



Technique:	Sewing
Designed By:	Linda Turner Griepentrog
Skill Level:	Experienced Beginner
Crafting Time:	An evening
Finished size:	depends on shirt (see notes below) The featured tote is 12" (30.48cm) tall, 15" (38.10cm) wide and 4" (10.16cm) deep (excluding handles)

Featuring Coats Dual Duty XP®

Whether you're a thrift store junkie, or just cleaning out your favorite guy's closet, there are some great plaid shirts that need a new life. Pick wool or flannel to reincarnate into this soft shopping tote, with usable pockets already in place.

Supplies

- Coats Dual Duty XP® All-purpose thread
- (1) men's plaid shirt
- ¾ yd (68.58cm) lining fabric
- ¾ yd (68.58cm) fusible fleece
- (1) pair 21" (53.34cm) faux leather rolled handles

Preparing the Shirt Front

The size of your tote is limited by the size of the shirt you begin with. Choose a shirt with front pockets and a button band down the front. Carefully cut along the side seams, and along the armholes to remove the sleeves. Cut off the collar just below the band and separate the front and back at the shoulder or yoke seams. With the shirt buttoned, sew down one side of the front band to create a single-piece shirt front.

Creating the Pattern

Create the pattern for your tote by drawing a rectangle as wide as possible. Measure the shirt front at the mid-armhole line, as this is usually the narrowest part of the shirt—that is the rectangle width. The length of the rectangle should be the desired tote height, plus 3" (7.62cm). Allow some clearance on each side of the shirt pockets when measuring so they don't end up in the side seam allowance. Draw the rectangle onto paper and cut out a 2" (5.08cm) square from each lower corner. This is the pattern for the tote front and back.

Cutting

From the shirt front, cut:

(1) tote pattern, centering on the front shirt band

From the shirt back, cut:

(1) tote pattern

Note: Depending on the original shirt cut, the plaids may not match at the tote side seams.

From the lining, cut:

(2) tote patterns

From the fleece, cut:

(2) tote patterns

Seam allowances are ¼" (.64cm).

Assembling the Tote

1. Following the manufacturer's instructions, fuse a fleece tote piece to the wrong side of the tote front and another to the tote back.
2. Using the plaid lines as a guide, quilt along several both vertically and horizontally, leaving the pocket areas free so they will be usable.
3. With right sides together, sew the tote front to the back at the side seams and across the bottom. Press the seams open.
4. To box the lower corners, fold the side seam on top of the bottom seam and sew across the corner. Repeat for the second corner.
5. Repeat Steps 3-4 for the tote lining, leaving a 3" (7.62cm) opening in the bottom seam for turning.
6. Find the upper center of the tote front and back. Mark a line 4" (10.16cm) on each side of the center marks.
7. Baste the handles in place on the tote right side, centering over the markings.
8. With right sides together, slip the lining over the tote, matching side seams and upper edges. Sew around the upper edge. Press the seam allowances open, being careful to press around the handles but not on them.

Finishing the Tote

1. Turn the tote right side out through the lining opening.
2. Press the upper edge, rolling the lining to the wrong side. Push the lining into the tote.
3. Topstitch the tote upper edge along a prominent plaid line.
4. Hand- or machine stitch the lining opening.

