

# El Porto "the-journey-is-the-destination" Duffle Bag

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"El Porto" means "the port" in Portuguese, but where I live, it refers to a section of beach north of Manhattan Beach, near the refinery. Because of the topography of the ocean floor at the surf, here is a great place to learn to surf. You can also watch the airplanes taking off from Los Angeles International Airport. I like to think that "the port" to which El Porto is referring to is the door to the rest of the world, either out there over the sea, or up there to where those airplanes are traveling. The El Porto bag will help carry your stuff during your adventures near and far.

This bag is a new take on the classic duffle. We added interesting pockets on either end of the duffle, as well as roomy pockets along the sides. To that, we made a comfortable sling strap, which is both fashionable and functional, as it includes an integrated media pocket. The sling is at a length for a child to wear over a shoulder or diagonally as a sling bag. For the ladies, El Porto hangs at about elbow length, a length I like, because I can have all my valuables tucked securely under my arm. Before beginning, decide how you would like to design your El Porto: Do you want to include the roomy side pockets? Or leave them off? What kinds of pockets would you like on the ends? The faced cut outs or the gusseted cargo zipper pockets? Or one of each?

Photo-illustrated step-by-step instructions are available at:

[http://www.studiotantrum.com/instructions/El\\_Porto\\_2.pdf](http://www.studiotantrum.com/instructions/El_Porto_2.pdf)

Recommended fabric: Denim, cotton twill, canvas, sturdy cotton percales.

## **Fabric requirements:**

<b>Material requirements</b>	
Zipper main compartment	40 cm / 16 to 18 inches
Zipper inner security pocket	12 cm / 4 inches
Zipper round gusseted pocket	18 cm / 7 inch
<b>Fabric (140 cm / 54 in.)</b>	<b>190 cm / 2yrd.</b>
<b>Other notions</b>	<b>1/2 or 3/8 inch elastic, fusible interfacing, 2 small pieces of hook-and-loop closure, two small bits of ribbons (optional-for shortening zipper), double-fold extra-wide bias tape.</b>

## **Piece List**

1 - Duffle body	cut 2 (outer); Cut one on fold (lining)
2 - Side pocket piece	cut 2 (cut 4 for fully lined pockets)
3 - Circular end piece	cut 4 (cut 6 for fully lined ends)
4 - Inner security pocket	cut 2
5 - Zipper end pieces (optional)	cut 2
6a - Sling strap (length for a child)	cut 4 on fold
6b - Sling strap (length for an adult)	cut 4 on fold
7a - Media pocket (children's version)	cut 1 on fold (cut 2 for lined pocket)
7b - Medientasche auf Träger (Damenversion)	cut 1 on fold (cut 2 for lined pocket)
8 - Gusseted cargo pocket	cut 1
9 - Mezzaluna pocket on cargo pocket	cut 1 (cut 2 for lined pocket)
10 - Pocket band for gusseted cargo pocket	cut 1
11 - Zipper extensions pieces for gusseted cargo pocket	cut 2

## **Cutting the layout**

Lay your prewashed and pressed fabric folded lengthwise along the grain onto your cutting surface right side up. Arrange the pattern pieces according to the grain and secure with a few pins or pattern weights. Cut each piece of the bag according to the piece list. Be sure to include a seam allowance and to carefully maintain the seam allowance when cutting and sewing. The pattern pieces do not include a seam allowance.

**Tip:** The circular duffle ends need to fit the tube of the duffle body exactly. It is a good idea to cut the circular duffle ends just slightly larger. These end pieces can always be trimmed to fit, whereas the tube of the duffle, once the zipper is added cannot be easily adjusted.

**Tip:** The media pocket should be cut to fit your medium. If your mobile phone or MP3 player is larger than the size of the media pocket on the pattern sheet, adjust the size to fit.

## **Sewing El Porto**

El Porto is comprised of three primary components—the shoulder strap, the duffle body and the circular ends—which will be attached together at the circular end seams. We will complete each of these different components and then construct the bag.

### **Sewing the fully faced pocket end**

1. Apply a very thin and flexible fusible interfacing to one end piece on the fabric wrong side. Lay this piece and another end piece right sides together and secure with a few pins or a light spraying of spray adhesive.
2. With a marking pen or chalk mark the circle cut out on the fabric wrong side. With a straight stitch, stitch carefully along this marked line. It is not a bad idea to go ahead and stitch around twice to strengthen this stitching line. Fold your work and snip a hole inside the stitched circle through both layers of fabric. Please do not poke the blade of your scissors through the material, as you could easily injure yourself. Cut out the circle, trimming very close to the stitching line. Now pull one fabric through the hole to the other side. You will see the respective fabric right sides on both sides. Press along the cutout. Edgestitch along the edge of the cut-out. Topstitch another line around this edgestitching line, as desired.
3. Stitch this faced cut-out piece wrong side (inner lining side) to the fabric right side of another circle end piece along the seam allowance. This end piece is complete. Set this piece aside for the time being.

### **Sewing the attached circular zipper cargo pocket**

1. Finish the top edge of the mezzaluna accessory pocket. Fold over and stitch a casing for inserting elastic. Put a safety pin in the end of your elastic and insert the elastic into the casing. Secure one end of the inserted elastic with a with a few stitches. Cinch the elastic a bit, so that the mezzaluna pocket fits to the circular face of the cargo pocket. Pin the elastic and secure this end of the elastic with a few stitches.
2. Stitch the mezzaluna pocket to the circular zipper pocket front along the seam allowance. Set this piece aside while you prepare the zipper piece for the cargo pocket.
3. Exchange the regular pressure foot for the zipper foot and adjust the needle position. Stitch the two zipper extensions right sides together to the zipper halves. Press the zipper extensions open and topstitch. Stitch the long pocket band to one end of the zipper at the zipper tabs and zipper extensions. Press and topstitch.
4. At the mark, begin pinning the zipper+band piece to the edge of the circular cargo pocket face+mezzaluna pocket piece right sides together. Continue to pin around the edge of the pocket front. Once you've come full circle and arrive at the other end of the zipper, carefully fold and place the band piece in place and pin securely. Trim any excess band material. Stitch along the circular edge, attaching the zipper+band piece to the cargo pocket front+mezzaluna pocket and finish the edge. Turn the circular zipper pocket to the right side and stitch the end of the band to the end of the zipper piece. Gently press along the edge of the circular seam and edgestitch.
5. On the circular duffle end piece, place the zipper pocket at the marks. Tuck under the inner pocket edge and pin the seam allowance. With the regular presser foot, stitch the pocket to the duffle end at 1/8<sup>th</sup> inch. Place this completed end of the duffle aside for the moment.

## Sewing the sling straps

1. Finish to top edge of the media pocket, fold over and press. Edgestitch the top edge of the media pocket piece and topstitch another line below this line. Stitch a button hole for inserting earphone cords as desired. Stitch one half of a piece of hook-and-loop closure near the top edge (alternately, you may use a snap to secure the top of this pocket).
2. Stitch the media pocket to the corresponding sling strap piece along the bottom edge only. Mark where the other half of the hook-and-loop closure will go on the sling strap. Stitch the other hook-and-loop closure piece to the strap.
3. Stitch the sling strap front and back pieces at the narrow top edge, press and topstitch. Repeat for the strap facing pieces. Depending on the strength of the material you are using, you may consider putting a bit of fusible interfacing at this seam, as this is a stress point which will carry the most weight of the bag.
4. You now have two "X" or hourglass shaped pieces, one for the sling strap outer with the media pocket and one for the sling strap lining. Stitch the sling strap front and facing pieces right sides together along the long edges. Take care to pin the media pocket in place before stitching.
5. Turn the sling strap right side out. Be sure to pull the sling half without the media pocket through the half with the media pocket, as the media pocket will not easily fit through the narrow part of the strap. Press and edgestitch along the left and right edges at 1/8<sup>th</sup> inch. Set the completed sling strap aside for the moment.

## Sewing the Body of the Duffle

1. With a marking pen or chalk, carefully mark stitching lines to subdivide the side pockets into smaller pockets. One stitching line in the middle will create two pockets that will fit either a pair of children's shoes in one pocket or a pair of adult shoes, one shoe in each pocket. Two stitching lines will create subdivisions suitable for water bottles
2. Make an elastic casings through the top edges of the side pocket pieces by folding over the top edge and stitching a tunnel. With the aid of a safety pin or bobbin, insert the elastic into the casings of the side pocket pieces. Cinch the elastic in the casings at the top edge of the side pocket pieces to fit the duffle side piece. Secure the ends of the elastic with a few stitches.
3. Stitch a line of basting stitches along the bottom seam allowances of the side pocket pieces. Pull the bobbin thread of the gathering stitch and ease the bottom edge to fit the duffle side piece. Pin the side pocket along the bottom edge and stitch in place. Pin the side pocket pieces strategically to the duffle side pieces and along the marked lines. Stitch along the marked lines to subdivide the side pockets. I recommend using a twin needle to make two even stitching lines. Stitch bar tacks right over the elastic at the top of the stitching lines. It is not a bad idea to put a tiny piece of fabric under the bar tack on the wrong side of the duffle side piece to further secure this stress point. Alternatively, you can stitch a piece of ribbon all along the diving lines and over and up to the top edge of the duffle piece.
4. Stitch the sides of the side pocket pieces to the duffle outer shell along the seam allowance. Now you have the two halves of the duffle outer shell with the side pockets attached. Pin the two completed duffle outside halves along the bottom right sides together and stitch. Finish this seam for extra durability. Set this piece of the bag aside for the time being.

## Sewing the inside valuables pocket

1. On the fabric wrong side of one piece of the inner valuables pocket apply a piece of fusible interfacing where you will inset the zipper. With a marking pen or chalk, mark a straight line on the fusible interfacing where the zipper will be. At either end of this line, mark a small "V". Carefully cut along this line and snip the Vs at the ends of the line. Press open this cut to reveal a long, thin rectangle into which the zipper fits. Exchange the standard presser foot for a zipper presser foot. Pin the zipper in place and stitch the zipper to the pocket piece. Around this stitching line, topstitch another line at 1/4 inch.
2. Open the zipper a little bit for easier turning later. Stitch the pocket front to the pocket back right sides together along all four edges. Finish the seams for extra durability. Trim the four corners of the pocket at 45° and be careful not to snip the stitching line. Turn the valuables pocket right side out through the zipper. Press the pocket and edgestitch at 1/8<sup>th</sup> inch along the right and left sides and the bottom. No need to edgestitch the top edge at this time.
3. Place the valuables pocket onto the lining piece at the markings and pin. Stitch the valuables pocket to the lining along the top edge at 1/8<sup>th</sup> inch and 1/4<sup>th</sup> inch. Also edgestitch down the right and left sides of the valuables pocket to approximately the location of the zipper. Secure this stitching line with a few staystitches or a small bar tack. This bit

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of stitching on the left and right of the zipper will make opening and closing this zipper easier. The greater portion of the pocket, however, hangs loose inside the bag, such that the contents of the valuables pocket do not create a visible bulge on the outside.

### **Constructing and completing the El Porto Duffle**

At this time, these individual components of the duffle have been completed:

The next step will be to connect the lining and the duffle outer at the zipper.

1. Pin one duffle shell piece top edge to the zipper right side. On the zipper wrong side, pin one short edge of the duffle lining. Using a zipper presser foot, stitch the zipper between the lining and the shell. Repeat for the other half of the zipper. Press the duffle shell and lining away from the zipper coil and topstitch carefully along each side. Please make certain that the lining and outer shell are pressed well away from the zipper coil. Secure the material with a few pins while topstitching the zipper just to be sure.
2. Now is the time to attach the sling strap to the duffle body. At the marks, baste stitch the sling strap to the duffle body, strap facing side to the duffle outside, along the seam allowance. Examine your work and make certain the sling strap is symmetrical and aligned with the center zipper. Remove the baste stitches and adjust if necessary.
3. Unzip the main zipper a little bit for easier turning later. Turn the duffle inside out. Pin one circular duffle end in place and stitch. At this time you will see if the duffle end fits exactly to the tube of the duffle. Trim the duffle end if necessary for a good fit. Repeat for the other duffle end.
4. At this time, you may finish this seam with a zig zag stitch or a four-thread over-edge stitch, press and topstitch this seam and your project is complete! However, I recommend encasing the seams in bias tape to lend your bag better form and a more finished appearance. Illustrated instructions for making Hong Kong seams may be found online at the Web address listed above.