

Upcycled Jeans Bag

<http://beverleybee.wordpress.com/>

I have been saving up our old, worn out, jeans for a the last year or so and now have quite a pile to work with. Having found a number of pins on Pinterest which have served as inspiration now is the time to make a start and actually do something with them.

The first project, is to make a couple of small bags. To spread the love of this hobby I have taken some pics to serve as a tutorial for anyone else who might be inclined to make one!

First of all when cutting out all the pieces I decided that it would be possible to make one bag out of the front and another out of the back (seat) section of the jeans. So I cut these out (by cutting the legs off at crotch level and cutting across the middle crotch join) then I cut straps (2 for each bag, about 2" wide) out of the full length of one of the cut off legs. Using the main bag pieces and straps I then cut the lining fabric (in this case I used some scraps of a brown and fuchsia pink striped fabric which I had in the stash) these should be the same size and shape as the strap pieces and for the bag lining I used the main bag piece as a template and left an additional half an inch at the top to turn over as a top hem (this shows in the photo below).



Also, if you want a pocket, cut a piece sufficient to make a double sided patch mobile phone pocket.

When sewing a bag I always prepare the lining first so it is ready to pop in when the main bag pieces are done. Decide if you want a pocket, position and sew that in place. For this bag I have just added a simple patch pocket, with tuck pleats at the bottom so that it opens to fit a phone.



Once the pocket is positioned and sewn in place sew up the side and bottom seams of the lining.

For the main part of the bag the first job is to sew the side seam and the bottom. If there are any studs please be very careful to avoid them when stitching up the seams (see below, I have pinned this so that the stud is on the top and will be visible when sewing and encased in the seam. If you are not confident about this remove any studs before sewing).



You may need to flatten out the curve of the crotch; I did this by creating a pleat, as shown below, and stitching through all thicknesses along the line of top-stitching to make the curve sit flat.

For this bag I also decided it looked best if the "side" seams were offset which would leave the detail (the zip and button) to one side, rather than in the centre front of the bag. You can see the off-centre seam in the picture below.

So that the bag will "sit" I made a gusset by stitching across the two bottom corners (sewing line as shown in the image below). If you decide to do this you will need to do the same with the lining.



Next stitch the strap and lining pieces together (right sides facing) then turn them through as shown above. Iron and top-stitch as required.

To attach the straps I put the bag piece down flat and made sure that each strap was positioned an equal distance from the sides and that the two straps, front and back, would also be in line with each other. I left enough of the strap below the top of the bag to allow for two lines of stitching (which would be "hidden" along the top-stitching of the original jeans).



To insert the lining, fold over the hem which you left at the top and then pin the lining inside the main bag with wrong sides facing. Sew around the top (which I did along the row of existing top-stitching) being careful not to catch the bag handles.

To finish the bag I attached one of the fabric flowers I made and used hot glue to glue down the fly section (this is optional but I wanted this section to lay flat. Hey-presto a finished bag.

