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The Charm Bag

Supplies:

- 1 charm pack or 12 5" x 5" squares (front and back)*
- 1 8" x 14" rectangle of coordinating fabric (bottom) **
- 1 15" x 25" piece of fabric for the lining (approximate, trim to fit)
- 1 4" strip of fabric cut the width of fabric (handles)
- 1 covered button or closure for the bag
- 1 3" square of fabric for covering button
- 1 1 1/2" x 5" piece of fabric for loop (to close button)
- 1 piece of batting (or fusible fleece) a few inches bigger than your outside bag piece, about 27" x 16"

General instruction:

- All seams are 1/4"
- Pressing is generally toward the dark fabric

Instructions:

Outside:

- Select 12 charms from the charm pack.
- Sew four strips of three charms each. Press seams in one direction.
- Sew two strips together along long side, matching seams, to form a rectangle of three charms across and two down. Press seam. Repeat for second side.
- Pin the rectangles to either side of the bottom piece, right sides facing. Sew together. Press seams toward bottom.
- Pin batting onto the back of the outer bag fabric and machine quilt. Use your choice of quilting methods. A simple method is to quilt in straight lines about 3/4" apart all the way across the fabric, either direction. Trim batting to the size of the outside piece.
- Cut (or trim) lining fabric to fit quilted piece. Fold the quilted top in half right sides together and sew side seams so that the seams between the bottom piece and the charms line up. Pin as needed.
- For the corners on the bottom of the bag, pull the sides apart until the sides form a triangle and the side seam is centered. Measure 1-1/2" in, draw a line and sew straight across. Trim seams to 1/4". This will make the bottom approximately 3" across. The deeper the triangle, the wider the bottom.



Lining:

If you want a pocket, sew two charms together. Hem all sides. Center on right side of lining about 3 ½" from the top. Pin in place and stitch.

Fold the lining fabric in half the long way, right sides together. Sew side seams, leaving about a 4" opening in the side of one of the seams so you can turn the bag. Form corners the same as for the outside.

Handle:

Iron the handles strip in half lengthwise, right side out. Open up and press the outer edges toward the center. Fold closed and press. Stitch down the entire length of the handle 3 or 4 times, or about ¼" apart.

Button closure:

Prepare in the same manner as the handle.

Bag assembly:

Leaving the outside quilted bag inside out, turn the lining right side out and set the lining down into the quilted bag, matching the top edge. The right sides of the fabric should be facing each other.

Pin the handles onto the outside piece about 2" from the side seam making sure they go down between the outside and the lining. Be sure they aren't twisted. Pin the bag closure the same way at the center of one side.

Pin the lining to the quilted bag and stitch around the top about 1/2" down from the top. Turn the bag through the 4" opening in the side seam of the lining. Tuck the lining down inside the bag and remove all the pins from the handles, etc. Topstitch about ¼" from the top. Sew on the button.

TIP

To make the bottom of the bag sturdy, cut a piece of cardboard, plastic canvas or other stiff material to the size of the bottom; I then make a mini pillow case out of the lining fabric to slip over it. This can be removed when you launder your bag.

* When you use 12 charms for a bag you can make three bags from a 40-piece charm pack. If you would like a bigger bag just use more charms and adjust your bottom accordingly.

** You could use six charms to replace this, but the lining and batting will need to be larger.

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