

# My First Project: The Super Simple Drawstring Bag!

## Materials Needed:

- **Fabric:** Two rectangular pieces of cotton fabric, each 10 inches wide by 12 inches tall. (Let the student choose a fun pattern!)
- **Sewing Machine:** Threaded with a coordinating color.
- **OR Hand-Sewing Supplies:** A needle and coordinating thread.
- **Fabric Scissors:** Sharp scissors for cutting fabric only.
- **Ruler or Measuring Tape:** For accurate cutting.
- **Iron and Ironing Board:** For pressing seams.
- **Straight Pins:** To hold the fabric together.
- **Drawstring:** About 36 inches of ribbon, cording, or a thick shoelace.
- **Safety Pin:** A large one works best.
- **Optional Decoration Supplies:** Fabric markers, paint, patches, or embroidery floss.

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## Lesson Plan

### 1. Learning Objectives (The Mission!)

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- Accurately measure and cut fabric pieces to the correct dimensions.
- Safely operate a sewing machine to sew a straight seam (or use a running stitch for hand sewing).
- Construct a "casing" for the drawstring.
- Assemble a functional, finished drawstring bag.
- Apply creative choices to personalize their project.

### 2. The Warm-Up: Bag Brainstorm (5 minutes)

Show the student examples of different drawstring bags. Ask them: What could you use a bag like this for? (Storing treasures, carrying snacks, a gift bag for a friend, holding game pieces). This connects the project to a real-world purpose and gets them excited about their own creation. Let them choose their fabric now to build ownership.

### 3. Step-by-Step Instructions (The Main Adventure!)

#### Part A: Preparation is Key! (10 minutes)

1. **Smooth it Out:** Have the student help you iron the two pieces of fabric. Explain that sewing with smooth, unwrinkled fabric is much easier and makes the final project look more professional.
2. **Create the Casing Top:** Take one piece of fabric. On the top 10-inch edge, guide the student to fold the fabric down by  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch and press it with the iron. Then, fold it down again by 1 inch and press it again. This creates a neat "tube" for the drawstring.
3. **Repeat:** Do the exact same thing for the second piece of fabric.

### Part B: First Stitches (10 minutes)

1. **Sew the Casing:** Guide the student to the sewing machine. They will sew a straight line along the bottom edge of the folded-over fabric on each piece. Make sure they sew close to the edge to secure the "tube" but leave the ends open. This is their casing!
2. **Quick Tip:** Remind the student to backstitch at the beginning and end of their seam to lock the stitches in place. If hand-sewing, show them how to make a small knot.

### Part C: Assembling the Bag (15 minutes)

1. **The "Fabric Sandwich":** This is a crucial step. Explain that we need to put the "pretty sides" of the fabric together. Lay the two pieces of fabric on top of each other, with the right sides facing inward. The casings should line up perfectly at the top.
2. **Pin It!:** Have the student use straight pins to secure the two long sides and the bottom of the bag. Place pins every few inches. Remind them not to put any pins across the top opening!
3. **Sew the Sides:** Starting just BELOW the casing, guide the student to sew down one side, pivot at the corner, and sew across the bottom. Then pivot again and sew up the other side, stopping again just BELOW the casing. Use a ½ inch seam allowance.  
**Teaching Checkpoint:** Ask, "Why do you think we don't sew the casing shut on the sides?" (Answer: So we can thread the string through!)

### Part D: The Big Reveal! (10 minutes)

1. **Clip the Corners:** To make the corners sharp, show the student how to carefully snip off the two bottom corners of the fabric, being careful not to cut the stitches.
2. **Turn it Out:** This is the magic moment! Have the student reach inside the bag and turn it right-side out. Use a pencil or a chopstick to gently poke the corners into a neat shape.
3. **The Drawstring Trick:** Attach the large safety pin to one end of your ribbon or cord. Guide the student to push the safety pin into one of the side openings of the casing. They will then bunch up the fabric and feed the pin all the way through one side and then all the way through the other side, so it comes out the same opening it went in.
4. **Finish the String:** Remove the safety pin and tie the two ends of the cord together in a secure knot. Your bag now cinches shut!

## 4. Make It Your Own! (Creative Time - 15+ minutes)

This is where the student's creativity shines. Set out the optional decorating supplies. They can:

- Use fabric markers to draw a design or write their name.
- Add iron-on patches.
- Use fabric glue to add pom-poms or gems.
- If they are feeling adventurous, hand-sew on a few decorative buttons.

## 5. Assessment and "Show & Tell"

- **Formative (During the Lesson):** Observe the student's ability to follow instructions, measure, and handle the sewing machine or needle safely. Ask guiding questions to check for understanding.
- **Summative (The Final Product):** The completed bag is the assessment! Does the drawstring work? Are the seams mostly straight and secure? Most importantly, is the student proud of their creation?
- **Student Reflection:** Have the student do a mini "Show and Tell." Ask them to share their bag,

explain one thing they learned, and name their favorite part of the project.

## 6. Differentiation and Extensions

- **For Extra Support:** Use a larger piece of fabric for easier handling. Draw a light pencil line for the student to follow while sewing. Use fabric glue for a "no-sew" casing if the sewing machine is too challenging.
- **For an Extra Challenge:** Suggest adding a fabric lining (sewing two bags and putting one inside the other). Create "boxed corners" for a flat bottom. Add a simple exterior pocket before sewing the main bag pieces together.