



Bags of Compassion – Sewing guide

Thanks for your support with our Bags of Compassion sewing project at St Columba's Hospice Care. We're delighted that you would like to help us by making a 'Personal Possessions Bag' for a patient and their family.

These bags are used to return the personal possessions of a patient to their family after the patient dies in the Hospice.

A patient's death is a very emotional time for their loved ones and we wanted a gentle and respectful way to return their personal possessions, that demonstrates the care and compassion that are two of our core values.

Completed bags can be returned directly to the Hospice or given in at one of our shops. Full details of our shops can be found on our website.

The Hospice address is:

St Columba's Hospice Care

Bags of Compassion Sewing Project

15 Boswall Road, Edinburgh, EH5 3RW.

FABRIC REQUIREMENTS

Outer Fabric & Straps

70cm x 154cm

or 1m x 115cm

or 75cm x 140cm

Lining fabric 60cm length for all widths

Suggested Fabrics Heavier weight cotton for outer bag.
Polycotton or cotton for the lining

Sewing notions - matching thread, pins, scissors

Sewing ability - competent

Instructions

(1) <u>CUT THE FABRIC</u> <i>See photo 1</i>	<u>Outer Bag</u> • Cut 2 pieces of fabric 70cm x 50cm • Cut away a 7cm square at the bottom corner of each piece <u>Lining</u> • Repeat as for outer bag <u>Straps</u> • Cut 2 pieces of fabric 70cm x 10cm
(2) <u>STRAPS</u> <i>See photos 2 & 2a</i>	Fold in 1cm along each long edge and press. With wrong sides together, fold the strap in half lengthwise as per photo. Press firmly and top stitch as per photo
(3) <u>PLACING STRAPS</u> <i>See photo 3</i>	Fold one of the Outer Bag pieces in half vertically and mark the centre line with a pin. Measure 10cm away from the pin towards each side and place one end of the strap with the raw edges to the top edge of the outer fabric. Stitch in place 1.5cm from the top. Reinforce the stitching with a second row. Place the other end of the strap in the same way taking care to check that the strap isn't twisted. Stitch in place in the same way as before. Repeat for the second strap on the other piece of outer bag fabric.
(4a) <u>MAKING UP THE OUTER BAG</u>	Pin the bottom edge of the outer bag right sides together. stitch with a 1.5cm seam allowance. Press open. Pin and stitch the sides seams also right sides together with a 1.5cm seam allowance. Press open. Leave the cut away corners unstitched
(4b) <u>MAKING UP THE LINING</u> <i>See photo 4</i>	Make this up in the same way as the outer bag but leave a 15cm gap in the middle of the bottom seam.

(4) <u>BOXING THE CORNERS</u> See photos 5a, 5b & 5c	Match the side and bottom seam of the outer bag and pin together. Stitch 1.5cm from the edge Repeat for the second corner. Turn the bag right sides out. Push out the corners and press. (A chopstick or knitting needle can help with this). Make boxed corners for the lining in the same way.
(5) <u>COMPLETING THE BAG</u> See photo 6	Insert the outer bag into the lining with right sides of both together and matching the side seams. Pin in place. Stitch all round 1.5cm from the top. Then stitch a second time for strength. Turn the completed bag through the gap in the bottom seam of the lining. Ease the lining into the bag and top stitch in place around the top of the bag. Lastly stitch the gap in the lining either by hand or machine.
(7)	Give the bag a final press Thank you so much for you support for this project.

Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 2a



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5a



Photo 5b



Photo 5c



Photo 6



Official

Photo of finished bag



Last update: March 2026