

Instructions for Personal Effects Bags



1. The Macmillan Nurses asked for instructions for a fabric bag into which they could put the personal effects of patients who had died. Due to the nature of these bags they do not have to be a specific size. These are essentially shopper bags and as such can be made from whatever suitable material is available. The bag pictured is made from curtain sample books. This sample book was 56cm x 46 cm but the bags could be made using different dimensions.



2. Firstly cut out 2 pieces of fabric 56cm x 46 cm for the bag and the 2 pieces 56cm x 12 cm for the handles.



3. Fold in all of the edges of the handles 2cm and iron then fold in half lengthways to form a strap 4cm wide. Sew along the edges and the length of the straps. At this stage if you want you can sew a small red heart onto the handle.



4. Take the larger pieces of fabric and sew a 2cm hem across the top of each piece. Pin the two pieces, right sides together, leaving the hemmed edge at the top to form a bag. Sew along the two sides and the base.



5. If you want the bag to have a base, open out the base of the bottom of the bag and pin across about 7cm from the edge. This is not as tricky as it first seems and gives the bag shape. The side and base seams line up at the apex of the triangle.



6. Sew across to form a triangle on each side.



7. Sew each handle onto the bag, leaving a gap between each handle of about 15cm. Sew around each handle to form a square to ensure the handles are secure. The bag is now complete.

The feedback we get from the Macmillan Nurses is that these bags make a difference as they are currently returning patients belongings in carrier bags. This is far more personal and dignified.

For further information on this and other projects see below.

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