

# Denim Striped Shoulder Bag

## SEWING TUTORIAL



*A stylish and spacious shoulder bag made with denim stripes. Perfect for everyday use!*

### FINISHED SIZE

Width: 40 cm  
Height: 30 cm  
Depth (bottom): 12 cm  
Handle drop: 20 cm

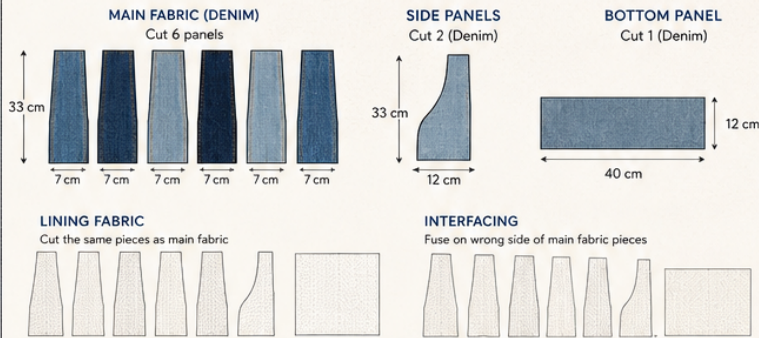
### MATERIALS

- Denim fabric (various shades)
- Cotton lining fabric
- Fusible interfacing (medium weight)
- 1 magnetic snap (18 mm)
- 1 O-ring (25 mm)
- Matching sewing thread
- Denim needle (size 90/14)
- Scissors, pins, fabric marker
- Tassel or fringe charm (optional)

### FABRIC (US)

| Fabric              | Amount         |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Main Denim (Dark)   | 1/2 yd (45 cm) |
| Main Denim (Medium) | 1/2 yd (45 cm) |
| Main Denim (Light)  | 1/2 yd (45 cm) |
| Lining Fabric       | 1/2 yd (45 cm) |
| Fusible Interfacing | 1/2 yd (45 cm) |

### CUTTING GUIDE (all measurements include 1 cm seam allowance)



### SEWING METHODS USED

- Straight Stitch: For general sewing (2.0–2.5 mm)
- Backstitch: To secure seams
- Topstitch: For a professional finish (3.0–3.5 mm)
- Gathering Stitch: To create the ruched top
- Edge Stitch: To secure raw edges

### SEAM ALLOWANCE

1 cm included in all pattern pieces

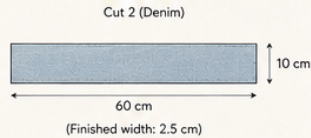
### TIP

Use a denim needle and strong thread for durability. Press seams flat for a clean, professional finish.

### STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS



### HANDLE PATTERN



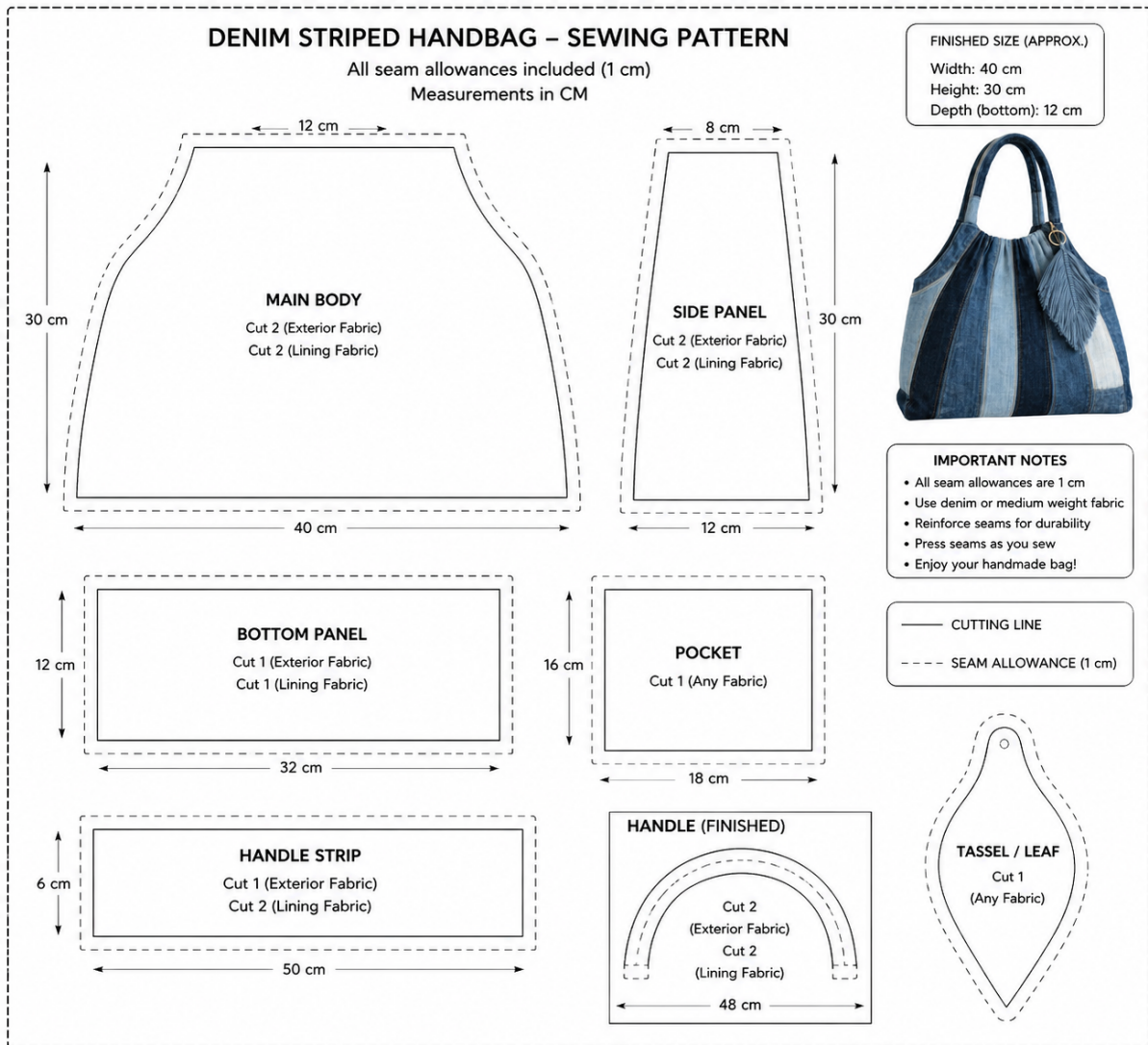
### BAG ASSEMBLY DIAGRAM



### SEWING TIPS

- Use pins or clips to match seams accurately.
- Topstitch along panels for a durable and decorative finish.
- Reinforce handle attachments by stitching a square with an X.
- Denim may fray—use edge stitch or zigzag stitch if needed.

Enjoy making your own unique denim bag! ♥



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## Denim Striped Shoulder Bag Sewing Tutorial

Create a stylish and roomy denim striped shoulder bag using several shades of denim. This project combines pieced denim panels, a softly gathered top, a full cotton lining, reinforced handles, a magnetic snap, and an optional decorative tassel.

The finished bag is approximately:

- Width: 40 cm / 15<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches
- Height: 30 cm / 11<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches
- Bottom depth: 12 cm / 4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches
- Handle drop: 20 cm / approximately 8 inches

All pattern measurements already include a 1 cm seam allowance, which is approximately <sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inch. Sew consistently with this allowance unless another measurement is specifically given.

## Materials and Supplies

You will need:

- Denim fabric in several shades
- Cotton fabric for the lining
- Medium-weight fusible interfacing
- One 18 mm magnetic snap
- One 25 mm O-ring
- Matching sewing thread
- Denim sewing-machine needle, size 90/14
- Fabric scissors or a rotary cutter
- Cutting mat
- Quilting ruler
- Straight pins or sewing clips
- Fabric marker or tailor's chalk
- Iron and ironing board
- Seam ripper
- Measuring tape
- Hand-sewing needle
- Tassel or decorative bag charm, optional

For a balanced striped appearance, use at least three denim colors:

- Dark indigo denim
- Medium blue denim

- **Light-wash denim**

**The fabrics should have approximately the same weight. Avoid combining very heavy denim with extremely lightweight denim because the finished bag may hang unevenly.**

## **Fabric Requirements**

**Prepare approximately the following amounts:**

- **Dark main denim: ½ yard, at least 18 inches wide**
- **Medium main denim: ½ yard, at least 18 inches wide**
- **Light main denim: ½ yard, at least 18 inches wide**
- **Cotton lining fabric: ½ yard, at least 18 inches wide**
- **Medium-weight fusible interfacing: ½ yard, at least 18 inches wide**

**The listed amounts provide enough material for the main striped panels, side pieces, bottom, handles, and lining. Purchasing a little extra denim is recommended when the fabric has damaged areas, thick seams, faded patches, or a directional design.**

**Prewash and dry the denim and lining fabrics before cutting. This prevents unexpected shrinking after the bag is finished.**

## **Important Sewing Methods**

**This project uses several basic sewing techniques.**

**Straight stitch: Use a stitch length of approximately 2.0 to 2.5 mm for general construction.**

**Backstitch: Backstitch at the beginning and end of every structural seam to prevent the stitching from coming loose.**

**Topstitching:** Use a longer stitch length of approximately 3.0 to 3.5 mm. Topstitching gives the denim a professional finish and helps the seams lie flat.

**Gathering stitch:** Use the longest straight-stitch setting on your machine. Do not backstitch at either end because you will need to pull the bobbin threads.

**Edge stitching:** Sew very close to a folded or finished edge, usually about  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch from the edge.

Test the needle, thread tension, and stitch length on a scrap of layered denim before sewing the actual bag.

## **Cutting the Main Denim Panels**

Cut six main denim panels.

Each panel should measure approximately:

- Height: 33 cm / 13 inches
- Width at the bottom: 7 cm /  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches

The panels shown in the tutorial are slightly tapered. The bottom is wider, while the upper section narrows gently. This shape helps form the rounded, gathered silhouette of the bag.

Use a paper template so all six panels remain consistent. Arrange the pieces in alternating denim shades, such as:

1. Medium denim
2. Dark denim
3. Light denim
4. Dark denim
5. Light denim
6. Medium denim

You may change the color order, but distribute the colors evenly to create a balanced appearance.

**Cut carefully around bulky recycled-jeans seams, pockets, rivets, and worn areas.**

## **Cutting the Side Panels**

**Cut two side panels from denim.**

**Each side panel should be approximately:**

- **Height: 33 cm / 13 inches**
- **Width at the bottom: 12 cm / 4¾ inches**

**The side panel has a curved upper edge that rises into a narrow extension. This extension becomes part of the upper side area near the handle attachment.**

**Make both pieces identical. Place the pattern on folded fabric and cut both layers together, or trace the same template twice.**

**Mark the top, bottom, and center of each side panel on the wrong side of the fabric.**

## **Cutting the Bottom Panel**

**Cut one denim bottom panel measuring:**

- **Length: 40 cm / 15¾ inches**
- **Width: 12 cm / 4¾ inches**

**For a bag with a slightly softer structure, keep the bottom panel rectangular as shown.**

**For additional support, you may fuse interfacing to this piece. A removable bag-bottom insert may also be added after construction, but it is optional and is not included in the original tutorial.**

## **Cutting the Lining Pieces**

**Cut the lining from cotton fabric.**

**Use the same pattern pieces as the main bag:**

- **Six main lining panels**
- **Two lining side panels**
- **One lining bottom panel**

**Do not add extra seam allowance because the 1 cm allowance is already included.**

**The lining should match the completed exterior closely. Accurate cutting is important because an oversized lining can bunch inside the bag, while an undersized lining may pull the exterior inward.**

## **Cutting the Interfacing**

**Cut interfacing for the main structural pieces.**

**Prepare interfacing for:**

- **Six main bag panels**
- **Two side panels**
- **One bottom panel**
- **Two handle pieces**

**Trim approximately  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch from the outer edge of the interfacing pieces when possible. This reduces bulk inside the seam allowances.**

**Check the manufacturer's instructions before fusing. Some interfacing requires steam, while other types should be fused with a dry iron.**

## **Cutting the Handle Pieces**

**Cut two denim handle strips.**

**Each strip should measure:**

- **Length: 60 cm / approximately 23<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches**
- **Cut width: 10 cm / approximately 4 inches**
- **Finished width: approximately 2.5 cm / 1 inch**

**Cut two matching interfacing strips and fuse one to the wrong side of each handle piece.**

**The finished handles should create a drop of approximately 20 cm, or about 8 inches, after they are attached to the bag.**

## **Preparing the Fabrics**

**Press all fabric pieces before sewing.**

**Fuse the interfacing to the wrong side of the corresponding denim pieces. Place the adhesive side of the interfacing against the wrong side of the fabric.**

**Press rather than sliding the iron. Hold the iron in one position for the time recommended by the interfacing manufacturer, lift it, and move to the next area.**

**Allow each fused piece to cool completely before handling it. Moving the fabric while the adhesive is still hot may cause bubbling or distortion.**

## **Sewing the Six Main Denim Panels**

**Arrange the six panels in the desired color order.**

**Place the first two panels right sides together, aligning the long side edges. Pin or clip the seam carefully.**

**Sew with a 1 cm or <sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>-inch seam allowance.**

**Add the third panel to the second panel in the same way. Continue until all six panels form one wide striped unit.**

**Backstitch at the beginning and end of every seam.**

**Press each seam open. Because denim can be bulky, use plenty of steam when appropriate and press from both sides.**

**Topstitch along both sides of every panel seam. Sew approximately  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch from the seam line using a 3.0 to 3.5 mm stitch length.**

**Topstitching reinforces the bag and emphasizes the vertical striped design.**

## **Forming the Front and Back Sections**

**The six striped panels form the main body area of the bag.**

**Depending on how you organize the pattern, divide or position the joined panels so the stripes remain centered on the front and back.**

**Check that the darkest, medium, and light denim sections are evenly distributed. The center area should appear visually balanced when the bag is viewed from the front.**

**Trim small irregularities along the upper and lower edges, but do not remove more fabric than necessary.**

## **Gathering the Top of the Denim Body**

**Set the sewing machine to its longest straight-stitch length.**

**Sew one row of gathering stitches approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch from the top raw edge.**

**Sew a second parallel row approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch from the top edge. Two rows create more controlled and even gathers.**

**Do not backstitch.**

**Leave thread tails several inches long at both ends.**

**Gently pull the bobbin threads to gather the upper edge.  
Distribute the gathers evenly rather than pushing them into only one area.**

**The gathered edge should fit smoothly between the upper sections of the side panels and later match the lining opening.**

**Do not cut or knot the gathering threads until the side pieces have been attached successfully.**

## **Attaching the Denim Side Panels**

**Place one side panel right sides together with one side edge of the main denim body.**

**Match the bottom corners and upper markings first. Pin or clip the remaining edge, easing the curved area carefully.**

**Sew with a 1 cm or  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch seam allowance.**

**Attach the opposite edge of the same side panel to the other corresponding edge of the bag body.**

**Repeat with the second side panel on the opposite side.**

**Clip into the curved seam allowances where necessary, taking care not to cut through the stitching.**

**Press the seam allowances toward the side panels.**

**Topstitch close to the side-panel seams for reinforcement and a clean denim finish.**

## **Checking the Exterior Shape**

**Turn the exterior temporarily right side out.**

**Confirm that:**

- The stripes are straight
- The gathers are evenly distributed
- The side panels are symmetrical
- The bottom opening is smooth
- The upper bag shape matches the tutorial
- No seam allowance is visible from the outside

Turn the exterior wrong side out again before attaching the bottom.

Correct any uneven gathers or twisted seams now. Adjustments are much easier before the bottom panel is installed.

## **Attaching the Denim Bottom Panel**

Mark the center of every side of the bottom panel.

Mark the corresponding centers along the lower opening of the denim body.

With right sides together, match the bottom-panel center marks with the body center marks.

Pin or clip the bottom panel all the way around the opening. Use extra clips near the curves and corners.

Sew slowly with a 1 cm or  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch seam allowance.

Keep the main bag fabric flat as it approaches the needle. Avoid sewing accidental pleats into the bottom seam.

After sewing, inspect both sides of the seam. Restitch any areas where the raw edge was not fully caught.

Clip or notch the curved seam allowances where needed.

Press the seam allowance toward the bottom panel.

**For additional durability, sew a second line of stitching inside the seam allowance, approximately  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch from the first line.**

## **Reinforcing the Upper Edge**

**Staystitch around the upper edge of the denim exterior, sewing just inside the seam allowance.**

**This line stabilizes the gathers and prevents the opening from stretching while the handles and lining are installed.**

**Remove the visible gathering stitches only when the gathers are securely held by permanent stitching.**

**Press the upper edge gently without flattening the gathered design.**

## **Making the Lining Body**

**Arrange the six lining panels in the same order as the exterior panels.**

**The lining does not require decorative topstitching, but all seams should be pressed open.**

**Place the first two lining panels right sides together and sew with a 1 cm or  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch seam allowance.**

**Continue adding panels until the lining body is complete.**

**Gather the upper lining edge in the same way as the denim exterior.**

**Attach the two lining side panels.**

**Check that the lining opening matches the exterior opening. Minor differences can be adjusted by distributing the gathers.**

## **Attaching the Lining Bottom**

**Pin or clip the lining bottom panel to the lower edge of the lining body with right sides together.**

**Match the center marks and side seams.**

**Leave an opening approximately 10 cm or 4 inches long along one straight section of the bottom seam. This opening will be used to turn the bag right side out.**

**Sew around the bottom, stopping at the first opening mark.**

**Backstitch.**

**Begin again at the second opening mark, backstitch, and continue sewing around the remaining edge.**

**Press the seam allowances carefully.**

## **Installing the Magnetic Snap**

**Identify the upper center of the lining.**

**The magnetic snap should be centered on the front and back lining sections near the top opening. Place it low enough that the metal hardware will not interfere with the final upper seam.**

**A position approximately 1½ to 2 inches below the upper raw edge usually works well.**

**Mark the two prong openings using the snap washer as a guide.**

**Fuse or sew a small square of interfacing behind each marked area. This extra reinforcement prevents the snap from tearing through the lining.**

**Carefully cut two small slits at the marks. Make the slits only large enough for the prongs.**

**Insert the snap prongs through the right side of the lining.**

**Place the washer over the prongs on the wrong side.**

**Bend the prongs outward or inward according to the hardware manufacturer's directions.**

**Install the second half of the snap directly opposite the first half.**

**Close the snap temporarily to verify that the two sides align.**

## **Constructing the Denim Handles**

**Place one interfaced handle strip wrong side up.**

**Fold the strip in half lengthwise and press to mark the center.**

**Open the strip.**

**Fold each long raw edge toward the center crease and press.**

**Fold the strip in half again, enclosing both raw edges.**

**The finished strap should be approximately 2.5 cm or 1 inch wide.**

**Pin or clip along the entire length.**

**Topstitch close to both long edges using a 3.0 to 3.5 mm stitch length.**

**For stronger handles, sew an additional line of stitching down the center.**

**Repeat for the second handle.**

**Check that both handles are the same length and width before attaching them.**

## **Positioning the Handles**

**Place the denim exterior right side out.**

**Position one handle on the front of the bag and one on the back.**

**Make sure the handles are not twisted.**

**The ends should be positioned symmetrically near the upper side areas.**

**Measure from the side seams to confirm equal placement on both sides.**

**Allow the handle ends to extend approximately 1 inch beyond the upper raw edge. These ends will be enclosed inside the seam between the exterior and lining.**

**Baste each handle end in place with a seam allowance slightly smaller than 1 cm.**

**Reinforce each attachment point by sewing a small square with an X through the center.**

**The finished handle drop should measure approximately 20 cm or 8 inches.**

## **Adding the O-Ring**

**Cut a small denim tab long enough to wrap securely around the 25 mm O-ring.**

**A finished tab approximately 2 to 3 inches long is usually sufficient, depending on the thickness of the ring.**

**Construct the tab using the same folding method used for the handles.**

**Slide the O-ring onto the tab and fold the tab in half.**

**Place the raw ends together.**

**Position the O-ring tab near one of the upper side seams, making sure the ring points downward toward the bag body while the raw tab ends align with the bag's upper raw edge.**

**Baste the tab securely.**

**The O-ring can hold the optional tassel, a small charm, keys, or another removable decoration.**

## **Joining the Exterior and Lining**

**Turn the denim exterior wrong side out.**

**Keep the lining right side out.**

**Insert the lining inside the exterior so the right sides of the fabrics face each other.**

**The handles and O-ring tab should be sandwiched between the exterior and lining.**

**Match:**

- **Side seams**
- **Center front**
- **Center back**
- **Gathered sections**
- **Handle-placement marks**

**Pin or clip around the entire upper edge.**

**Ensure that the handles are pushed down inside the bag and away from the stitching line.**

**Sew around the complete upper opening with a 1 cm or  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch seam allowance.**

**Sew slowly over the handle and O-ring attachment areas because these sections contain several fabric layers.**

**For stronger attachments, stitch over each handle position a second time.**

## **Turning the Bag Right Side Out**

**Reach through the opening left in the lining bottom.**

**Pull the denim exterior through the opening gradually.**

**Do not pull hard on one handle or one side panel. Work the fabric through a little at a time to prevent stretching the seams.**

**Push out the bottom edges and side curves using your fingers or a blunt turning tool.**

**Do not use scissors or another sharp object because it may puncture the fabric.**

**Once the exterior is fully turned, pull out the lining and smooth all the seams.**

## **Closing the Lining Opening**

**Fold the raw edges of the lining opening inward by 1 cm or  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch.**

**Press the folded edges flat.**

**Pin or clip the opening.**

**Close it by machine, sewing approximately  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch from the folded edge.**

**For an almost invisible finish, sew the opening closed by hand using a ladder stitch.**

**Push the lining into the bag after the opening has been secured.**

**Smooth the lining into the corners and bottom.**

## **Topstitching the Bag Opening**

**Roll the upper seam gently between your fingers so the denim sits slightly above the lining. This prevents the lining from showing on the outside.**

**Press the upper edge carefully.**

**Topstitch around the complete bag opening approximately  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch from the edge.**

**Keep the gathers evenly distributed as you sew.**

**Use a denim needle and sew slowly through the thick handle areas.**

**A second row of topstitching may be added approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch below the first row for a more decorative and reinforced finish.**

## **Making the Optional Denim Tassel**

**Cut several narrow denim strips or use denim yarn, soft cord, or embroidery floss.**

**The tassel shown in the tutorial is long and feather-shaped, but a traditional looped tassel also works well.**

**For a fringed tassel:**

- 1. Cut a rectangular piece of lightweight denim.**
- 2. Draw a line approximately 1 inch from one short edge.**
- 3. Cut narrow fringe strips from the opposite edge up to the marked line.**
- 4. Roll the uncut upper section tightly.**
- 5. Secure it with hand stitches or strong glue.**
- 6. Wrap a narrow denim strip around the tassel neck.**
- 7. Add a small hanging loop.**
- 8. Attach the loop to the O-ring.**

**Trim the tassel fringe evenly after it is attached.**

## **Final Pressing and Shaping**

**Place a folded towel inside the bag to support its shape.**

**Press the outer seams carefully with steam if the fabric allows it.**

**Do not press directly on the magnetic snap. The metal may become extremely hot.**

**Shape the gathered upper edge with your fingers.**

**Check that the lining lies flat and does not pull on the exterior.**

**Allow the bag to cool completely before removing the towel.**

## **Final Quality Check**

**Inspect the finished bag carefully.**

**Confirm that:**

- **All six denim panels are securely joined**
- **The top gathers are even**
- **The side seams are smooth**
- **The bottom panel is fully attached**
- **The lining opening is closed**
- **The magnetic snap aligns correctly**
- **Both handles are equal in length**
- **The handles are firmly reinforced**
- **The O-ring tab is secure**
- **The topstitching is straight**
- **Loose threads have been removed**

**Test the bag by placing a few lightweight items inside it. Check the handles and bottom before carrying heavier objects.**

## **Sewing Tips for Better Results**

**Use sewing clips instead of pins in very thick denim areas. Clips hold several layers without bending or leaving large holes.**

**Change the denim needle when it becomes dull. A dull needle can skip stitches, damage the thread, or create uneven topstitching.**

**Use a longer stitch length for visible topstitching. Short stitches may sink into heavy denim and appear irregular.**

**Hammer very bulky seam intersections gently with a rubber mallet before sewing. Cover the fabric with a folded cloth first to protect the denim.**

**A hump jumper or folded scrap of denim can help keep the presser foot level when sewing over thick seams.**

**Grade bulky seam allowances by trimming each layer to a slightly different width. Do not trim so close that the seam becomes weak.**

**Finish raw edges with a serger, zigzag stitch, or overcast stitch when the denim frays heavily.**

**Use strong polyester thread for construction. Decorative topstitching thread may be used on visible seams, but test the machine tension first.**

## **Care Instructions**

**Spot-clean the bag whenever possible.**

**For full washing, close the magnetic snap and remove the tassel or bag charm.**

**Place the bag inside a laundry bag or pillowcase.**

**Wash it in cold water on a gentle cycle.**

**Use mild detergent.**

**Do not use bleach.**

**Reshape the bag while damp and allow it to air-dry.**

**Avoid machine drying because heat may shrink the cotton lining, affect the interfacing, and distort the gathered shape.**

## **Finished Denim Striped Shoulder Bag**

**Your completed bag should have a softly rounded body, alternating vertical denim stripes, gathered upper sections, comfortable reinforced handles, a structured rectangular bottom, a cotton lining, and a centered magnetic closure.**

**The finished size is approximately 15<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches wide, 11<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches high, and 4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches deep, with an 8-inch handle drop.**

**Add a denim tassel to the O-ring for the same decorative appearance shown in the tutorial, or personalize the bag with a charm, keychain, fabric flower, or handmade label.**

**Enjoy making your own unique denim shoulder bag! 💙👜**