

How to Make a Sling Handbag

by Pamela Fay

If you like accessories, particularly handbags, a sling bag is a must have. Sling bags make good totes for whatever you need to carry, from everyday essentials to beach wear. You can make a sling handbag with a couple of T-shirts. Be environmentally friendly and repurpose two shirts from your existing stash. There's no need to purchase them new. They don't even have to match. In fact, it's best if they don't.

Step 1: Select two sturdy T-shirts. They should be approximately 25-inches long but do not need to be the same size. Try pairing a graphic or lettered T-shirt with a bright solid. Scrap material will work as well. You need two $\frac{3}{4}$ -yard pieces of 36-inch or wider material. Use interlock or non-woven material so that you can leave the edges unfinished. In addition to T-shirt knits, other good choices include ultrasuede or fleece.

Step 2: Create a paper pattern from newsprint or butcher paper. The triangle dimensions are 9-inches by 23-inches by 25-inches. Draw the 25-inch edge opposite the right angle formed by the other two sides. Cut the right angle triangle from newspaper or butcher paper.

Step 3: Turn the shirts inside out and lay flat. Pin the pattern onto the material with the short edge at the bottom of the shirt. If you are using scrap material, the 23-inch edge should run parallel to the fold and the selvage. Cut the triangles through both layers of material to create two triangles. Repeat with the second shirt. Make sure that the right sides of the triangles are together.

Step 4: Pin together the 23-inch side of each of the triangle pairs. With the 9-inch edges at the bottom, lay the triangles side-by-side to form a rectangular shape with a V on the inside. This will position the 26-inch edges of both triangles on the inside. The 23" edges form the right and left sides.

Step 5: Move one triangle's 9-inch bottom edge between the layers of the second triangle to form a sling. You will retain the rectangular shape with a smaller V in the interior. Line up the four layers of the 9-inch edge evenly and pin the edge together. It doesn't matter which triangle you insert, but remember that the inserted triangle will show predominantly on the outside of the bag.

Step 6: Stitch along all pinned edges by machine $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch from the edge. Or, use a needle and thread to close the opening with a running backstitch. Sew over the stitching at the corners to reinforce the seam. Remove the pins and turn the handbag right side out.

References

Generation T: 120 New Ways to Transform a T-Shirt; Megan Nicolay; 2009.