

Valentine Chair Backer Tutorial©

by Amy at www.ourscoop.blogspot.com



Disclaimer: I am not a professional or a good writer for that matter. This is my very first sewing tutorial so please let me know if I need to make any corrections. Don't let the length of this intimidate you. A: I didn't know the best way to write all this and B: I just tried to be very descriptive. It is not hard, just detailed. Please email me if you have any questions or you come across a part where you are stuck at ourscoop@gmail.com

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Materials Needed:

- 1/2 yard of Felt or exterior fabric. I used Wool/Felt. You can order it online at www.prairiepointjunction.com
- 1/2 yard of lining/interior fabric.
- 3/4 - 1 1/2 yards of Heavyweight Fusible Interfacing*
- Scrap Fabric or Fat Quarters (small pieces of fabric sold for around \$2) for the heart and ruffle details.
- Ric Rac
- 2-4 Buttons – 2 for the ruffle bag and 4 for the ric rac bag. I made my own to match using a Dritz cover button kit from JoAnns Fabric \$2.99
- FABRI-TAC optional but is very helpful to stabilize things
- 3/4" Velcro

*Depending on what fabrics you use would determine how much interfacing to use. For example, Felt is a pretty stiff fabric. I only added interfacing on the felt and not the lining(which only requires 3/4 yard). If you choose to use a cotton exterior fabric, I would put the interfacing on both the Exterior and Lining Fabrics pieces for a good shape on this project.



Cut:

- 2 11" x 11" Squares of Exterior Fabric
 - 2 11" x 11" Squares of Interior/Lining Fabric
 - 2 11" x 11" Squares of Fusible Interfacing
 - 3 11" x 3" Exterior Fabric- side/bottom piece
 - 3 11" x 3" Interior/Lining Fabric- side/bottom piece
 - 3 11" x 3" Fusible Interfacing- side/bottom piece
 - 1 11" x 6" Exterior Fabric for the flap
 - 1 11" x 6" Interior Fabric for the flap
 - 4 1 1/4" x 13" felt/exterior Fabric for the Straps
- Cut the Accent fabric when you reach that step.

Once Cutting is complete, **START** by fusing the interfacing (instructions should come with the interfacing for application) to the **WRONG SIDE** of the 2 **EXTERIOR** Squares and to the **WRONG SIDE** of the **EXTERIOR** 3 side/bottom pieces. This will give the bag some stiffness and help with the shape.



Cut a heart out of paper for the peek a boo heart on the front. Luckily I had this template from the early early days of scrapbooking. I'm sure you could find a perfect template on the Martha Stewart website. On **ONE** of the Exterior pieces, find the middle by measuring your square width ways and trace the heart 3" above the bottom. Cut out heart. Make sure to start cutting **WITH IN** the traced heart. That will be the front piece.



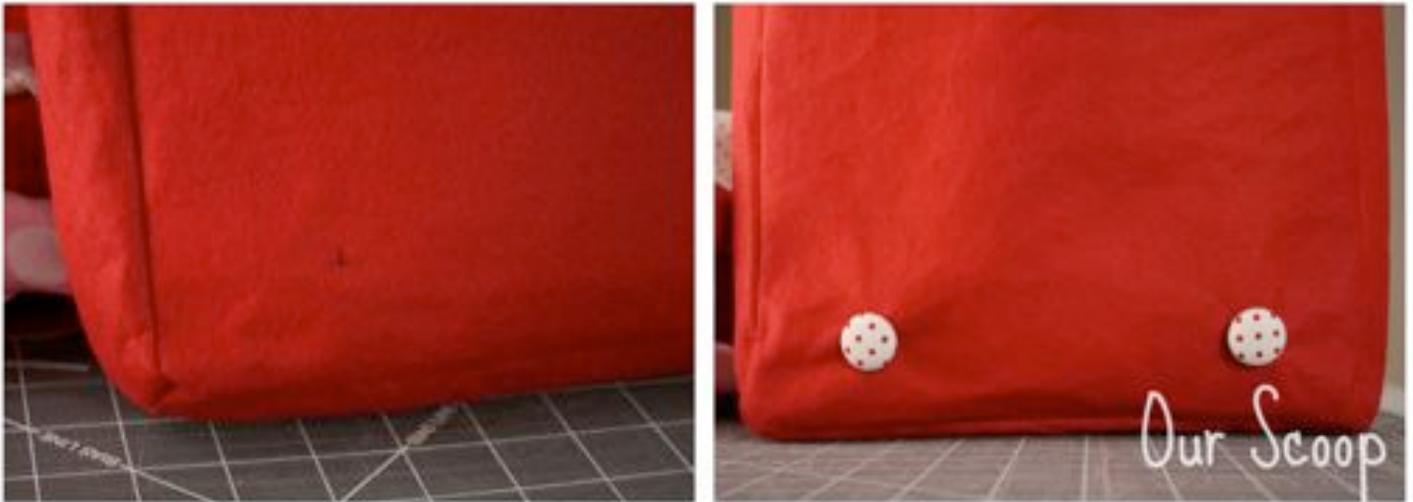
Cut a 4" x 4" Square of Accent Fabric for your heart in the front. Add fusible interfacing on the back of the square for added strength. Center it behind the cut out heart and just tack the corners with a little bit of FABRI-TAC and let dry. Top stitch around the heart.



Starting with the front piece, pin the side and bottom strips to the front. Start pinning at the top right hand corner and work your way down to the bottom piece continuing until you get to the top left hand corner. Sew your seam starting at the top right hand corner continuing all the way to the left hand corner using a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance. Repeat this entire step for the back piece. Now sew side and bottom seam closed on the bottom of bag. Turn bag right side out and bag should be able to stand on its own. Set aside.



Now repeat the same process for the lining. Starting with one 11" interior square piece, pin the side and bottom strips to the front. Start pinning at the top right hand corner and work your way down to the bottom piece continuing until you get to the top left hand corner. Sew your seam starting at the top right hand corner continuing all the way to the left hand corner using a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance. Repeat this entire step for the back piece **but leave a 4" opening on the side for turning**. Now sew side and bottom seam closed on the bottom of bag. Set aside.



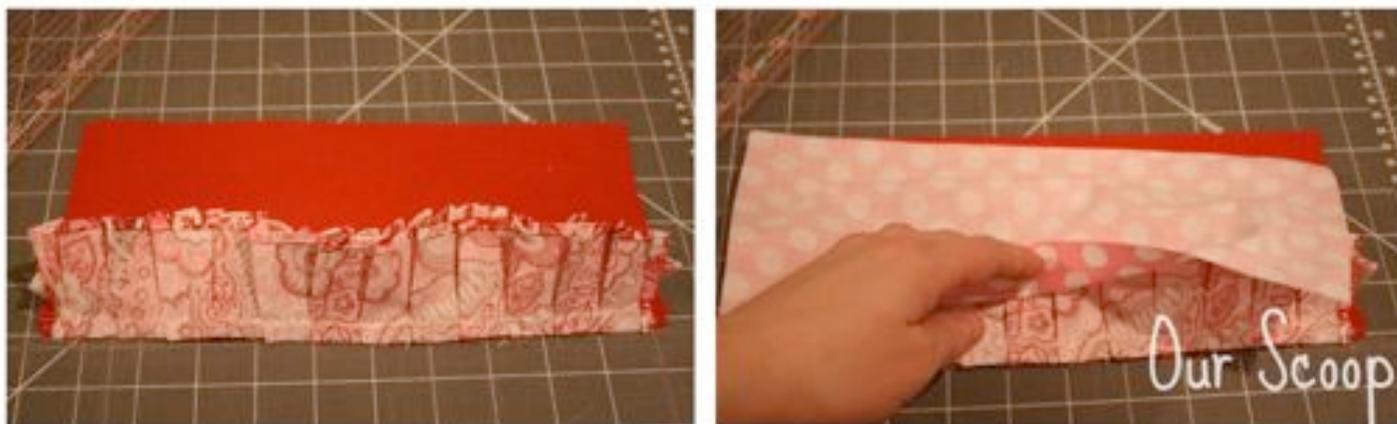
On the Exterior bag, mark a spot on the bottom BACK for the buttons to be sewn. I measured 2" in from the side and 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the bottom. Sew buttons on. Make sure to sew them on secure!

Now lets get started on the flap. I'll show how I did both the ruffle flap and ric rac flap.

1st the Ruffle flap: This is tricky. For the Ruffle flap, Cut the felt/exterior main flap piece to 11"x 4". Save the scrap piece you just cut off, it should still be 11" wide.



I sewed the ruffles on the bottom of the exterior flap piece right sides together using my ruffler foot. **MAKE SURE TO LEAVE A 1/4" INDENTATION ON EITHER END OF THE RUFFLE** to allow room when it is sewn and turned. I cut the striped ruffle 2" wide and approx. 20" long, pressed, turned under and sewed the bottom raw edge before I ruffled it. Once ruffled, iron ruffle to perfect. Now on that 11" scrap piece, this will be the other fabric ruffle. I cut this ruffle 2 1/2" wide and approx. 20" long. Just to be safe on both ruffles I made sure to have enough length for the ruffles. You can sew strips of fabric together to make it long enough if needed. Sew second ruffle (the wider ruffle) right sides together to the scrap piece. Put the two pieces (stripe ruffle and flower ruffle) together eye balling how much of the bottom ruffle you would like to show and pin into place. Using a longer stitch (not so tight, you'll see why), stitch the top ruffle piece onto the bottom ruffle piece.



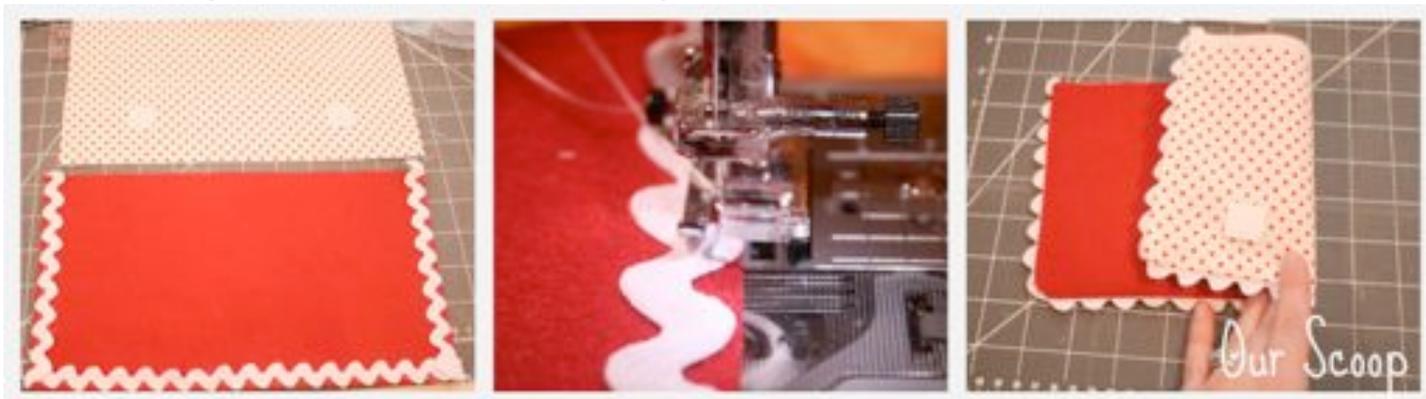
Flip all ruffles upward to add the back lining piece. Maybe pin the ruffles out of the way so they won't be sewn into the side seams. With right sides together pin the lining piece to the exterior ruffle piece. Starting at the top right hand side sew with a 1/4" seam allowance down around bottom and ending at the top left hand corner. The top should be open. Turn right side out and **Press** with an iron. Now we get to go back and **UNPICK**. Don't worry, not too bad. And if you haven't unpicked anything by this point, you are a lot better than me!



Make sure to pin the layers together so they won't shift during this process. Don't stress to much.

Unpick this stitch holding the ruffles together so we can have a continuous top stitch. Once unpicked, start at the top right and corner and sew a top stitch a 1/8" from edge and work your way around to the top left hand corner. For topstitching on this entire project I used a little longer stitch. Not so tight. I don't know the length but practice on a scrap piece to see what stitch size you like. I love topstitching. It can make your work look more professional. But ALWAYS press and iron your seams before topstitching for a crisp look. If you want a closure on the bag, now would be a good time to sew a Velcro square centered under the first ruffle of the flap. Once that is done set aside.

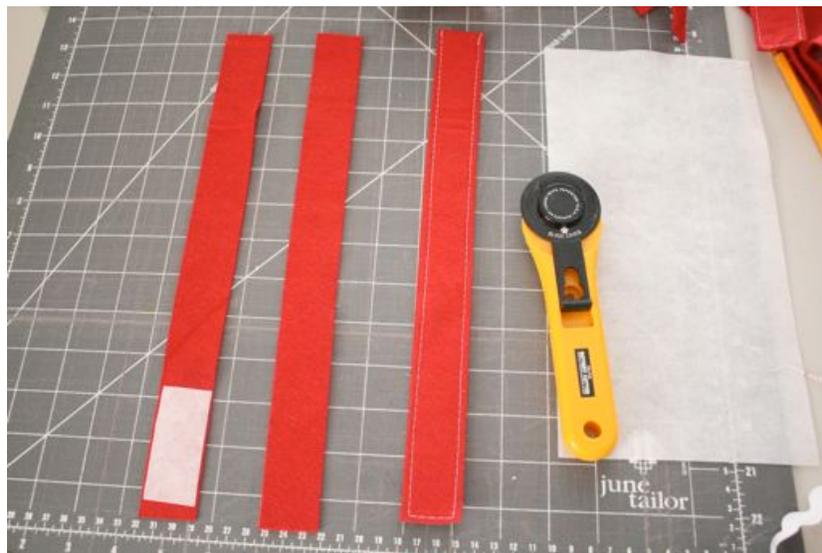
Now I'll show you how to make the ric rac flap.



Using the 11" x 6" flap piece we are going to sew ric rac on the edges. I used ric rac that is 1/2" wide. The ric rac is not a continuing piece all the way around. I cut it for each side length making sure to line up the wave on the corners where I wanted them. To stabilize the ric rac, sew it onto the **right side** of the flap using a 1/8" seam allowance. Just enough to keep it in place. On the **right side** of the lining piece sew on two Velcro squares for the closure. I think I measured mine 2" in from the side and 1 1/4" from the bottom. But eye ball what looks best taking in consideration all the seams that will be sewn. After I mark the spot, I dab a little FABRIC-TAC under the Velcro so it won't shift and let dry. Then sew Velcro into place around edges. Now put the two flap pieces right sides together (ric rac side in between the layers) and pin. **MAKE SURE THE VELCRO IS AT THE RIGHT END** before you sew the two pieces together. Starting at the top right hand corner stitch with a 1/4" seam allowance all the way around to the left hand corner leaving the top or back end open. Clip bulk away from corners and flip right side out and **press**. Then do a topstitch all the way around using a 1/8" seam allowance.



Then mark and center where to sew on the buttons. So it looks like there are buttons but it is really Velcro. ;) Sew on buttons **just on that top flap piece** (reaching in between the lining and felt). Set finished flap aside.



The straps should be cut 1 1/4" wide x 13" long. I cut a little piece of fusible interfacing and ironed it on where the buttonhole will be for stability. Sew two straps together using a topstitch 1/8" seam allowance. Make TWO finished straps.



I'm not sure all sewing machines are the same when sewing buttonholes, so do a practice one first and measure the length to be accurate. I measured 2" from the bottom and marked for a buttonhole. Sew the buttonhole. Have you ever sewn a buttonhole before? If you haven't, I think you'd be surprised how easy it is. Read your users manual. Don't be intimidated. You can do it! ;) After sewing your buttonhole, pin at either end and seam rip the opening. The pins will stop the seam ripper from going beyond the stitched buttonhole.

Now we are SO close to assembling the bag! Hang in there!



Attach the straps to the buttons and turn inside out.



This is where we combine both bags. With **RIGHT SIDE OUT**, tuck lining inside the exterior bag. Match corners and pin the front and sides **right side** together. Pin the ends of straps in about $\frac{1}{2}$ " making sure to measure they are straight up from the bottom and even. It should look like this:



(note: this is a different bag than in the picture above. Don't let the different polka dot lining confuse you)



Now we get to add that cute flap. The flap goes in between the lining and the exterior bag on the strap side as shown. Tuck the ric rac or ruffle side down. Pin. Matching corners, pushing down the bulk of the straps and pin across raw edge of flap lined up with raw edge of bag as shown below:



Sew around top of bag using a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance. Reinforce stitching where the straps are for added support.



Find that little hole in the lining on the side and turn your bag inside out. Then tuck the lining back into the bag making sure to push the lining all the way down to the bottom. Press around the top for a crisp finish.



Unbutton the straps and flip upward to do a topstitch around the top as shown above. Use a $\frac{1}{8}$ " seam allowance. Stitch hole in the lining closed.



Match up the bottom Velcro pieces. Center and secure them with FABRI-TAC. Sew Velcro on the bag once the glue has dried a bit. Press bag to finish.

And VOILA!

You have your cute Valentine Chair Backer and a very long detailed tutorial!

