



Quick Zip Bag

1-2 Hours

What will you learn?

How to:

Pre-wash fabrics before using them

Zig-zag or serger finish seam allowances to prevent raveling (loose threads)

Put in an exposed zipper

Use interfacing to reinforce a high stress area (optional, notebook pencil case version)

How to insert grommets (optional, notebook pencil case version)



What will you need?

A sewing machine and basic sewing tools

¼ yard of medium weight denim, poplin, cotton or cotton-polyester blend decorator fabric will make 2 pencil bags (or a scrap of fabric 16 ½" by 10" will make one bag to hold pencils, pens, and other school supplies)

14 inch or larger polyester dress zipper to go with your fabric (contrasting zippers look nice with plain fabrics, you might like to make your bag in your school colors)

Thread to go with your fabric

Fusible interfacing (optional, for notebook pencil case version)

Three grommets (optional, for notebook pencil case version; buy a package of grommets with the tool* to install them if you don't already have one)

Seam Allowances: ¼ inch or use the right edge of your presser foot as a seam guide (a standard presser foot on most sewing machines makes a 3/8 inch seam allowance)

Directions to make this project: (Remember to backstitch at the beginning and end of your seams!)

1. Pre-wash all your fabric in warm water on a gentle cycle with laundry detergent, rinse with cold water, and dry on warm until dry. High heat and over-drying your fabrics will cause wrinkles to form that will be difficult to remove.

2. Carefully press your fabric flat. Use steam if necessary.

- If your zipper has been folded, the zipper tape may need pressing. Polyester zipper teeth may melt under the heat of the iron. Carefully press just the zipper tape with the edge of your iron. If the zipper tape is really wrinkled, you can soak the zipper in warm water and smooth out it on a flat surface to air dry. You can speed up the drying process with a hair dryer but watch the heat.
- Cut a rectangle of fabric, 16 ½" by 10". Zig-zag or serge the edges of the fabric to prevent raveling (loose threads). If you use a zig-zag stitch, the multi-stitch zig-zag is a good choice for quilting weight cotton fabrics (Settings: 1.5 long and 3.5 wide). The multi-stitch zig-zag will keep the edge of the fabric from curling.



- With the right side of your fabric up, open your zipper and place one edge of the zipper tape face down along one of the 10-inch sides. If you center the zipper, you can avoid running into the zipper pull and metal stop with the presser foot of your machine.



- If your machine has a multi-position needle, move the needle to the left position. Make sure you have on the multi-purpose presser foot if you move the needle from the center position. With the zipper on the top, position the presser foot so the left edge is riding along the zipper teeth and sew.



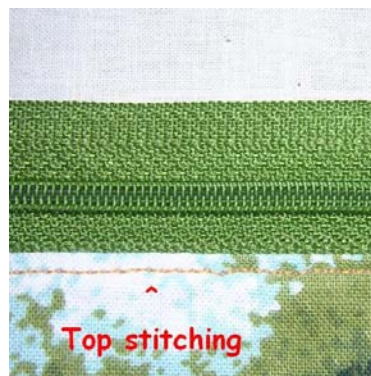
If your machine does not have a left needle position use a zipper foot so you can sew along the zipper teeth. The stitching line needs to be a scant ¼" from the zipper teeth.

- Zig-zag the edge of your zipper tape to the fabric. This will help to keep the fabric and the edge of the zipper from becoming stuck in the zipper teeth.

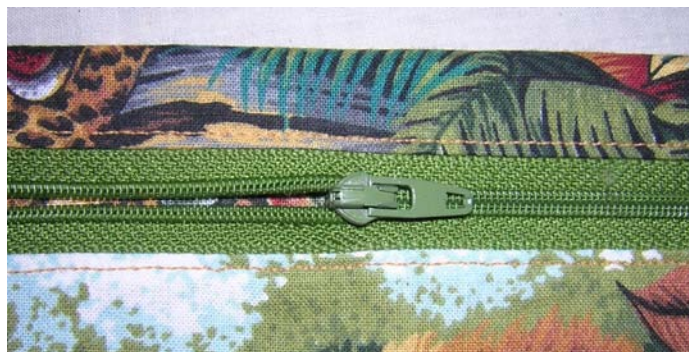


Zig-zag stitching should not cross over the straight stitching you did previously.
(Settings: 3.0 long and 2.5 wide)

8. Fold the fabric back so you can see the top side of the fabric and the top of the zipper. Top stitch from the right side so that you stitch through the fabric and the zipper tape.



9. Repeat steps 5-8 for the other side of the zipper. Close your zipper to help position it on other side of the fabric, pin it in place, and then open it so it will be easier to sew close to the zipper teeth.



10. Close the zipper so you can position the zipper teeth about 1 inch from one side of your bag. With the bag fabric wrong side out, pin the open sides of your bag together. Be sure to **open** your zipper **halfway** before you sew the sides of your bag. When you go over the zipper teeth, sew slowly. Sew again to reinforce the seam.



11. Trim the zipper even with the fabric with kitchen shears or an old pair of fabric shears. Cutting through the zipper teeth will dull a good pair of fabric shears.



12. If you will be adding grommets to your pencil bag so you can put it in your notebook, fuse strips of interfacing as shown in the pictures. Cut the interfacing 1 1/2" wide and just long enough to fit between the side seams of your bag.



13. Turn your bag right side out and push the corners out with a point turner. Press and add grommets if desired.

14. Make more bags in different sizes. A zipper is easier to put in if you select one longer than your fabric and then trim it to fit after you have sewn it in. If you have small pieces of fabric, you can use two to make this bag. Using two pieces of fabric makes the zipper easier to put in, especially if the zipper is close to the size of your fabric. Cut one piece about 2 1/2 inches shorter than the other. Example: For the pencil bag, cut

the top piece 7 ¼” by 10” and the other 9 ¾” by 10”. You will put one side of the zipper on each of the fabrics and then seam them together.

Try different fabrics for your bags. Scraps of nylon and even fiberglass screening from a hardware store will make great pencil bags. Plastic coated fabrics are a challenge to work with so avoid them unless you have a **Teflon®** coated presser foot. You can use quilting weight cotton fabrics for your bags but if you intend to use your bag as a pencil case you may want to reinforce the entire piece of fabric with interfacing. Stitch a **Quick Zip Bag** in a tote bag or the **Drawstring Backpack** for a secure pocket for money and an ID card.

Notes:

New zippers in discontinued colors may be found at second-hand shops like **St. Vincent's, Goodwill, or Salvation Army Stores**. A friend of the author found a bag of 30 unused zippers for 99 cents. Remember it is easier to use a zipper longer than the edge of your fabric.

* Fabric punches for inserting eyelets and grommets with tools can be found at **Jo-Ann** fabric stores. Stores like **REI, Seattle Fabrics, and The Rain Shed** also have kits with tools and grommets. **REI** had a kit for about 10 dollars that included the grommets, a fabric punch, and the tool to attach the two parts of the grommet.

<http://www.rei.com>

<http://images.rei.com/media/602141Prd.jpg>