

# TOTALLY TUBULAR HANDLES

Soft, comfortable grip

Made with your fabric to match/coordinate beautifully with your project  
Make to your desired length

## Supply List for (2) 11" handles

<b>Fabric</b> , 44" wide quilt-weight cotton, OR, PLIABLE faux leather	1/3 yd or FQ*
<b>Lightweight Interfacing*</b> , fusible, all-purpose woven, 20" wide (ShapeFlex 101) *not needed if using faux leather	1/3 yd or FQ*
<b>Tissue Paper</b> to help feed leather —may sub- stitute lightweight tracing paper or tear-away	Several 2" strips
<b>1/2" semi-stiff cording</b> (available in upholstery supplies)	3/4 yd

### Other equipment

- \_\_\_ Rotary cutter, ruler and mat
- \_\_\_ (Opt.)—Paper to make your own template,  
2 1/4" x 12"
- \_\_\_ Sewing machine
- \_\_\_ Smooth clips (clothespins) for faux leather
- \_\_\_ 3/4" wide transparent tape to wrap cord ends (to  
prevent fraying)

Use Totally Tubular Handles on any pattern where the handle ends get sewn into a seam or covered by another bag element or trim piece.

This tutorial shows how to make (2) 11" handles like the ones in the 12" wide CADDY. Tips are also given for minor variations.

Totally Tubular Handles from faux leather and 1/2" cording are featured on the CADDY, a tool holder easel.

## CADDY



Find the Caddy pattern at:  
Craftsy.com and sewtogether.net

Questions?

Comments?

Send them to:

Sara@sewtogether.net

\*FQ = Fat Quarter = 18"x20"

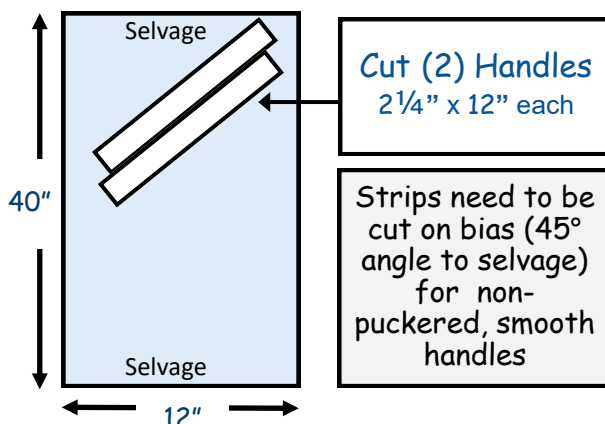


## CUTTING AND FUSING

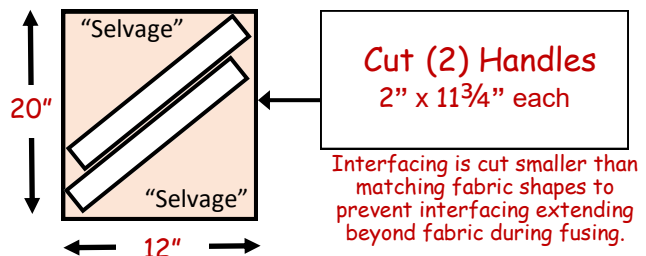


Rotary cut pieces, OR, if you prefer, make paper template to use as pattern pieces—helps in placement.

### FABRIC



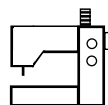
### FUSIBLE INTERFACING (ShapeFlex 101) (Not needed if using faux leather)



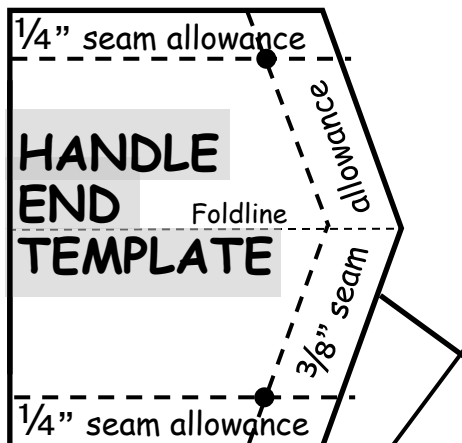
Center and fuse the **interfacings** to wrong sides of the **fabrics**.

# SEWING

Steps 1-6



The **Handle End Template** creates a shape at the ends of the handle so that the handle joins to the bag/purse at less than 90°, making a gentle arc. You may leave your handle strip ends square if you like, and then ignore instructions about cutting the cording ends at angles, too.

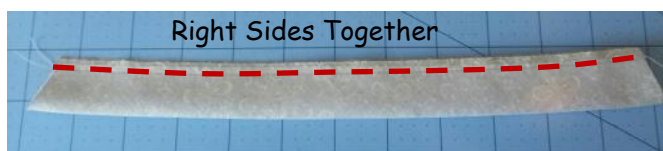


1. Use Handle End Template to trim all ends of handles.



The handles in some of the photos are from a lovely smooth faux leather that worked beautifully in the Caddy project I used it for, and the handles will wipe clean very nicely—unfortunately solid black does not photograph well.

2. Fold handles in half lengthwise, right sides together, and sew  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam on long raw edges—use stitch length 2.0 for a gap-free seam. **TIP:** Due to slight variations in fabric and cording, you might want to do one complete handle (at least through Step 9) before doing the other, to test the cord fit, etc.



Backstitch/Secure at beginning and end of seams

3. If your handles are fabric, press the seam allowances open for smoother seamlines.

Note: Seam allowances will not stay in pressed-open position while turning the tube or when inserting cording. My faux leather and fabric handle samples still turned out decent. However, if perfect smoothness is desired, hand baste seam allowances in open position before proceeding (basting not recommended for faux leather where permanent holes would remain when basting is removed).

Use a safety pin in the fold to help turn the tube right side out. Be especially careful not to pin beyond the  $\frac{3}{8}$ " seamline with faux leather, and to turn tube slowly a bit at a time. Tip: Use the eraser end of a pencil to help get the tube started.



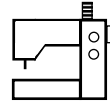
5. Halfway there...



6. All the way turned!

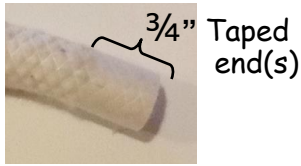


# SEWING

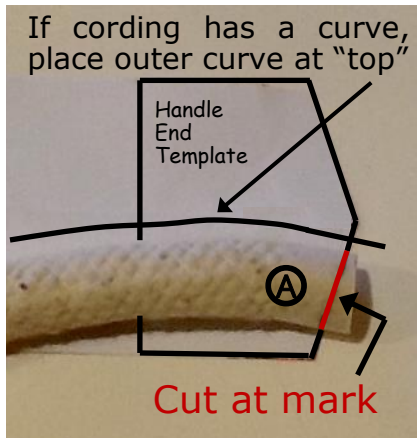


## Steps 7-15

7. Cut (2) 13" long pieces of cording. Wrap transparent tape around all four ends of cording.



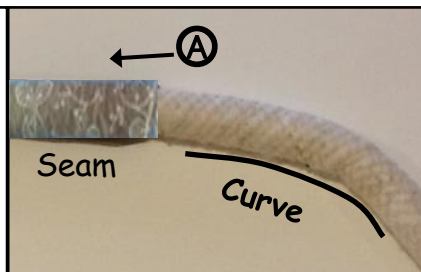
8. Angle-cut **one end** of each cord through the tape, using the Handle End Template as shown to create the correct angle. This will be end **A**.



9. Insert cord end **A** into handle and work it through the tube by pushing and pulling a little at a time (like inserting elastic in a casing). Keep seam straight, not twisting, around cord. If cord has a natural curve to it, align seam with the *underside* of the curve.

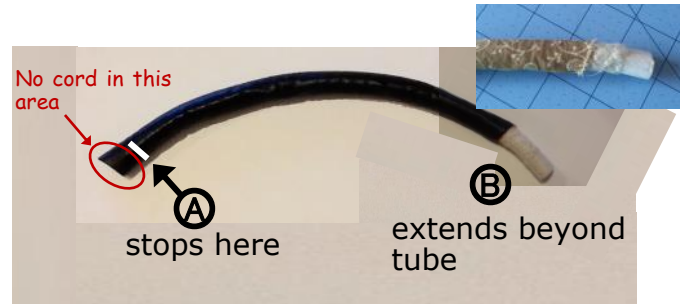
Note: The taped end **A** was easy to work through the faux leather tube without any extra tools. However, the fabric tube sample was too limp, and I had to use long tweezers to get the cord through—I did this by inserting the open end of the tweezers all the way through the tube, clamping end **A** with the tweezers, and very carefully inching the cord through, never letting go of the pointy tweezer ends.

The cord should fill up the tube completely and firmly. If it doesn't, turn the tube inside out and adjust the seam as necessary.



10. Stop when end **A** is 1/2" from end of the tube. Gently smooth the handle along the cord, without letting end **A** slip. End **B** will extend beyond its tube end.

Tip: A blunt curved tool (Purple Thang) can help pull out raw fabric ends that accidentally get pulled into the tube.



Now End **B** needs to be shortened so that it also ends near its 3/8" seam line (steps 11-13).

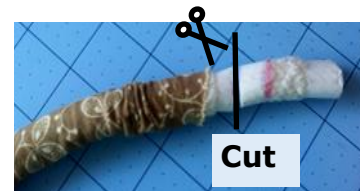
11. With the handle completely smooth (no gathers and no edges tucked under), trace fabric end onto cord.



12. Scoot fabric away from cord end **B**, and add tape where shown.



13. Cut through cord & tape, 1/2" from mark, and parallel to mark.

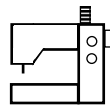


14. Smooth fabric back into place, covering cord end.

15. Repeat steps 9-14 for other handle.



# SEWING



Steps 16-18

16. Sew tube shut, close to cord ends, on  $\frac{3}{8}$ " seam line—this could be sewn by machine, but is more accurate if done by hand. Secure thread tails so stitches will not come undone while sewing to project.

## FAUX LEATHER TIP

Use tissue paper to protect right side of faux leather from damage from feed dogs. Tissue also helps machine feed the faux leather better. After sewing, tear off the tissue paper (gently, to avoid distorting the stitches). If faux leather has a non-slick wrong side, tissue is not needed when sewing right sides together.



Step 17 shows one way to add a Totally Tubular Handle (TTH) to your project. A TTH could be added anywhere the ends will be enclosed in a seam or covered by another bag element.

17. Position handle on your purse or tote, **matching seamlines** (handle will be at "angle" to fabric edges). Sew handle ends just inside seamline and  $\frac{1}{8}$ " away (sew by machine or by hand).



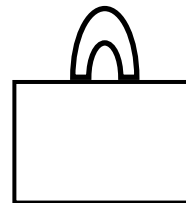
18. Continue with your project's instructions.

## VARIATION IDEAS

### 90° angle connection:

For a handle that joins to a bag at a 90° angle, disregard instructions involving the Handle End Template.

Do keep  $\frac{3}{8}$ " seam allowance at short ends of handle.

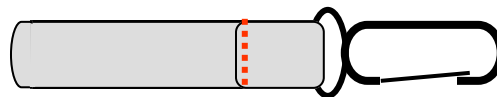


### Ruched Handle:

For permanent gathers on the handle, cut strips  $1\frac{1}{2}$ -2 times longer than finished length (but cut cord the finished length). Not suitable for thick fabrics—only for fabrics that will gather nicely.



**Ring connection:** The Totally Tubular Handle could be joined to a  $\frac{3}{4}$ " metal ring if the handles' seam allowances at the short ends are increased to  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " — to allow for turning under  $\frac{1}{2}$ " hem, inserting through ring and securing the hem edge (experiment first).



**Tassel Caps:** Ends of the Totally Tubular Handle could be finished with  $\frac{1}{2}$ "/15mm inside diameter tassel caps. I found these at Hobby Lobby for \$2.99/pair. Tiny screws secure the cap to the cord.



Thank you for your business!  
For more patterns  
and  
hard-to-find notions  
visit [www.sewtogether.net](http://www.sewtogether.net)