

Hand and Shoulder Bag

Hand and Shoulder Bag

Level of difficulty: easy, provided you are happy with a simple cable - by the time you have made the strap you should be VERY confident!!

A stylish and chunky bag, designed to sit neatly under the arm, resting just above the hip of a 1.65m, 5ft 6” tall woman or made like a satchel to carry A4 sheets of paper.

This bag is built by making the strap, which also works as the base and sides of the bag, then making two panels, one of which is longer to act as the flap.

The bag is knitted using two strands of yarn together to make it really chunky so you can choose to use a single colour or to mix two different colours. You could also try making the strap in a single colour and the body of the bag in mixed colours or a contrasting colour.

Measurements: The handbag strap measures 33cm, 18” outside the bag and the bag itself approximately 25cm, 10” wide and 15cm, 6” deep. For the shoulder bag, the strap measures 98cm, 36” long outside the bag, which is 3cm, 12” high and 25cm, 10” wide.

Materials:

300g Blacker Yarns Black Welsh Mountain Aran wool (or other Blacker Yarns aran wool) for handbag and 600g for shoulder bag.

1 pair 5mm needles, cable needle, 5mm crochet needle, 1 pair 4mm sock needles, darning needle to sew up, one large button.

Tension:

Using 5 mm needles, cast on 30sts using two strands of wool. Work 30 rows in stocking stitch. Wash sample, press flat. When dry, pin out and measure a 10cm square: approx 13sts x 17 rows=10cm (4”). Adjust needle size to give required tension.

Stitches & Abbreviations:

st, sts = stitch, stitches K = knit
P = purl S = slip a stitch from one needle to the other
Stocking Stitch: alternate rows plain and purl
C6F: slip next 3 stitches onto cable needle, hold at front of work, K3 then K stitches from cable needle.
C6B: as above but hold at back
pssso = pass the slipped stitch over the next knitted stitch

Method:

Cable Pattern

Cast on 23 stitches:

- Row 1: S1, K1, P2, K15, P2, K2
- Row 2: S1, P1, K2, P15, K2, P1, K1
- Row 3: S1, K1, P2, K3, C6F, C6F, P2, K2
- Row 4: as row 2
- Row 5: as row 1
- Row 6: as row 2
- Row 7: S1, K1, P2, C6B, C6B, K3, P2, K2
- Row 8: as row 2, completes the pattern

THE STRAP

Cast on 23 stitches using 5mm needles and a double strand of wool.

Repeat rows 1-8 of cable pattern 23 until work measures 99cm, 39” for handbag or 183cm, 72” for shoulder bag. Cast off.

Advanced knitters may wish to use a provisional cast-on and join the two ends of the strap by knitting and casting off together but this will be

easier after making the rest of the bag. You may also complete the strap first and then knit together the sides and strap as you go, but a more rigid structure will be achieved by making seams.

THE STRAP BECOMES A BAG

Spread out strap on a table for this!

Place strap right side up with pattern facing.

The joining seam of the strap will be at one corner of the bottom of the bag.

Handbag

Place markers as shown on the diagram below.

Place markers at intervals of 25cm, 12” and then 15cm, 6”, 44cm, 18” along strap, ensuring that you leave 15cm, 6” at the end and shortening the long piece **B to C** to fit if necessary.

	A	B	C
25cm	15cm	44cm	15cm
12 ins	6 ins	18 ins	6 ins
Base	Side	Strap	Side

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Hand and Shoulder Bag

Shoulder bag

Place markers as shown on the diagram below. Place markers at intervals of 25cm, 12" and then 30cm, 12", 98cm, 36" along strap, ensuring that you leave 15cm, 6" at the end and shortening the long piece B to C to fit if necessary.

	A	B	C
25cm	30cm	98cm	30cm
12 ins	12 ins	36 ins	12 ins
Base	Side	Strap	Side

Adjust accordingly if making strap shorter or longer.

BAG FRONT

With cable pattern facing upwards, pick up 42 stitches from **start to A**.

Using a crochet needle, two strands of wool and the holes of the knit stitches gives a neat finish. Transfer stitches onto knitting needle.

Work in Stocking Stitch until knitting measures 15cm, 6" for handbag or 30cm, 12" for shoulder bag.

BAG BACK AND FLAP

Pick up 42 stitches on the other side of the strap from **start to A**, in the same way as for the front. Work in Stocking Stitch until knitting measures 15cm, 6" for handbag or 30cm, 12" for shoulder bag, this forms the back and the extent to which you will need to sew in the knitting into the sides.

Carry on knitting for a further 15cm, 6", ending with a purl row. This forms the flap of the bag.

SHAPING THE FLAP

Next row: K3, S1, K1, pss0. Knit to last 5 stitches, S1, K1, pss0. K3.

Next row: purl

Repeat these two rows 6 times. (30 stitches remaining). Cast off.

The flap will roll up of its own accord - sew this back into place at either end to create a feature.



FINISHING OFF

Sew in the back and front each up to 15cm, 6" or 30cm, 12" of next side from A to B. Sew or cast together the ends of the strap. Then sew in the back and front up 15cm, 6" or 30cm, 12" of the other side of the bag, from C to end.

Sew in all loose ends neatly.

Sew on a large button in the centre of the front approx 7cm from the base.

Crochet or knit an "I cord" or plait some wool into a cord approx 5cm, 2" long with a tail of 10cm, 4" each side and sew in to the base of the flap to provide a fastening for the button. Sew loop together at the top to fasten around the button tightly. Variation: use a large popper and make a tassel to cover.

Optional extras:

The shoulder strap will curl in of its own accord. You could sew the two sides together.

To stiffen the base more, cut down a drinking straw and oversew into each corner across the width of the base.

Wash bag. Block to dry, or dry flat and steam press to correct shape when dry.

Care advice: Hand wash in cool water using a liquid wool wash. Spin dry. Do not tumble dry. Spread on a towel, hand pressing to shape. Store folded.



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