend (see notes below). Use ½" seam allowances. Finished bag (excluding handles) is approximately 12" wide by 13½" high. The finished handles are 1" wide.

INSTRUCTIONS:

HANDLES: There are different 2 options for sewing the handles (choose your preference).

Note: Option #2 works better for heavier fabrics.

Option #1 Fold a piece of handle fabric in half, right sides together (39" x 3" folded to a 39" x 1½" size). Stitch a ½" seam allowance along the long side. Turn right-side out. Press flat. Repeat for other handle. Set handles aside.

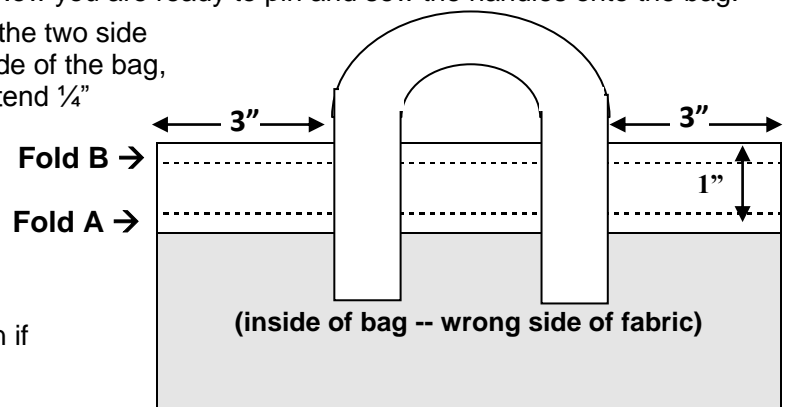
Option #2 Along each long edge, fold over 1/2-inch of fabric and press. Fold the handle in half (right sides out) matching the folded/ironed edges. Press. Topstitch ¼" along each of the 2 long sides of the handle.

BAG: Fold the 13" x 30" piece of fabric in half, right sides together (to a 13"x 15" size). Stitch a ½" seam allowance along each 15" side. Add a zig-zag stitch or serge along each seam edge to prevent fraying. Keeping the bag inside-out, fold the open 13" edge of the bag over ½" (to the wrong side of fabric) and press (Fold A below). Fold over again another 1" and press (See Fold B below). Now you are ready to pin and sew the handles onto the bag.

Pin the ends of the handles to open edge of the bag at the two side seams of the bag. The handles will be sewn to the inside of the bag, 3-inches from the side seams. The handles should extend ¼" beyond/below the fold at "A"

Topstitch around the top of the bag by fold "B" (stitching the handle ends to the bag as you sew).

Topstitch around the bag by fold "A", folding the end of each handle under ¼" just before you stitch over each handle end. Turn bag right-side out. Press with an iron if needed.



PLEASE NOTE:

- Use sturdy cotton or poly/cotton blend fabrics (no knits, stretchy or sheer fabrics)
- Do not use heavy/thick fabrics such as denim or upholstery fabrics – heavy fabrics add significantly to shipping costs.
- Darker colors and darker-colored prints work well to hide the dirt. (The people in our Tanzanian villages do not have access to running water, electricity and washing machines -- they wash their clothes in a bucket with water from the river).
- Please be mindful of the fabric prints/patterns that you choose. Remember that these children have little in the way of any possessions, and we want to be mindful of the message that we send about the possessions that we have in the U.S. Use your good judgment as a guideline...What type of school bag would you want to personally hand to a Tanzanian child?
- Good fabric choices are prints of animals, fish, birds, flowers, fruits/veggies, nature, soccer ball prints or any abstract prints, plaids or stripes.

We welcome your email to let us know you will be joining us in this project (info@heartsinunity.org)

Completed school bags can be shipped to the following address at any time:

Hearts in Unity ♥ P.O. Box 41 ♥ Germantown, WI 53022 ♥ USA

Monetary donations to help offset the costs to ship the school bags to Tanzania are also welcome. Shipping costs are approximately \$3 per pound.

Thank you for your help and for opening your heart to the orphans and at-risk children of Tanzania



Hearts in Unity

Sewing School Bags for Children in Tanzania, Africa

Pattern for School Bag with ONE Long Handle:

For each fabric school bag you will need:

- **ONE** piece of fabric 13" x 30" (bag)
- **ONE** pieces of fabric 39" x 3" (handle) (a piece of fabric short as 36" x 3" is OK also)

Please use fabric made of sturdy cotton or cotton/polyester blend (see notes below). Use ½" seam allowances. Finished bag (excluding handle) is approximately 12" wide by 13½" high. The finished handle is 1" wide.

INSTRUCTIONS:

HANDLES: There are different 2 options for sewing the handle (choose your preference).

Note: Option #2 works better for heavier fabrics.

Option #1 Fold the piece of handle fabric in half, right sides together (39" x 3" folded to a 39" x 1½" size). Stitch a ½" seam allowance along the long side. Turn right-side out. Press flat. Set aside.

Option #2 Along each long edge, fold over 1/2-inch of fabric and press. Fold the handle in half (right sides out) matching the folded/ironed edges. Press. Topstitch ¼" along each of the 2 long sides of the handle.

BAG: Fold the 13" x 30" piece of fabric in half, right sides together (to a 13"x 15" size). Stitch a ½" seam allowance along each 15" side. Add a zig-zag stitch or serge along each seam edge to prevent fraying. Keeping the bag inside-out, fold the open 13" edge of the bag over ½" (to the wrong side of the fabric) and press (See Fold A below). Fold over again another 1" and press (See Fold B below). Now you are ready to pin and sew the handle onto the bag.

Pin the ends of the handle to open edge of the bag at the two side seams of the bag. The handles will be sewn to the inside of the bag. The handles should extend ¼" beyond/below the fold at "A"

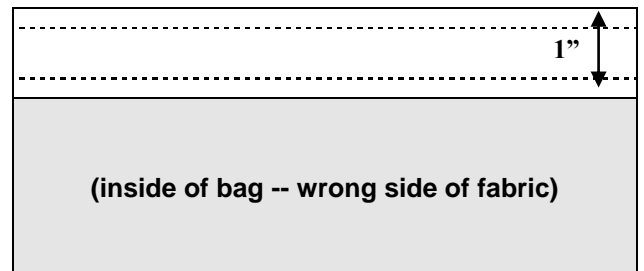
Topstitch around the top of the bag by fold "B" (stitching the handle ends to the bag as you sew).

Topstitch around the bag by fold "A", folding the end of each handle under ¼" just before you stitch over each handle end.

Turn bag right-side out. Press with an iron if needed.

Fold B →

Fold A →



PLEASE NOTE:

- Use sturdy cotton or poly/cotton blend fabrics (no knits, stretchy or sheer fabrics)
- Do not use heavy/thick fabrics such as denim or upholstery fabrics – heavy fabrics add significantly to shipping costs.
- Darker colors and darker-colored prints work well to hide the dirt. (The people in our Tanzanian villages do not have access to running water, electricity and washing machines -- they wash their clothes in a bucket with water from the river).
- Please be mindful of the fabric prints/patterns that you choose. Remember that these children have little in the way of any possessions, and we want to be mindful of the message that we send about the possessions that we have in the U.S. Use your good judgment as a guideline...What type of school bag would you want to personally hand to a Tanzanian child?
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