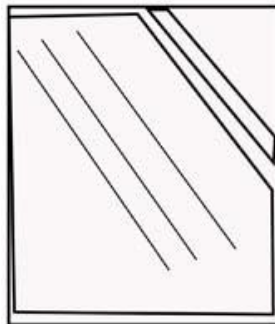# HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN HANDBAG PIPING

Making your own piping is a great way to add interesting texture and a professional decorative touch to your handbag. This also allows you to choose your own fabric (either print or plain!) instead of using packaged piping that usually comes in a limited selection of colors. In addition, piping adds depth and stability to your new bag. The instructions given are for piping to trim the top of an outside bag pocket.

Some type of cording is needed to create the dimensional effect for your piping. There are many options such as Wright's Cotton Filler Cord, which is available at most sewing stores and at most Wal-Mart's that carry fabric. Keep in mind how big your bag will be – if you are making a small purse, do not overwhelm it with large piping. I have experimented with shoe strings and large kite string so just use your imagination!

The width and length of your fabric depends on the size of your cording. My personal favorite is rope from Ace Hardware in the 1/8" width size. You get 48 feet for about $4.00 which will last you a very long time! If you are using 1/8" cording, I recommend that your fabric be 1 ¾" wide. This gives plenty of room to sew in your cording and also attach your piping to your handbag.
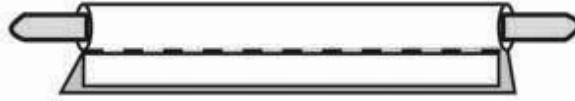
Cut your fabric strips 1 ¾" wide by however long you need your piping (For the Two Pocket Tote Bag pattern, this will be 14"). This fabric strip width is based on using 1/8" wide cording.
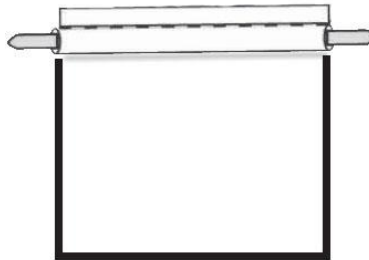
Illustration #1

After cutting your strips of fabric, wrap them around your cording making sure the cording extends a little beyond each end of your fabric with RIGHT side of fabric facing out, WRONG sides together, and the cording inside. Stitch just below the cording using a zipper foot, making sure not to crowd the cording (Do not have your stitching line pushing against the cord too tightly). Your piping will measure approximately 3/4" in width.
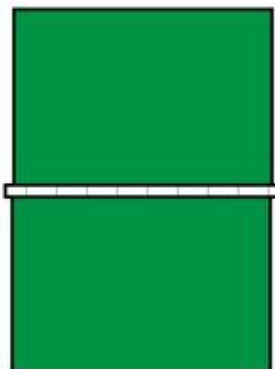
Illustration #2

To attach your piping to your pocket, place the raw edge of your piping even with the raw edge of the fabric where you wish to have your piping placed (In this case, it's the top of a pocket) and pin.
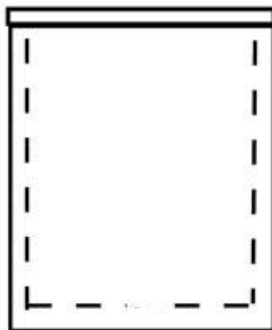
Illustration #3

Place the other side of your pocket FACE DOWN (RIGHT sides of fabric will be facing each other) on top of fabric that has piping sewn on. This creates a "sandwich" of fabric, piping in the middle, and your other piece of fabric on top (All the fabric raw edges will line up with each other). Sew as close to the piping as possible with your zipper foot, crowding up against the cording in your piping and catching your bottom piece of fabric, your piping, and your top piece of fabric in the seam. Turn to check out your handiwork! You should see 2 pieces of fabric RIGHT SIDE OUT with a line of piping going down the middle, as shown in the illustration below:

Illustration #4

To finish off your pocket, just fold your pocket over with the piping on top and WRONG SIDES of the fabric together and press.
Sew 3 sides of your pocket.

Illustration #5

You will now have a very stable pocket with a decorative piping trim on top!