
Sew a Waxed Canvas Tote Bag with Fancy Tiger

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview

(upbeat jingle) - [Voiceover] Hi, I'm Amber. - [Voiceover] And I'm Jaime. - [Amber] And we're from Fancy Tiger Crafts in Denver, Colorado. And we sell supplies for knitting, sewing, crochet, spinning, and quilting. And we teach workshops for those, too. - [Jaime] We came up with a great project, which is a waxed canvas bag, and it's a simple and classic tote that's going to look great with everything. You're going to learn how to work with waxed canvas, put in pockets, add a lining, you're going to make a boxed bottom on your bag, and you're going to attach leather handles. Along the way, I'm going to show you tips and tricks so that you can customize this simple tote to be perfect for you. (upbeat music)

Chapter 2 - Materials

Materials

- The materials you're gonna need for your waxed canvas tote are a half yard each of two fabrics. I'm using a waxed canvas for the outside of the bag, and it's a 10.10 ounce duck canvas. For the inside of the bag, I've chosen to use a ticking stripe, but you can use anything for the inside of your bag, it's just gonna be the lining, so if you wanna use a crazy bold print, go for it. You're also gonna need a mat, rotary cutter, and ruler. And if you don't have those items, that's okay, I can show you another way to cut your bag out without them. You're gonna need scissors or thread snips, pins and pincushions. You're also gonna need some leather straps. I'm using ones that we make at Fancy Tiger that are pre-made and come with rivets. And I'm gonna be using a rubber mallet to attach them. You could use any pre-made leather strap. If you're super crafty, you could make your own leather straps. And you could also use webbing for your straps as well. You are also going to need a sewing machine, and it can be helpful when working with wax canvas to have a denim needle. You're going to need some sort of device to mark onto your fabric, I like using a chalk pen. Anything that'll show up on your fabric is gonna be great. You're going to need an iron and an ironing board, and it can also be helpful when working with waxed canvas to have a press cloth.

Chapter 3 - Make Bag

Cut out pattern pieces

- Today we're working with waxed canvas, which is a cotton canvas fabric that has had natural wax applied to it, which makes it naturally water-repellent and resistant. It is a awesome material if you live in a wet climate, and it has a really cool old-timey look that I love. We're gonna be cutting out our bag, and first, I'm gonna cut the main bag out of the waxed canvas. So, we want to make a rectangle that is going to be 16 by 37 inches for the bag. And, first, we're gonna line up the bottom. I have it folded in half, here, and I'm using the salvage edges because the salvage edges are straight, and I want to have a straight rectangle. And then, I'm going to square up my edge. Notice that I'm not paying attention to the markings that are on the mat itself, but I'm gonna use my ruler, which has a nice square edge. So, I have my ruler aligned with the bottom of my salvages. And now, I'm gonna cut this side of the fabric off to square it up. If you don't have a rotary cutter at home, you can make marks with a ruler and just cut with scissors. Now that we have one squared edge, we're gonna use that to measure our 16 inch width, and I'm just gonna make a mark with my marking tool.

I'm lined up against the mark that I made at 16 inches. I'm using this short side of the ruler to make a right angle so that I can have my fabric be square, and I'm just gonna go ahead and cut. Now, I've made a very long rectangle out of my fabric that is 16 inches wide, which is what I need it to be for my bag. Now, I need to shorten it to make a 37 inch long rectangle. My fabric is folded in half so that it's half of 37 inches, which is 18 and a half inches. Cut across the top at 18 and a half inches. Now, I have my rectangle that is a total of 37 and a half by 16 inches for my bag. From your remaining fabric, you're gonna cut two pockets that are seven by nine inches, which I have here. You can also cut your pockets a bigger size if you want to have bigger pockets, or if you wanted to have three instead of two pockets, go ahead and cut three. It's totally up to you. You are also gonna cut a rectangle from your lining fabric that is the exact same as the outer piece of fabric that I've just shown you how to cut.

Attach pockets

- Now we're gonna construct our two pockets. The first step with your first pocket is just to fold one long edge of the pocket down about a quarter of an inch, and the beauty of working with waxed canvas is it does have a lot of body, and you can kind of fold it down and finger press it, and it will stay, but to make a more finished edge, we're gonna use an iron to press it before sewing. When ironing with waxed canvas, there are a lot of oils and wax on the fabric. So you're gonna wanna use a press cloth, in order to protect your iron from the waxes and oils. I'm gonna sew this using a quarter-inch seam allowance, making sure that my stitches are within that folded edge. Notice I am using a coordinating thread for this, so that you don't notice my stitches. It's not necessary to backstitch at this time. (machine whirring) I'm just gonna clip these threads, and then the next step for the pocket is to finish the other three sides. So I'm gonna do the same process of folding each side in a quarter inch, and I'm just gonna finger press those first before ironing them. I'm gonna do the two short sides, and then I'll do the long side. This is my finished pocket, and now I'm gonna attach it to the right side of the lining of my bag. This particular fabric that I'm using doesn't have a right or wrong side. So it doesn't matter which side I attach it to, but if you were using a print, you would want to attach this with the print side facing up, and once I attach this pocket, this side is going to become the right side of my lining fabric. So, I'm placing it with the folded sides down, and I have my top-stitched top edge aligned with the top edge, and you can place this where you want it, but I like to put it about three inches from the top, and I'm just gonna eyeball that it's in the center, and once I like the placement, I'm gonna go ahead and use pins to attach it to my fabric before sewing, and just a couple pins on each edge is plenty, and we've already sewn the top edge of the pocket. So we're just gonna be sewing these three edges that we just pressed, and this time, we are going to be backstitching at the top end of each corner. One is gonna be your starting point, and one is gonna be your finishing point. Again, I'm gonna sew these on with a quarter-inch seam allowance, and I am gonna be backstitching at each corner. (machine whirring) When you get to a corner, you're gonna stop, use the hand wheel of your machine to put your needle into the fabric, lift the presser foot, and rotate your fabric. Now you're ready to sew the next side. (machine whirring) Same thing, use your hand wheel to rotate, put your needle in the fabric, lift your presser foot, and then sew your last side. (machine whirring) Now you're gonna sew your second pocket on the exact same way that you sewed your first pocket onto the other side of your lining. The tops of your pockets are open, and they're aligned with the top of your lining. Remember, this is your lining, and it's gonna go like this. So you wanna be able to access those pockets.

Assemble bag

Now we're gonna sew the side seams of both your outer bag and lining. Here I have my outer bag, and it's folded in half from when I cut it. I'm gonna sew two side seams on either side, at a half inch seam allowance. I love working with wax canvas, because it doesn't shift and move the way regular fabric can, so I'm not going to use pins when sewing these seams. I'm starting at the top edge of the bag and I am going to backstitch when I start the seam. Now I'm doing the other side, and again, starting at the top of the bag and using a half inch seam allowance, back-stitching at the top. There's no need to back-stitch at the bottom of the bag because your next step is gonna be to square the corners. Now we're gonna do the side seams of the lining in the exact same way that you just did the bag. However, this time, you're going to use a slightly larger seam allowance than a half inch, because the wax canvas does not stretch at all. And a normal cotton fabric will stretch just a little bit. So by having a bigger seam allowance on your lining, you'll ensure that the inside of your bag is gonna fit perfectly into the outside of your bag. And I'm just gonna pin these, because it's a cotton fabric that could move while stitching. Just a few pins down the seam that I'm gonna be sewing. And same for the other side. Again, I'm starting at the top of my bag, and I'm doing just slightly over a half-inch seam allowance. And I am going to be back-stitching at the top, and not at the bottom. And repeat for the other side. To make this tote more functional, we're going to box the corners, which is going to create depth in the bottom of the bag. I'm gonna do this on the wax canvas first, but you're gonna do it on both the wax canvas and the lining, the exact same way. The first step is I'm gonna iron this seam allowance open, and ironing your seam allowances open gives your bag a much more professionally-finished look. I'm going to use my press cloth. And go as far as you can, then you're gonna repeat with the other side. To box the bottom of the bag, first you're gonna open the bag. We're just gonna work with one corner at a time. I'm opening the bag, I'm pressing my finger into this corner. And I'm going to take the seam allowance that I've just pressed open, and I want it to be flat, and I'm gonna center it along the bottom of the bag, making a nice triangle right here in the corner. Then, I'm gonna take my ruler and I'm gonna put it down so that the point is at one and a half inches and one of these straight lines is lining up with my seam allowance. Then, I'm gonna take a chalk marker and just mark a line straight across the bottom of the ruler, all the way across the bag. This is one of those times that if you wanted to change the shape of your bag, you could have a larger bottom, by simply changing, instead of one and a half inches, try two or three inches. This'll give you a larger boxed bottom. We're gonna stitch right along this line on the sewing machine, back-stitching at both ends. I'm lining this up so that my needle is gonna be right on that line. Now, I'm gonna cut this seam allowance about a quarter of an inch from where I just sewed, straight across. You can see that the boxed corner creates nice depth in your bag. And you're gonna repeat that process for the other corner of your bag and both corners of the lining, all done the exact same way. As you stitch on this line, you wanna make sure to keep your seam allowances open. I've already boxed the corners of my lining, and now it's time to put the two together, making what I like to call my bag sandwich. This is gonna start by turning my lining right side out. That means you should be able to see your pockets, and now I'm gonna put this inside the outer bag, making sure that the outer bag is wrong side out, so you can see these seam allowances. Putting the lining inside of the bag, what's important is to line up the two seam allowances on each side. So I'm gonna line those up and pin those first. That was one side. Now I'm gonna do the same thing on the other side, making sure to keep those seam allowances open. Now that I have those two sides pinned, I'm just gonna keep pinning all the way around the top of the bag. Lining up the edges of the lining of the bag with the outside of the bag. Once you have that

pinned, you're gonna sew around the top of the bag, leaving a four to five inch opening at the top of the bag you're gonna use to turn the bag right side out. I've removed the tray of my machine to make it easier to sew around the opening. Now, I'm gonna start sewing, somewhere on one long side, go around the bag and stop five inches before I get to the starting point. Starting in the middle of the long side and using a half inch seam allowance, back-stitching at the beginning and end of the seam. When you get to your seam allowances, you wanna make sure to keep them open so that you don't have extra bulk at the side of your bag. Now I'm coming back around to the side that I started on so I'm gonna make sure to leave a five inch gap before stopping. And back-stitch. I've sewn the top of my bag and I've left a five inch opening, and this is what we're gonna use to turn the bag right side out. Sticking your hand inside the bag, you're just going to start pulling the fabric to the right side. The wax canvas is a little bit stiff, so just work with it. And then you can use your hand to open up the bag, flatten out those nice corners you made, and then you're gonna stick the lining inside the bag. At this point, your bag doesn't look very awesome, but it's okay, that's what irons are for. So now we're going to spend a little bit of time with the ironing board and we're gonna press out this top seam and make it look great. When pressing the seam, you're gonna use your fingers to roll this out so that the seam is right at the edge of your bag. Once you get it looking nice by finger-pressing it, you're gonna go ahead and apply the iron. And I'm ironing on the cotton side, the lining side, so I'm not using the press cloth. And I am using steam, which is gonna make that edge look even better. We're gonna do the entire top edge of this bag. Irons are the key to have professionally-looking sewn items, so don't skimp on this part. When you get to the opening, you're gonna wanna fold both the lining and the outside of the bag in, a half an inch. And then you're gonna press that as well. Once you have your bag pressed, it should be looking pretty awesome, and now you're just gonna top-stitch that edge. When top-stitching the bag, you want to start on one of your seams, which will ensure that nobody sees the back-stitch that you're gonna do, and we're going to be using a quarter inch seam allowance to top-stitch the bag. You're almost done with your bag, now we just get to add leather handles, and you're good to go.

Chapter 4 - Finish Bag

Attach handles and finish

- The final step for your waxed canvas tote is going to be to attach leather handles. I'm using leather handles that already have holes punched in them. If you were going to make your own you would just want to use a leather punch to punch holes into your handles. I'm going to use my ruler to measure three inches from the edge of the bag to place the handles. Again, you could place your handles wherever you think looks best. I'm just lining up the outer edge of the handle at three inches and making sure that the top hole is below the top of my bag. I'm gonna use my chalk marker to mark that hole and mark the bottom hole. I'm gonna use the tip of a scissor to poke a hole through both the outer bag and the inside lining. Once I get the hole poked, I like to poke it from the back to the front. This is the way that you're gonna put your rivet in. I've found that it makes it easier. I have two holes. I'm gonna take a rivet and with the longer part I'm just gonna poke it from the back through to the front and do the same with the bottom. Yes, takes a little bit of strength to get that in there. I'm going to put my handle on and then you take the short rivet and put that right on top. It clicks in just a little bit which will hold it in place. Now you get to pound those in with a rubber mallet. The back is just going into this mat and not into the other side of the bag. A few smacks should get it nice and tight. Now you're gonna repeat that for the second side of the handle. Once you attach these rivets it is impossible to get them out, so double check your work and make sure

your handle is not twisted. (rivets snapping) (hammer pounding) You're gonna repeat that entire process for the second bag handle. You've just finished an awesome new bag that's super versatile and the perfect fall accessory to wear with almost anything. It's easy to change this bag up using different fabrics and even making it a different size. - I made this one out of Pendelton wool and I added a closure here. The bag is a little bit smaller. The dimensions are 12x24 when you cut out the outside and the lining. I just, I love it. It's simple, it's versatile, and you can carry it with anything. - I also made another waxed canvas version. This one is blue waxed canvas with red handles and an adorable red ticking on the inside. This time I used the same inside fabric for my pockets instead of the waxed canvas. Do you wanna get some coffee? - Sure, let's go. (soft instrumental music)