



POCKET GUIDE

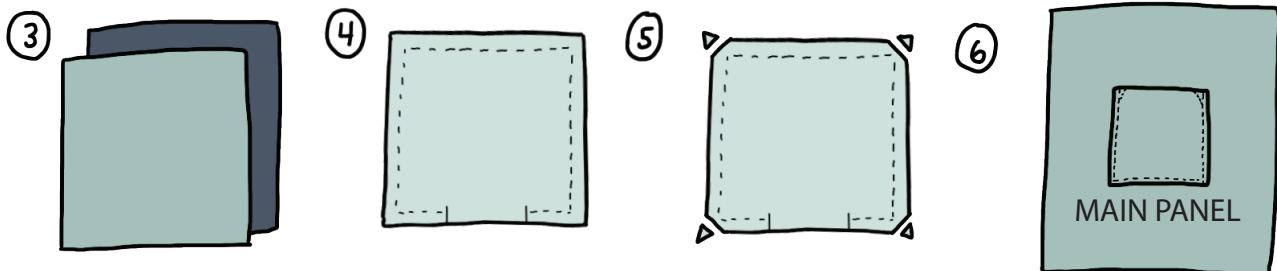
the MTLsimpletote is a very basic bag with an intuitive construction. this makes it easy to customize the pattern and add on features like pockets and zippers -- the fun part! this guide is here to help you get started :)

features can be placed on eight faces of the tote bag. not every face has to be used, so you can choose where you want your pockets: on the sides, the front, the back, or in the lining. it may be helpful to think about what you are going to use the bag for and what style of pocket might be helpful. for me, i use this bag when running errands around my college campus. i'll carry my phone, my id and keys, some money, a water bottle, food, and a jacket. for this purpose, i like to have an easily accessible exterior pocket to slip my phone in, a side water bottle pocket, and an interior zippered pocket for stuff i don't want to lose. if you're using this bag for grocery shopping, maybe you don't want to add pockets. and if you don't know what you'll use the bag for, adding pockets based on aesthetics works just as well.

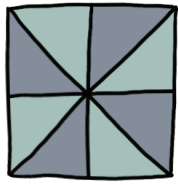
whatever pockets you decide to make, attach them to the tote bag panels before you assemble the tote bag (so in between step 1 and step 2 in the instructions). consider if the pocket will stand on it's own or be enclosed as part of a seam. there's so many possibilities, it can be a bit overwhelming. if you need some ideas, here's how i make some of my most used pockets:

PATCH POCKET

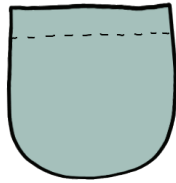
1. choose your finished pocket size. in this example, i want my pocket to be 5.5" wide x 5.5" tall.
2. add seam allowance to all sides. to save fabric and since it's just a pocket, i'll use a 1/4" seam allowance. so $5.5" + 2*(1/4") = 6"$. i'll cut out a 6" x 6" square.
3. cut out the pocket: you'll need two pieces of whatever size pocket you decided on. from the exterior fabric, cut a 6" x 6" square and from the interior fabric, cut out another 6" x 6" square.
4. place the two squares RST. just like when you sew a pillow, sew around the edge of the square, leaving a 2" opening along one edge.
5. clip the corners and flip the pocket right side out.
6. iron around the pocket and the opening.
7. choose where you want the pocket to go. position the pocket so that the side with the opening is not the top edge. pin and topstitch the pocket in place, securing the opening as you do so.



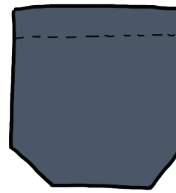
PATCH POCKET VARIATIONS



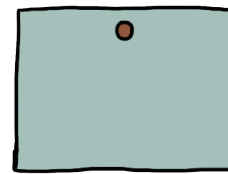
QUILTED



ROUNDED



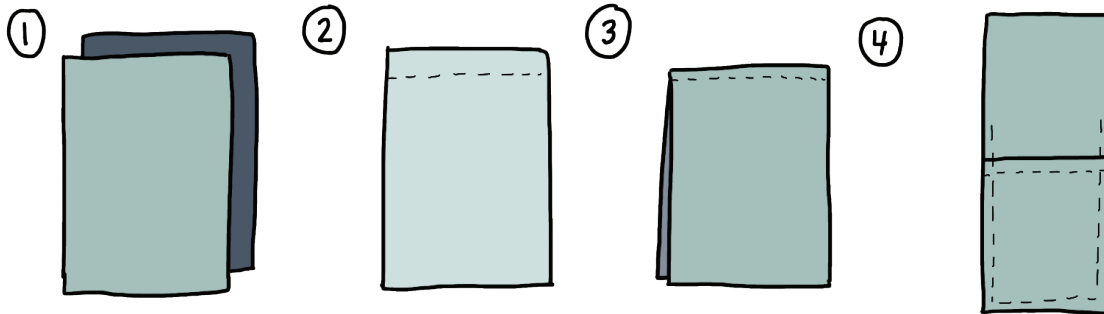
JEANS POCKET



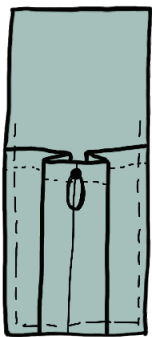
ADD A SNAP

SIDE POCKET

1. from the exterior and interior fabric, cut a 6" x 8" rectangle.
2. with RST sew along a short edge of the rectangle with a 1/2" seam allowance.
3. turn to the right side, press, and topstitch along the seam.
4. place the pocket on top of a side panel and baste in place. the edges will be secured when the bag is assembled.

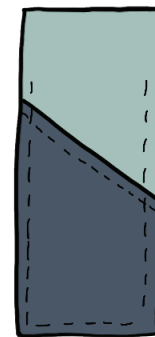


SIDE POCKET VARIATIONS

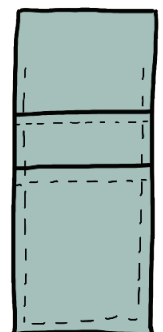


PLEATED

1. for 1" pleated pocket with drawstring: from exterior fabric, cut (2) 5.5" wide x 8" tall rectangles. on one 8" edge, make two marks 1.25" and 1.5" from the top.
2. with RST, sew along an 8" edge with 1/2" SA, stopping and sewing around the two marks. press seam open and topstitch the seam allowance down on both sides.
3. fold the top edge down 1/4", then 3/4" down and topstitch down.
4. thread drawcord through channel. at the opening in the center seam, pull out the cord and attach a cordlock.
5. make a mark on the bottom 1.5" from side, then another mark at 2.5". repeat on other side. match the marks to form a pleat. pin pleat at top and bottom and baste at the bottom only. baste the pocket onto the side panel.



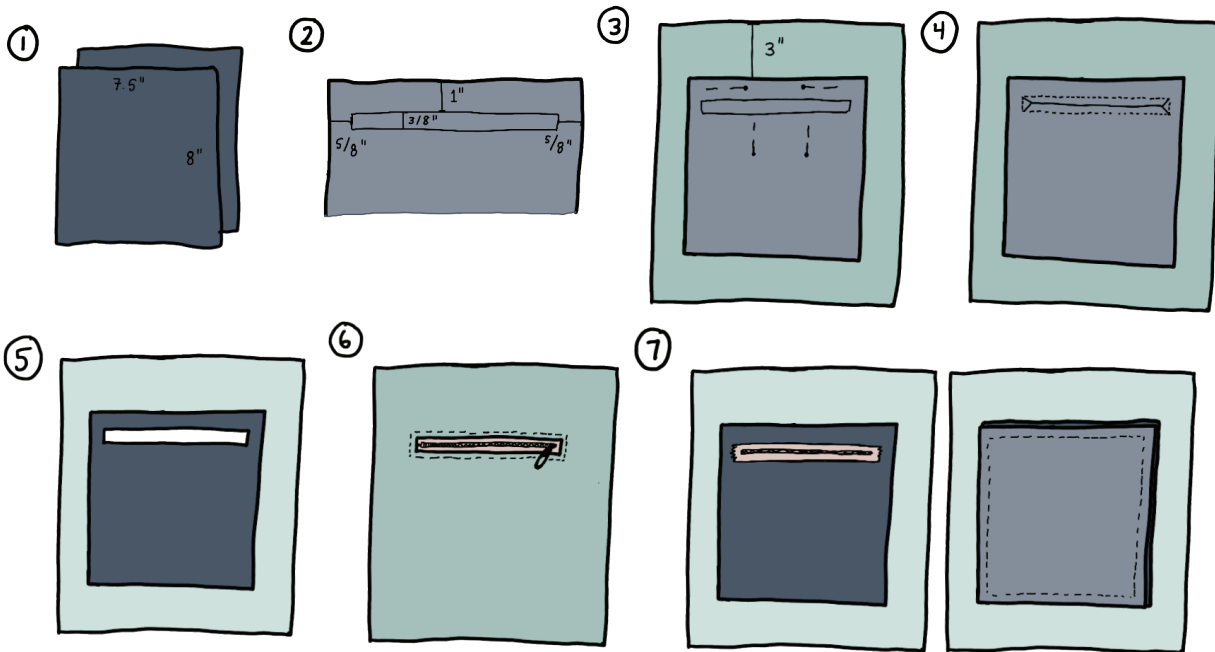
ANGLED



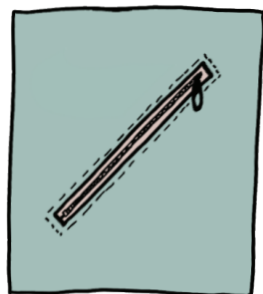
DOUBLE

WELT ZIPPER POCKET

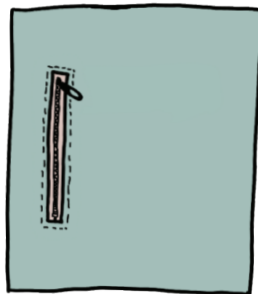
1. choose zipper size and determine how tall you want your pocket to be. for this example, i'll use a 6" zipper and make a 6.5" tall pocket. the width of the rectangle you'll want to cut is (zipper length + 1.5"). the height of the rectangle will be (height + 1.5"). so here, from my interior fabric, i'll cut (2) 7.5" wide x 8" tall rectangles.
2. on the wrong side of one of the rectangles, draw a horizontal line 1" down from the 7.5" edge. draw vertical lines 5/8" from the sides. draw another horizontal line 1 3/8" down from top to create a rectangle.
3. place this rectangle RST with the panel you are adding the zipper to. center the rectangle you drew with the place you want the zipper opening to be. i like to place mine about 3" down from the top edge. pin in place.
4. sew around the marked rectangle. cut through the center of the rectangle and clip to the corners.
5. push the lining through the opening so that it is now wrong sides together (WST) with the main panel. press.
6. pin/glue/tape the zipper in place behind the opening created and carefully topstitch in place.
7. on the wrong side of the main panel, match the other pocket rectangle RST with the pocket rectangle now attached behind the zipper. sew around all edges, being sure to peel back the main panel as you go so it doesn't get caught.



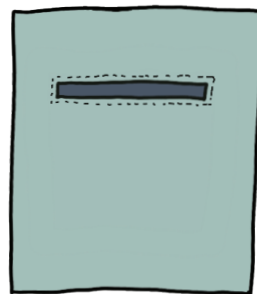
WELT ZIPPER POCKET VARIATIONS



DIAGONAL



VERTICAL



NO ZIPPER

GREAT AS
BOTH AN
INTERIOR AND
EXTERIOR POCKET

OTHER IDEAS



LARGE FRONT POCKET

constructed the same way as the side pocket, except to match the size of the main panel instead. determine the height you want your pocket and add 1/2" of seam allowance. the width is the width of the main panel, 12".

FLAP POCKET (with snap)

make a patch pocket, then make the flap. the construction is very similar: design the shape you want, add seam allowance, sew around the edge, leave an opening, flip to the right side and press. add a snap and topstitch it all down.



FULL ZIPPER POCKET

cut two extra main panels from an exterior fabric and a lining fabric. draw a horizontal line where you want the zipper to be placed and cut along that line. make the same cut on the lining panel. proceed as if you're making a zippered pouch, etc. look at my fanny pack instructions if you don't know how to sew a zipper. the front pocket there is very similar.



i sincerely hope this guide was helpful! patterns are great to start out with, but i also love having more control over my projects. i think that once you gain the skills and confidence, it feels more meaningful and fun to design for yourself and any specific purpose you may have. my goal with this tote pattern and pocket guide is to give you a feel of both. feel free to use these ideas as building blocks or inspiration for your own ideas, or ignore them all together. i'd love to see your creations (and gain inspiration from you, too!) -- tag me on your posts or use the hashtag #mtlsimpletote.