

Little Japanese Bags (makes 2 or more)

I first came across this little bag when my son was at university and a Japanese girl in the same course came to our house for Sunday lunch. She turned up with a beautiful bunch of flowers and a little bag containing some chocolate coins ('For good luck!') She told me that these bags have been around for generations. Since then I have seen them in Japanese magazines and books, and I have been to a workshop, learning how to make them. These instructions were written by me. I hope you'll enjoy making these little bags. They are very versatile and, if small enough, even work as Christmas tree decorations.

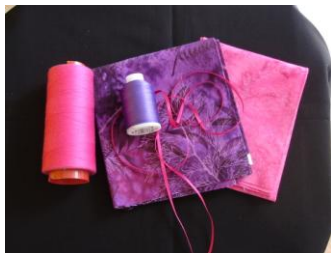


Materials needed:

2 Fat Quarters of contrasting fabrics (Plain, tone-on-tone, or with an overall pattern. Directional fabrics or stripes are not really suitable.)

Matching sewing thread (if unavailable, use a neutral medium grey)

18 to 20 inch length of narrow ribbon for every bag, in a colour that looks good with both fabrics.



Equipment needed:

Sewing machine

Needle for hand sewing

Cutting mat and rotary cutter

Equilateral triangle ruler (or any other ruler that has 30 and 60 degrees marked on it)

Method:

1. Press your two FQs, and put them (right sides together) on your cutting mat. Cut sets of two equilateral triangles with a side length of between 9 and 11 inches (All sides must be the same length). Make sure that one edge is parallel with the warp or weft (If you cut out your triangles carefully, you can get 4 (or more) sets out of each two fabric stack.)



2. Using a $\frac{1}{4}$ inch seam, sew the two triangles together, starting a few inches from the edge on the warp/weft side, and finish about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches from the start.



3. Turn the triangle inside out and press well, taking care that the fabric at the opening is turned under.
4. Place the fabric triangle in front of yourself. The side that you cannot see will form the petals. Turn the three corners towards the centre by about $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, depending on the size of your triangle, and pin in place (The smaller the petals are, the taller the open bag will be. And the larger the petals are, the wider the opening will be.)
5. Sew across each of the three petal edges, using a matching thread, and creating generous $\frac{1}{4}$ inch channels for the ribbon (The wider the petals the more generous your bag opening is, but you will lose height when your bag is standing up. It's your choice to decide on the proportions for your little bag.).



6. Sew in all the thread ends.

7. Match the end of two petals, with the petals on the inside of the bag. Sew a narrow seam from the start of the fold to about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch from the ribbon channel.
8. Repeat with the other two sides, and sew in the thread ends.
9. Turn your little triangle bag inside out.



10. Thread a narrow ribbon through the three petals, pull to close the opening, and tie with a bow.

Experiment with the size of the triangles and petal sizes, and have fun!

