

French Braid Bag

This fabulous over-the-shoulder bag packs a solid style punch, with the feature 'french braid' pieced panel on the front. Its classic shape gives plenty of room inside, with a zippered inner pocket, and 'fat' handle for comfort. It is both quick, and easy to make and we're sure you'll be receiving requests for more from family and friends.



Bag Dimensions are 14 inches wide x 11½ inches high and approx. 2 inches deep.

You Will Need:

½ metre (½ yard) fabric for bag outer

½ metre (½ yard) fabric for bag lining

2-3 jelly roll (2½ inch strips) for front panel. (You may like to use 4-5 for more variety as we did.)

1¼ metres (1¼ yards) fusible light-weight interfacing



½ metre (½ yard) fusible light-weight pellow

1 x magnetic clasp

1 x 7 inch zip in a colour to match bag lining

Small amount heavy /mid-weight fusible interfacing for inserting magnetic clasp

Bag Construction:

Please read all instructions fully before beginning. All measurements are in inches, and unless stated otherwise, a ¼ inch seam allowance has been used.

Referring to the attached Cutting Guide, carefully cut the required bag pieces from the bag fabrics, pellow and interfacing. Iron the interfacing to the wrong side of the bag pieces as indicated in the Cutting Guide. Fuse the pellow on the wrong side of the bag outer pieces as required. *Note - Piece the front French Braid panel first, then interface and sew front together before adding pellow to the whole panel. Also read pattern about cutting away the dart shapes from the interfacing and pellow pieces.

Construction:

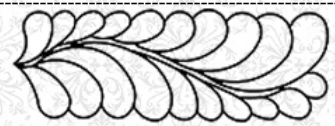
First, piece the front French Braid panel from the 2 ½ inch strips. This is really easy, and is pieced in a similar fashion to making a Log Cabin quilt block.



Start with a 2 ½ inch square, sewn to the lower edge of a 5 inch strip as shown.



Press seam and open out for the top of the braided panel.



Add a 7 inch strip to the first pair as shown. Open out and press each seam as you go.



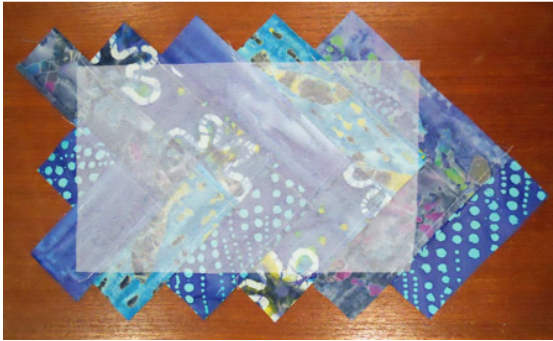
Add a 6 inch strip to the right hand side, matching the lower edge each time you add a strip.



Add a 7 1/2 inch strip to the left hand side.



Add a further four 6 inch strips and three 7 1/2 inch strips in order as shown.



Press well, turn over, and position the French Braid fusible interfacing panel on top, making sure to centre it. Iron in place.



Trim the pieced panel to fit the interfacing rectangle. It should measure 12½ inches long x 7½ inches wide as shown.



Finally, piece the outer fabric small front panels to either side of the pieced braid panel. Press, and topstitch along both seams to flatten and neaten the front.

Then fuse the pellon to the back of this panel.



Both the front and back panels have small darts sewn in the bottom corners, to give this bag some fullness.

As shown, cut away the dart triangle from the interfacing and pellon panels before fusing them to the bag fabrics. This will give you a guide for sewing the darts.

To make the darts, fold the corner on itself with right sides together, matching the dart outer edges. Sew from the point down to the outer edge.

Sew darts in all bag outer and lining front and back panels.

Handle:

Fuse the pellon strip down the centre of the handle. Fold up a ½ inch seam allowance down each of the long sides and press. Fold handle in half with wrong sides together and pin well.

Topstitch down both sides of the handle.

Pin the bag outer front and back panels together, with right sides together and taking care to match the darts. Sew together and turn right sides out.

With right sides together, then sew the handle to the top (right side) of each side of the bag. Match raw edges and just sew with a scant seam to hold it in place securely.

Lining:



This lining has a zippered pocket. To start, mark and make a hole for the zip. Lay a lining pocket piece on one of the lining side panels with right sides together and about 4 inches down from the top as shown. Use a fabric marking pen or lead pencil and draw a rectangle 6 inches long and 3/8 inch (1cm) high as shown. This rectangle needs to be drawn 1½ inches (3½ cm) down from the top of your pocket piece.

Then draw a centre line along the rectangle, with a 'V' shape at each end as shown.

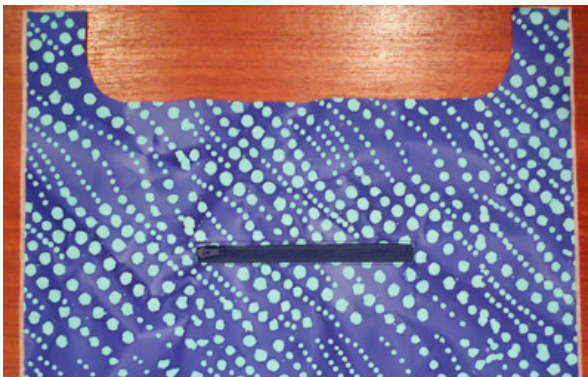
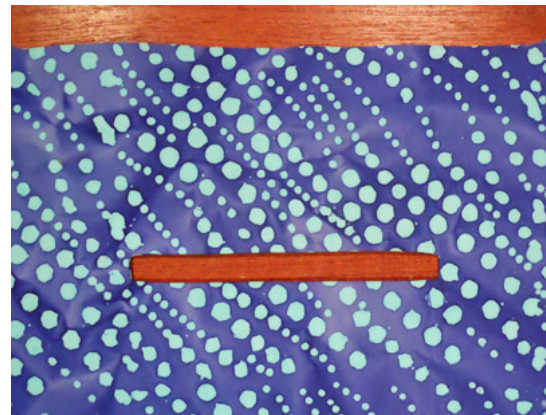


Sew the pieces together along the marked outside lines of the rectangle.

Taking care not to cut the stitching, then cut along the marked centre line and along the 'V' shapes to the corners of the rectangle.



Pull the lining pocket piece through the hole to the wrong side of the bag panel and carefully press seams on both sides to flatten.



With right sides facing up, then position the zip carefully under the hole, (so that the zip is also facing up), and pin in place. Using your zipper foot, topstitch around all four edges of the rectangular hole to secure the zip in position.

(Note – the zip is slightly longer than the hole, so you will need to centre the zip and trim the ends after sewing in place.

Lay the remaining pocket piece on top of the first, and with right sides together, sew around all four sides to finish.



Magnetic Clasp:

The next step is to attach the magnetic clasp, with one half at the top of each side of the lining panels.

Fold the lining in half vertically to make a crease up the centre. From the top edge, measure down 1¼ inches on that line and mark that point with a lead pencil. Cut a square of heavy interfacing approximately 1½ inches square and iron it to the back of the lining piece on top of the light weight lining and centred over the marked dot. This will help protect the fabric in your bag and stop the clasp from wearing through with repeated use. (You can use the medium weight interfacing here if you do not have any heavy weight, although the heavier weight gives better protection.)

Push the two prongs of the top half of the clasp (with the centre part raised) into the right side of the fabric to create indents, then use your unpicker tool to make two tiny slits in the fabric there, to push the clasp through. Make the slits smaller than the width of the prongs. Push the clasp prongs through to the back, turn the lining side piece over, slip on the 'washer' provided with the clasp and fold the prongs over onto themselves, over the back of the clasp. (If you splay them out, you run the risk of them eventually piercing through the bag fabric.)

Cut an approximate 2 inch square of the medium weight interfacing and place it over the top of the folded prongs on the wrong side of your lining side. Use the iron again to fuse it in place, as another safeguard to protecting your bag fabric. On the right side then, sew a square around the clasp to finish it neatly, and hold all layers securely together.

Attach the remaining half of the clasp in exactly the same way to the other lining side panel.

As you did for the bag outer, then pin both lining sides together, with right sides together, and matching the darts. Sew together, making sure to leave most of the middle of one side unsewn, to turn the bag through later.



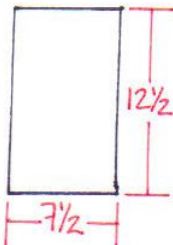

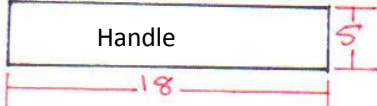
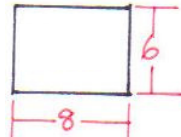
Put the bag outer into the lining bag and tuck the handle in between the two layers. Carefully pin around the top edges and sew.

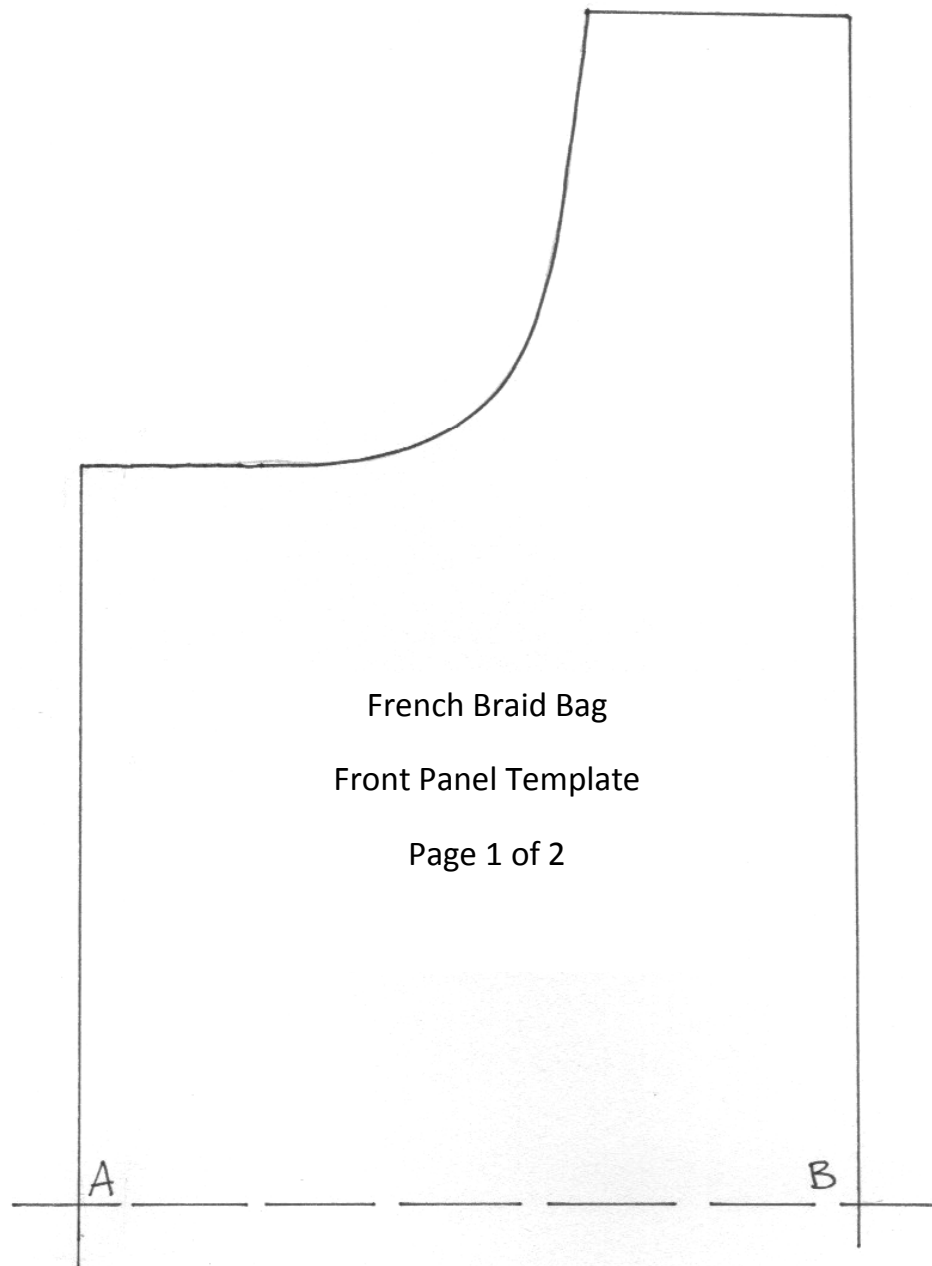
Turn bag right sides out through the hole left in the lining side. Tuck in the seam allowances and topstitch that hole closed to finish the lining.

Push the lining into the bag outer and carefully topstitch around the top edge to finish.

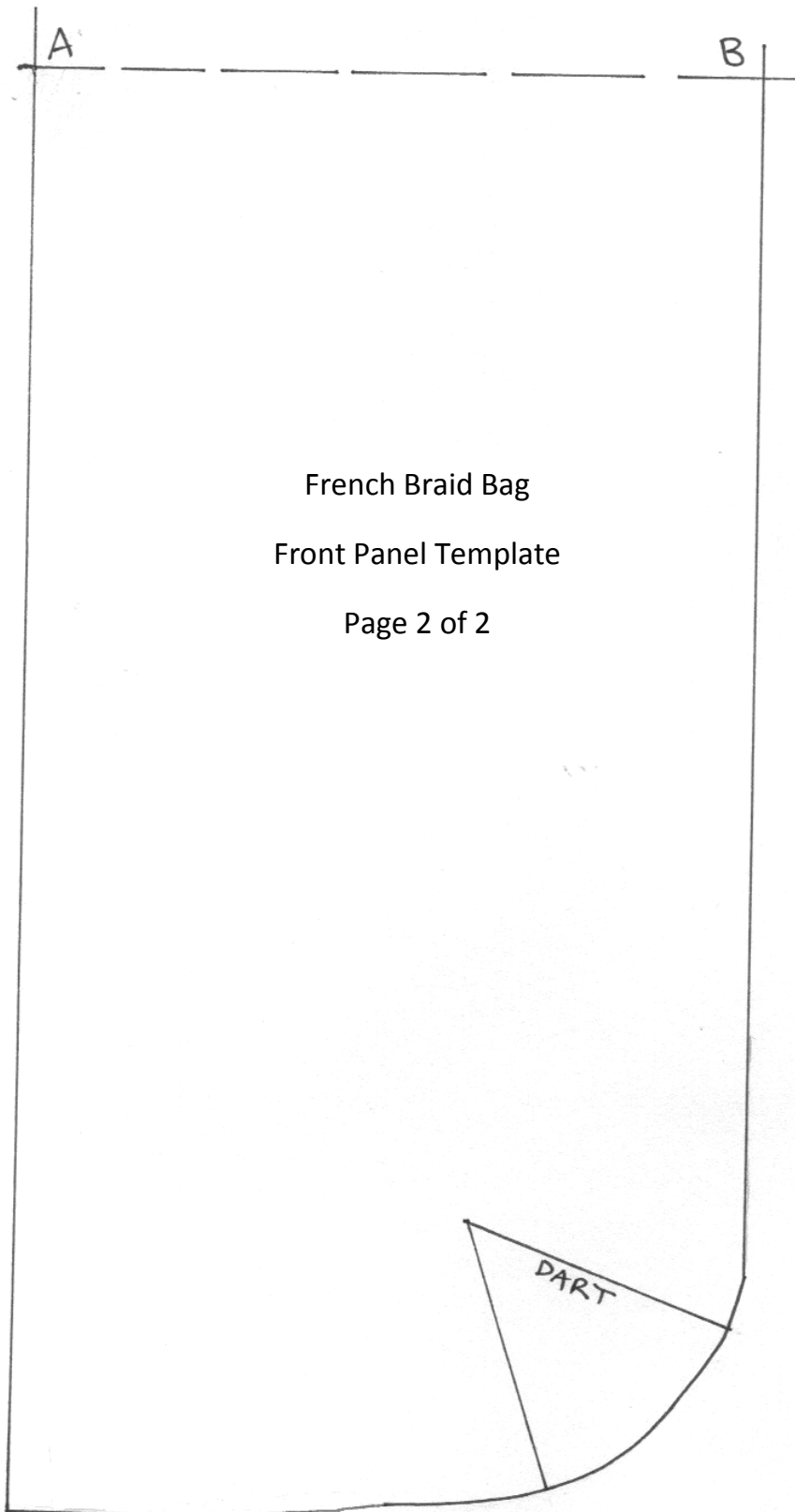


French Braid Bag Cutting Guide

	<p>Cut the required number of each piece according to the measurements on each diagram.</p> <p>* Please note – all measurements are in inches.</p>
 <p>Front Panel Template</p>	<p>Cut 2 outer fabric</p> <p>Cut 2 light-weight interfacing</p>
 <p>French Braid Panel</p>	<p>Cut 1 light-weight interfacing</p> <p>(Piece one French braid panel as explained in pattern instructions and trim to size.)</p>
 <p>Bag Side Template (Cut on Fold)</p>	<p>Cut 1 outer fabric</p> <p>Cut 2 lining fabric</p> <p>Cut 3 light-weight interfacing</p> <p>Cut 2 pellon</p>
 <p>Handle</p>	<p>Cut 1 outer fabric</p> <p>Cut 1 light-weight interfacing</p> <p>Cut 1 pellon – 4 inches wide</p>
 <p>Pocket</p>	<p>Cut 2 lining fabric</p>

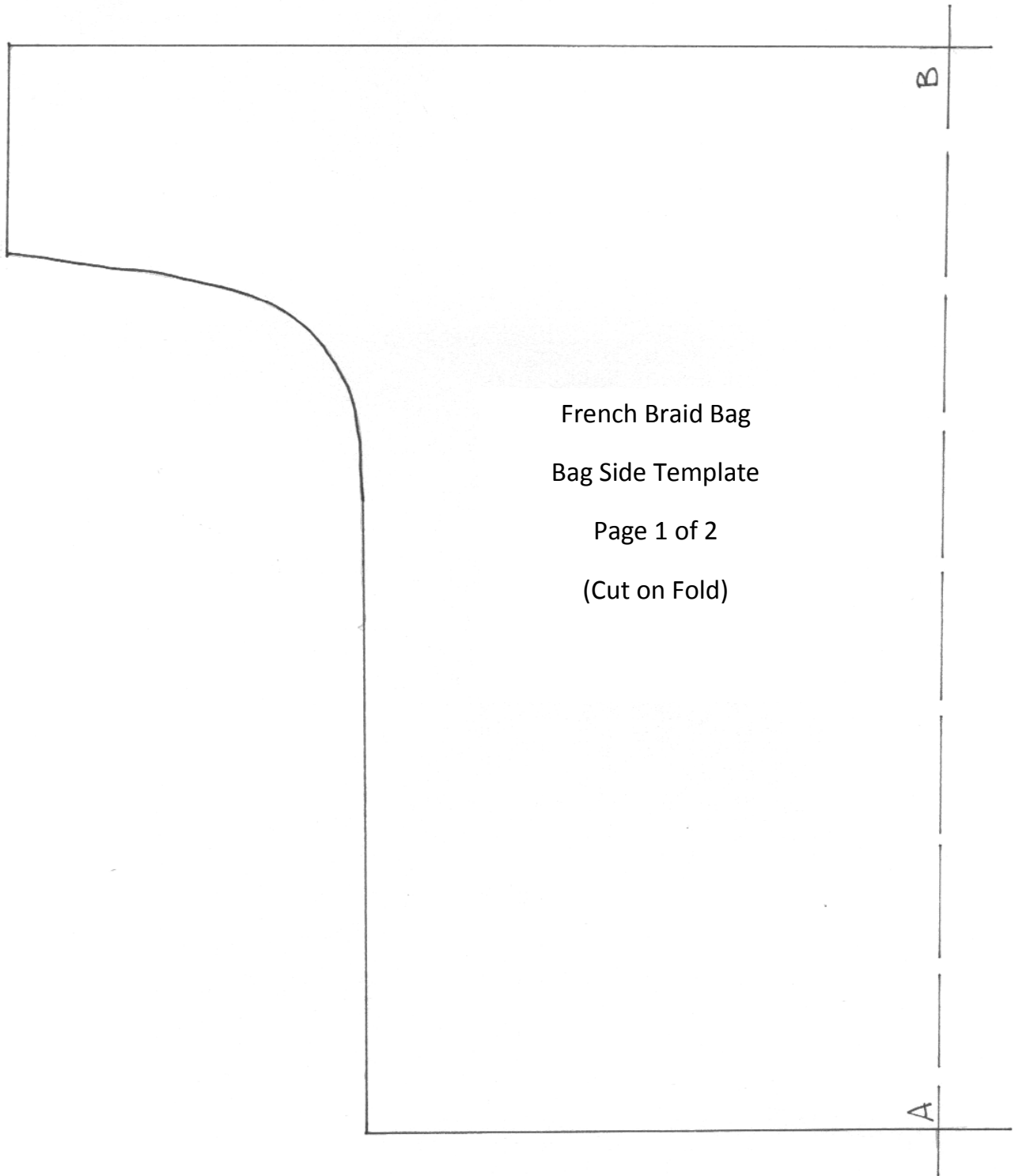


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Front Panel Template
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French Braid Bag
Front Panel Template

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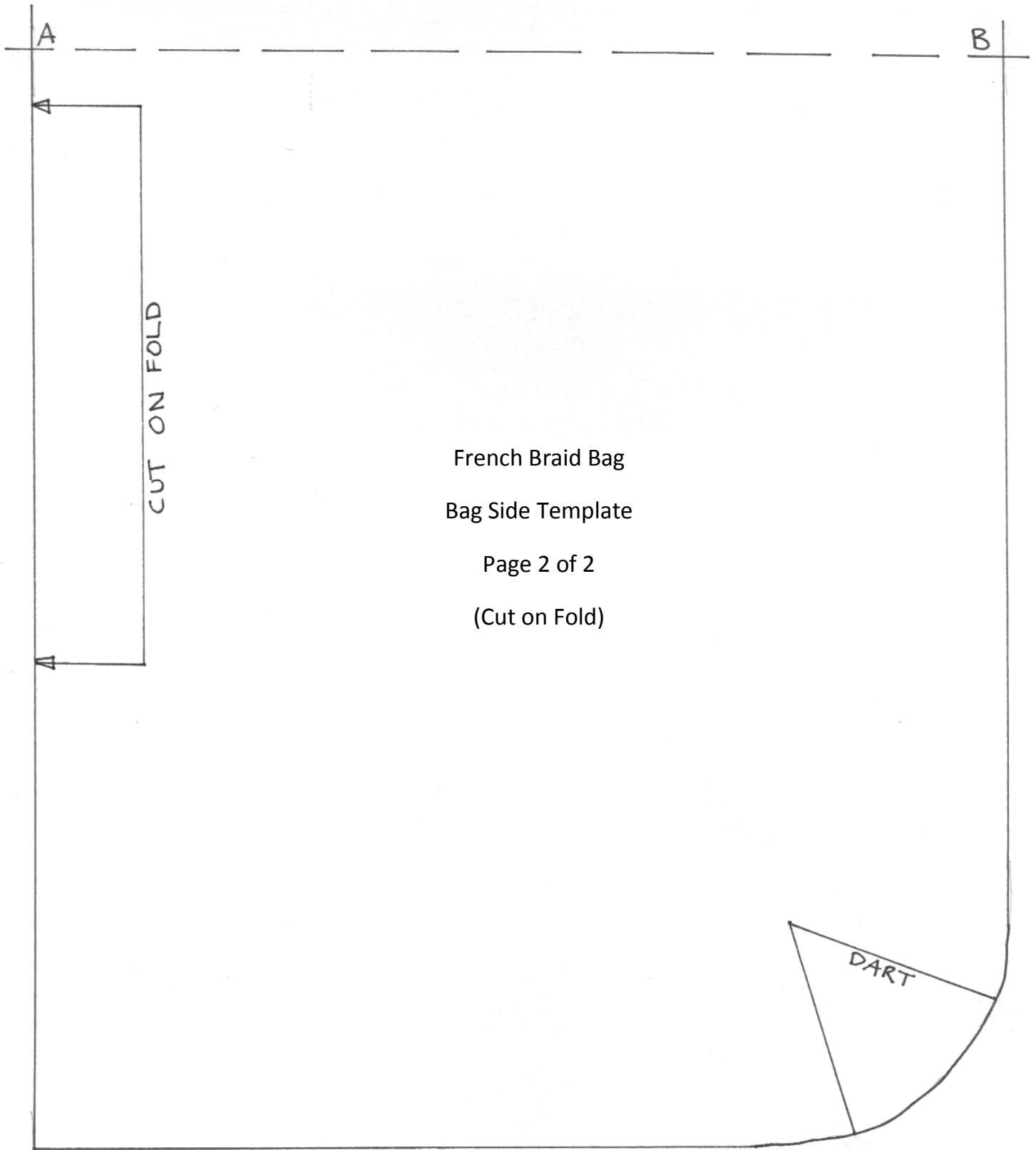


French Braid Bag

Bag Side Template

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(Cut on Fold)



French Braid Bag

Bag Side Template

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(Cut on Fold)