Beyond Better than Basic Chalk Bag

This pattern is for a climbing chalk bag. It features a front zipper pocket for holding things like a nail file or clippers, or a small set of keys. Two belt loops allow for easy wearing, plus a loop for holding a chalk brush. It cinches shut using an integrated paracord cinching mechanism to keep your chalk in check. The inside is lined with fleece for a soft chalking-up and to help distribute the chalk.

There are a few tricky steps, such as sewing the circular bottom piece to the tube-like outer shell, and a deceptively fiddly topstitch. But overall, the process is straightforward and can be done on a domestic machine. All pieces are simple geometric shapes, so I have not provided any pattern pieces to print out.

Note: The colorful bag was made as a prototype of this pattern, so dimensions do not exactly match those given here.

Legal Stuff

Originally published at https://github.com/schackartk/sewing_patterns

Portions of this pattern, especially the chalk cover design, have been adapted from a pattern by Tram Dang called Better Than Basic Chalk Bag, which was distributed under an unspecified Creative Commons license.

That pattern can be found at:

https://blog.weighmyrack.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/chalk-bag-pattern-for-climbers.pdf

Materials

- 1 ft – Shell fabric[1]
- 1 ft – Lining fabric[2]
- 1 ft – Fleece
- 5½" – Nylon zipper[3]
- 2 ft – ⅛" Paracord
- 1 Cord lock
- 1 Grommet
- 1½ ft – 1" wide Binding (e.g., grosgrain)
- 1½ ft – ½" wide webbing[4]
- 1¼" – ⅜ ID nylon tubing
- (Optional) 5" Mini (1.5mm) paracord and ¾" electrical heat-shrink tubing to add to zipper slider

[1] In most of the photos, I am using X-Pac® VX21, for its strength and ease of cleaning (and because I already had it). Cordura® is also a good choice. If using a fabric with less rigidity, you may choose to interface or add an inner lining layer of a more rigid material. There are 2 main outer panels, so feel free to choose 2 colors.

[2] I used the same material, 210D ROBIC® ripstop nylon, for both the pocket lining and the chalk cover, but they don't have to be the same material. For the chalk cover, choose something tough and flexible, and preferably a material that can be cleaned easily.

[3] The examples shown use #3 YKK Uretek® nylon coil zippers with reverse zipper sliders.

[4] You can use 1" webbing for the brush and belt loops if you prefer.

Cut

Cut all pieces; measurements are in inches

Shell Fabric

Main panel – 11½×7

- If you are using a more intricately patterned outer fabric and want to pattern match the front panel with the main panel (like one of the example bags), cut main outer piece to 15½×7, and cut out 3" section from the center. This is where the zipper panel will go. You will now have 2 pieces, each 6¼×7

Outer zipper panel – 5×7½ then cut 1½" from top, resulting in 5×1½ zipper panel top piece and 5×6 zipper panel bottom piece

- If pattern matching to the main panel, cut the outer zipper panel to match with the two halves of the main panel. Don't forget to accommodate a ½" seam allowance on each piece[1]

Shell bottom panel – 5½" diameter circle

Lining Fabric

Zipper panel lining – 5×7

Chalk cover panel – 15¾×5

Fleece

Fleece lining panel – 14¾×6½

Fleece lining bottom – 5½" diameter circle

1"-wide binding

Top rim binding – 14½"

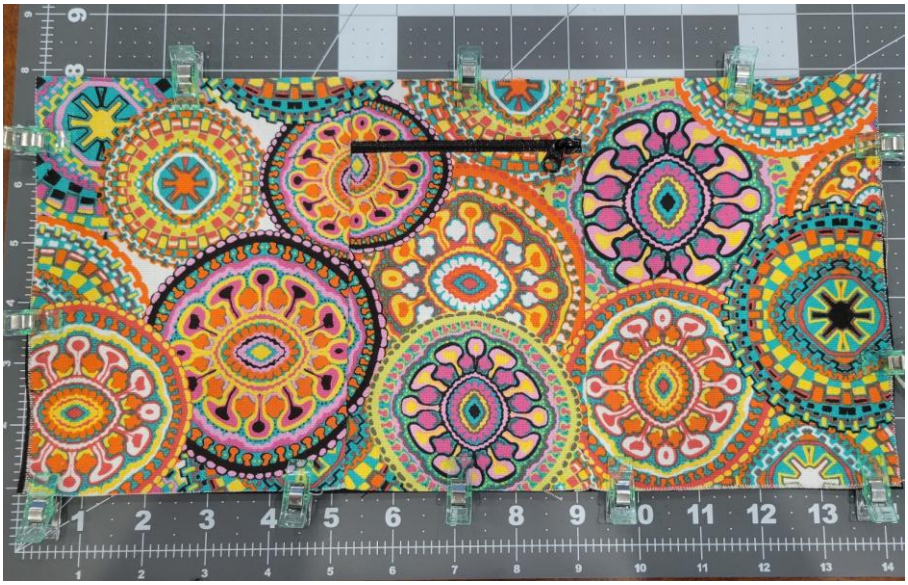
Top rim binding cover tab – 2¼"

½"-wide webbing

Brush loop – 3¼"[2]

2 × Belt loop – 5"[3]

[1] See image below for pattern matching. Note that dimensions in this image may not match those given:



[2] Modify to suit your chalk brush. Loop piece should be 1¼" longer than the widest part of brush handle. You can use 1" webbing if you prefer.

[3] Modify to fit your belt. Loop pieces should be at least 2 times as long as the belt width plus 1½". You can use 1" webbing if you prefer.

Construction

Zipper panel

- Align bottom edge of zipper panel top piece with top edge of zipper, right-sides together. Sew closely to the zipper with zipper foot leaving enough space for the zipper pull
- Press zipper panel top piece up, so right-sides are showing. Top stitch at ¼" from zipper teeth
- Repeat with bottom zipper panel bottom piece. This is the complete Outer zipper panel
- If zipper slider is not attached, attach it now, moving pull to center of zipper, with both sides closed
- Baste Outer zipper panel to zipper panel lining at ¼" seam allowance, with right-side of lining facing wrong-side of Outer zipper panel

Outer shell

Option 1: Standard instructions

- Align long edge of zipper panel and main panel wrong-sides together. Sew at ½" seam allowance. Double over zipper for strength
- Fold main panel back over so right-sides are showing, and topstitch on main panel ¼" from the seam
- Repeat with other long edges of zipper panel and main outer panel. You can leave it wrong-side out but do the topstitch on the right-side. It can be tricky
- Flatten outer shell, folding zipper panel in half, crease back edge (not zipper panel), and unfold. Create ½" long horizontal marks centered 1½" from crease and 1¼" from the top edge on each side of crease. These mark the where the bottom of the belt loops will align
- Skip to: *Attach to bottom portion*

Option 2: Pattern matching instructions

- Align left-hand long edge of zipper panel with pattern-matched main panel portion. Sew at ½" seam allowance. Double over zipper for strength
- Repeat with the right-hand side of zipper panel and remaining pattern-matched main panel portion
- Topstitch main panel portions ¼" from the seams just created connecting zipper panel to main panel portions
- Align the remaining edges of main panel portions wrong sides together, creating an outer-shell tube. Stitch at ½" seam allowance, then flip right side out
- Flatten outer shell, folding zipper panel in half, crease back edge (not zipper panel), and unfold. Create ½" long horizontal marks centered 1½" from crease and 1¼" from the top edge on each side of crease. These mark the where the bottom of the belt loops will align

Attach to bottom panel

- Make ⅜" relief cuts along the bottom of the tube-like outer shell portion to make it easier to attach to the circular bottom panel
- Align bottom edge of outer shell with circular outer shell bottom panel, right-sides together. Sew at ½" seam allowance, avoiding sewing over slits. Trim excess allowance
- Flip right-side out
- Flatten the outer shell with zipper panel facing up and centered. Mark a dot on the crease on the right (as opposed to left) side of outer shell 1¼" from top edge. This marks where the grommet will be placed
- With the shell still flattened, lightly mark the left crease1¼" from the top. Unflatten and make ½" vertical marks 1" on either side from the crease marking, each centered 1¼" from the top edge. These mark where the edges of the brush loop will align

Webbing loops

Belt loops

- Fold end of ½" webbing back by ¼"
- Align the folded end with one of the belt loop markings on the outer shell, with folded side against the outer shell
- Fold belt loop such that the far cut end is butted against the other cut end
- Sew the belt loop on with a box X stitch that spans where the cut ends are butted together
- Repeat with other belt loop

Brush loop

- Fold end of ½" webbing back by ⅜"
- Align the folded end with the chalk brush marking
- Sew the end of the loop on with a box X stitch covering the folded ⅜" portion
- Fold the other end of the webbing back by ⅜" and sew on with a box X stitch

Fleece lining

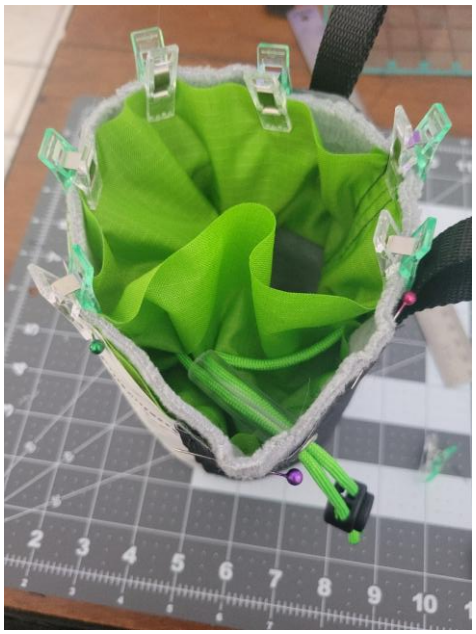
- Fold fleece lining panel in half, right sides together, aligning short edge
- Sew together with ½" seam allowance, and trim the excess from the seam allowance
- Make ⅜ relief cuts along the bottom of the tube-like fleece lining to make it easier to attach to the circular fleece bottom piece
- Align bottom edge of fleece lining with circular fleece bottom piece, right-sides together. Sew at ½" seam allowance, avoiding sewing over slits

Chalk cover

- Fold chalk cover panel in half, right sides together, aligning short edge
- Sew together with ½" seam allowance
- Flip right-side out and topstitch ¼" on either side of seam
- Take fleece lining and flip right side out
- Slip chalk cover panel tube over the fleece lining with fleece lining and chalk cover panel right-side in. Align top of chalk cover panel tube 1½" inches from top of fleece lining – see image
- Sew at ½" seam allowance
- Flip fleece lining right-side in

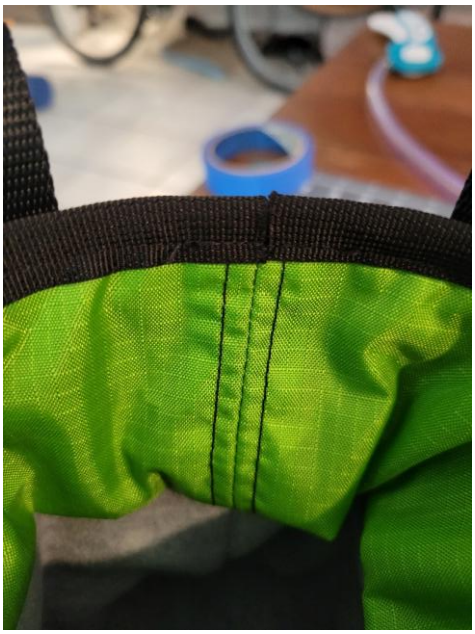
Cinching

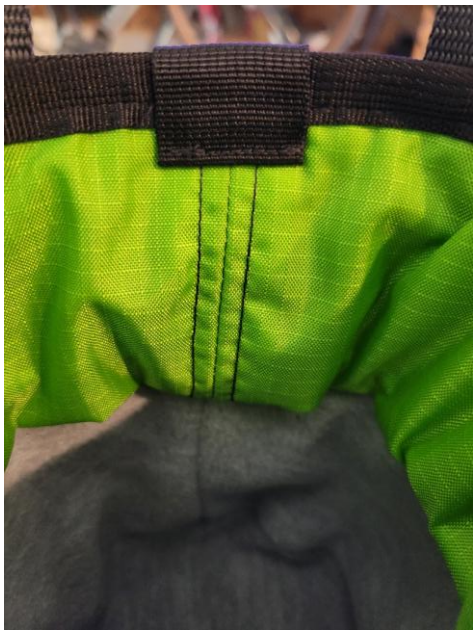
- Slip fleece lining into outer shell, with shell right-side out and lining right-side in. Align fleece lining seam opposite the zipper panel
- Baste fleece lining to outer shell at ¼" seam allowance
- Cut out a hole through both the outer shell and fleece lining slightly smaller than the grommet, centered on the grommet hole marking. You can add a small piece of touch fabric on the fleece side, and cut through it as well, to reinforce the inside of the grommet
- Install grommet into the grommet hole
- Fold paracord in half and pass folded end through grommet and vinyl tubing. Loop around chalk cover (see image below)
- Install cord lock to paracord and tie off the ends



Rim

- Flip chalk cover up to align with top of outer shell and fleece lining and baste at ¼" seam allowance.
- Fold rim cover binding in half lengthwise to crease
- Secure binding to rim of chalk bag, aligning ends to the seam in the chalk cover. Where ends meet, if there is significant overlap of rim cover webbing, trim the excess so that ends meet at chalk cover seam
- Sew ¼" from the bottom of the rim cover webbing
- Fold ends of rim cover tab back by ¼" and press
- Center rim cover tab over where the two ends of the rim cover meet
- Sew ¼" from the bottom folded edges of the cover tab





(Optional) Zipper pull

- Fold mini paracord in half and pass folded end through the hole of the zipper slider
- Using a lighter, melt the ends of the mini paracord to create a small blob of melted material. This helps the shrink tube keep a grip on the pull
- Slip the heat shrink tube over the ends of the paracord, shrink using a heat gun, hair dryer, or carefully using a lighter