

# Seeking designers and seamstresses to construct Hero Packs!

What's a Hero Pack, you say?

- Hero Packs are a tangible expression of support for kids of military families.
- They're backpacks filled with fun items and items designed to help keep kids connected with their deployed parent - a way to hand-deliver a salute to military kids for their strength and sacrifices while parents are deployed.
- A key feature of Hero Packs is the handwritten letter or card to the youth – if you would like to do a group or community service project of sewing Hero Packs or writing letters, or know of a youth who needs a Hero Pack, visit us at <http://utah4h.org/htm/featured-programs/4hmilitary>
- Interested in sewing a Hero Pack or two? Contact Connie Packer at 801-768-7428 - she may even have some material if you're willing to sew...



Utah 4-H backpack pattern modifications are on reverse.

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Backpack pattern modifications that may be helpful:

- It is not necessary to make two separate pieces for the casing instead, just cut one piece and fold over the top.
- We have found that it is unnecessary to use the grommets, and instead it works better to just sew the cording into the seam. The grommets tend to pull out over time.



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## Drawstring Backpack

2-3 Hours

### What will you learn?

#### How to:

Make and use a paper pattern

Use interfacing to reinforce a high stress area

Zigzag or serger finish seam allowances to prevent raveling (loose threads)

Insert grommets

#### What will you need?

A sewing machine and basic sewing tools

½ yard decorator weight fabric, cotton or cotton-polyester, 45 inches wide or more

All-purpose thread to go with your fabric

12 inches of ¼ inch wide paper-backed permanent bond fusible web (find this product on the roll or cut strips from a sheet of fusible webbing)

3 inch square fusible interfacing

Two grommets large enough for two cords to go through (buy a package of [grommets with the tool](#) to install them if you don't already have one)

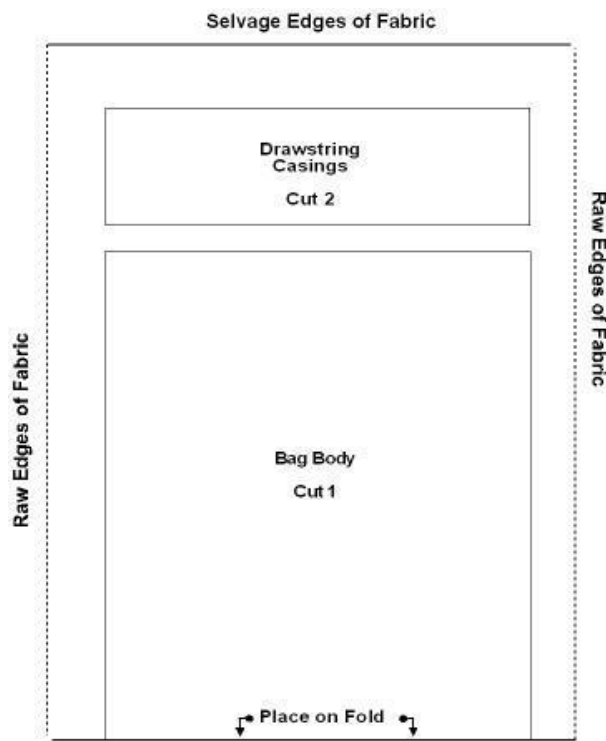
4 yards of [nylon or polyester cord](#)\* (¼ or ¾ inch wide flat cord or lacing is nice but round cord will work well if it is not too big to slide easily in the casing)

2 decorative wood beads with a hole big enough for two cords to go through (other options: 2 cord locks/toggles, 4 beads if you use round cord that is too thick to go through the hole two cords at a time, or knotting technique requiring no toggle or beads)

**Seam Allowances:** ¼ inch or use the right edge of your presser foot as a seam guide (a standard presser foot on most sewing machines makes a 3/8 inch seam allowance)

### Directions to make this project:

1. Make a [paper pattern](#).\*\* Cut a rectangle 15 inches by 17 inches from heavy paper. Label this piece the "**Bag Body**." Along one 15 inch side, write "**Place on fold**." Cut another rectangle 3 inches by 15 inches. Write on this piece, "**Cut two**." These will be the "**Drawstring Casings**."
2. Carefully press your fabric flat. With right sides of fabric together, line up the selvages of your fabric and smooth toward the fold. If there are wrinkles, keep the selvedge edges together but shift your fabric sideways until there are no wrinkles.
3. Pin your large pattern piece on the fold of the fabric as marked. Pin the smaller pattern piece above the large pattern piece.

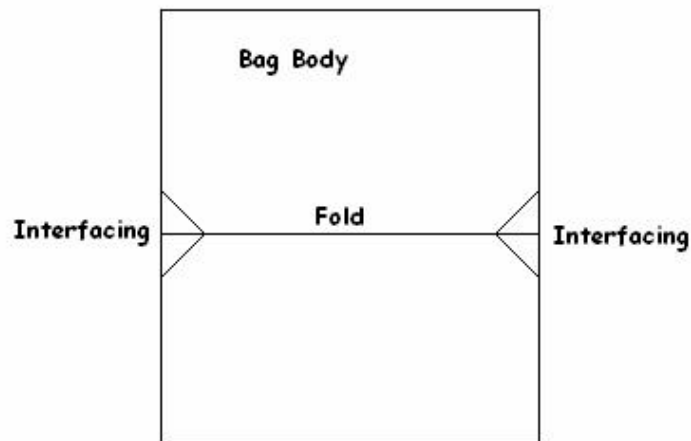


4. Cut out fabric pieces by cutting carefully next to your paper pattern pieces with sharp fabric shears.

5. Cut the square of fusible interfacing in half diagonally.

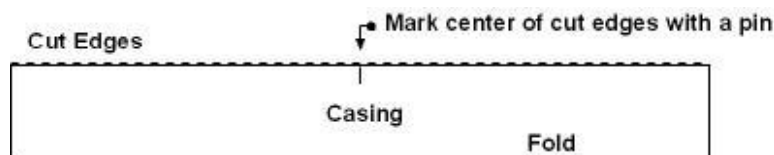


6. Open the bag body and lay it flat on the ironing board with the wrong side up. Follow the package instructions to fuse one piece of interfacing on each side of the bag, matching the right angle point with the fold and the diagonal cut edge to the side of the bag.



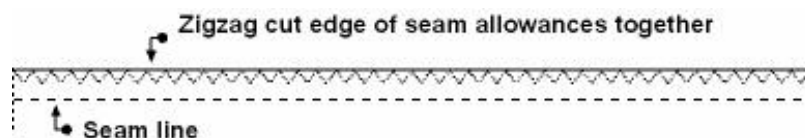
7. Separate the two drawstring casings. Fold over each short end to the wrong side, 3/8 inch if you are using 1/4 inch seam allowances or 1/2 inch if you are using the right edge of a standard presser foot. Press to mark. Fuse in place with a 1/4 inch wide strip of fusible web or secure by sewing in place, if desired.

8. With wrong sides of fabric together, press each of the drawstring casings in half, matching the 15-inch long raw edges. Fold each to mark the center of each casing on the raw edge with a pin.

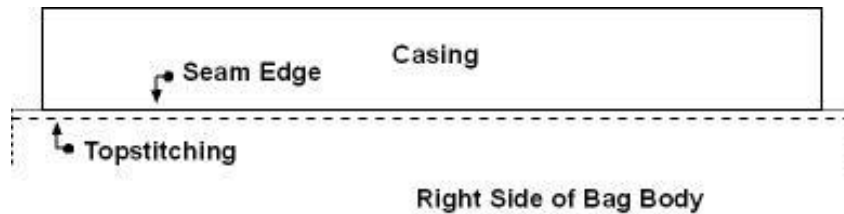


9. Use pins to mark the center point on each short end of the bag body.

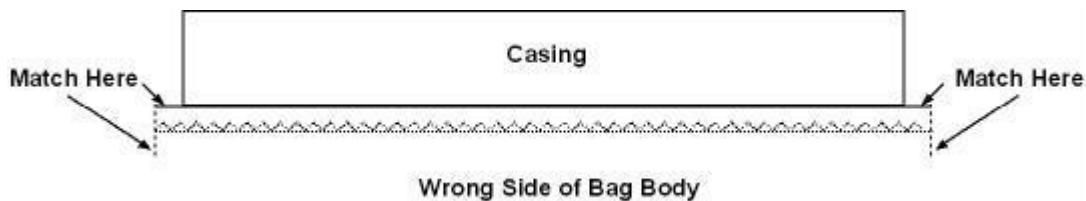
10. Matching cut edges and center marks, pin the casings to the right side of the bag body. Stitch the casings to the bag body. Backstitch at the beginning and end of each seam. Zigzag or serge the seam allowances of each seam to prevent fraying.



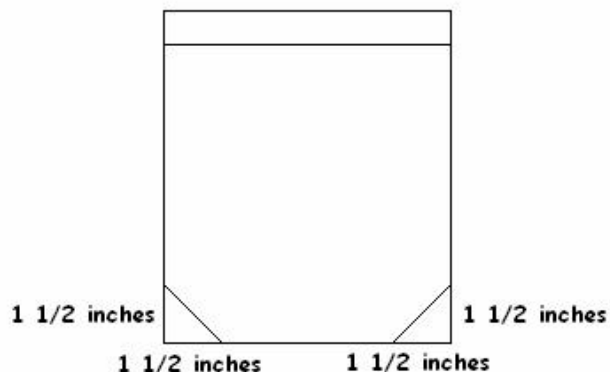
11. With the bag body right side up on an ironing board, press against the edge of each of the casing seams so the seam allowances will be pressed towards the center fold of the bag body.
12. Topstitch (stitch from the right side) near the edge of the seam, securing the seam allowance to the top of the bag body. This step is similar to understitching a facing on a garment.



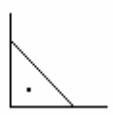
13. With right sides of fabric together, fold your bag body like you cut it. Match the cut edges and the top edge of the seam where you attached the casings. Start stitching the side seams at the top next to the casing and finish at the fold. Backstitch at the beginning and end of each seam. This step makes a bag.



14. Zigzag or serge the seam allowances together to prevent raveling.
15. Turn the bag right side out and use a point turner to push out the corners at bottom of the bag. Press the seams of the bag to one side by putting the bag over the end of the ironing board and pressing against each seam. Take the backpack off the end of the ironing board and press the corners flat.
16. Draw a diagonal line across the corner; start and finish line 1 1/2 inches from the corner. Stitch on the line, backstitching at the beginning and end.



17. Mark a dot in the center of each of the corner triangles. Create a hole with a fabric or leather punch\*\*\* (or poke holes with an ice pick, small sharp scissors, or a small Phillips screw driver) through all layers of the fabric where you placed the dot. Install a grommet in the hole according to the package instructions.



18. Cut the cord in half. Melt the ends of nylon cord on a stove burner set on medium heat to fuse the fibers together to prevent fraying. Thread each half of the cord in opposite directions in the casings. It is easy to thread the cord through the casings if you put a large safety pin in a knot near the end of the cord so you can push it through.

19. Put both ends of one cord through a grommet. Repeat with the second cord and try on the backpack for fit. Insert both ends of the cord through a bead (or cord lock) and make an overhand knot to secure. If the overhand knot is not large enough to keep the bead from falling off, make another one over the top of the first.



Or option below for no beads or toggle:



Insert both cord ends through front side of grommet. Separate cords on the back side and put cord section from the front side between the cord ends. Tie an overhand knot to hold them in place.

20. Use and enjoy!

21. Make another backpack and try adding a pocket to the front or use medium weight denim and stamp designs on the denim with a gel bleach cleanser (not liquid bleach). Try making the pattern smaller so the backpack will fit younger children in preschool or kindergarten.

### Notes:

Grommets with tools can be found at **Jo-Ann** fabric stores. Stores like **REI**, **Seattle Fabrics**, and **The Rain Shed** also have kits with tools and grommets. **REI** had a kit for about 10 dollars that included the grommets, a fabric punch, and the tool to attach the two parts of the grommet.

<http://www.rei.com>

<http://images.rei.com/media/602141Prd.jpg>

\* **Jo-Ann** fabric stores carry a round polyester cord that works well for this project. Round nylon cord can be found at **REI** stores. The flat version is available at **Seattle Fabrics** and **The Rain Shed**:

<http://www.seattlefabrics.com/webbing.html> and <http://www.therainshed.com/>

You can use cotton drapery cord or make your own drawstring from fabric but nylon or polyester will hold up to the wear and tear of the friction from pulling on the drawstring. Nylon slides easily in the casing. You can try hardware stores for heavy string and cords, also.

\*\* This backpack finishes about the same size as the famous Nike packs (about 14 inches by 18 inches, flat finished measurements).

\*\*\* Fabric punches for creating holes for eyelets are found in the sewing notion section of **Jo-Ann** fabric stores. Use small sharp scissors to make the hole bigger, just large enough for the shaft of the grommet to fit. Nancy's Notions carried a fabric punch that is packaged with a buttonhole cutter and small mat.

<https://www.nancysnotions.com/>

<https://www.nancysnotions.com/NNProdImages/BHCK2.JPG>