



# Whole Lotta Tote

by Dana at WaterPenny.net

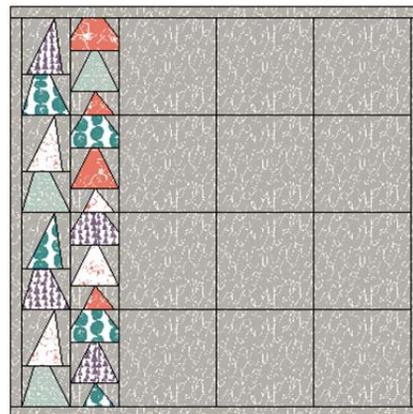
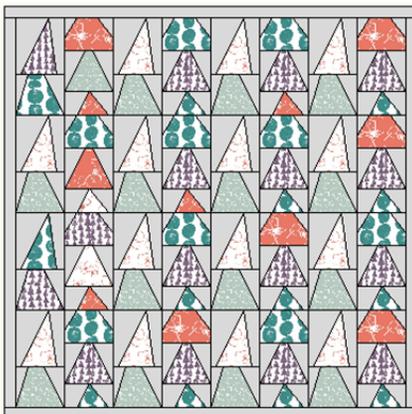
This basic quilted tote is big – maybe I’m the only one who’s always looking for a slightly bigger tote, but I think this is the perfect size for filling with gear for your next sew-in or for hauling your quilts to show off at your next guild meeting. It fits a 6 pack of paper towels with room on top for a box of cereal, if your life is that impossibly glamorous!

I love Lotta Jansdotter’s designs and wanted to create a quilt block inspired by her textile patterns. This block is based on the tree fabric from her Mormor collection. The background fabric is my trusty old friend Kona Ash. Still looks great with everything.

While you could make this block without paper piecing, the foundation helps. It’s great for paper piecing beginners because it is a very flexible design and you once you get the hang of the blocks, it is fun to use different angles and stray a bit from the printed pattern – if you’re into that sort of thing!



This block finishes at 12.5x16.5 – being generous with our fabric, for each block you’ll want fat quarter of background fabric and scraps that add up to a fat quarter total of other colored fabric for the triangles. This block would make a fun quilt too! But first things first, we’ll make a tote.



**You'll need:**

- ¾ yard background fabric (I used Kona Ash)
- At least 3 fat quarters for your triangles – though you may want more variety.
- 41.5 x 20 fabric for lining – I pieced mine from 2.5 fat quarters.
- 43 x 22 batting or other bag lining you prefer
- 1 fat quarter per handle if you are fussy cutting the stone fabric, handle fabric will measure 40x5" per handle

**Let's get started!**

- From your background fabric, cut
- 5.5 x 16.5 inch background fabric
- 4 x 41.5 inch background/bottom fabric

Set aside for now. What a tease! We're cutting these first before we hack our background fabric up while paper piecing. So, on to the paper piecing!

**Make 3 blocks**

Print out three copies of the templates that follow these instructions, and paper piece the 15 small blocks and assemble to create 3 12.5x16.5" blocks. You may want to make all your smaller pieces before assembling into the larger blocks so you can play with the lay out.

There are many resources on paper piecing available, this video is a nice one. Be sure to use a short stitch to make it easier to pull the paper out later.

[http://video.fonsandporter.com/videos/0057\\_paper-foundation-piecing/](http://video.fonsandporter.com/videos/0057_paper-foundation-piecing/)

To sew the blocks, lay the foundation paper with the printed side down. Lay the triangle fabric right side up, and the background corner fabric right side down. Pin and flip over to sew along the printed line (left image) Press open and trim – be sure to leave the quarter inch seam allowance (right image).

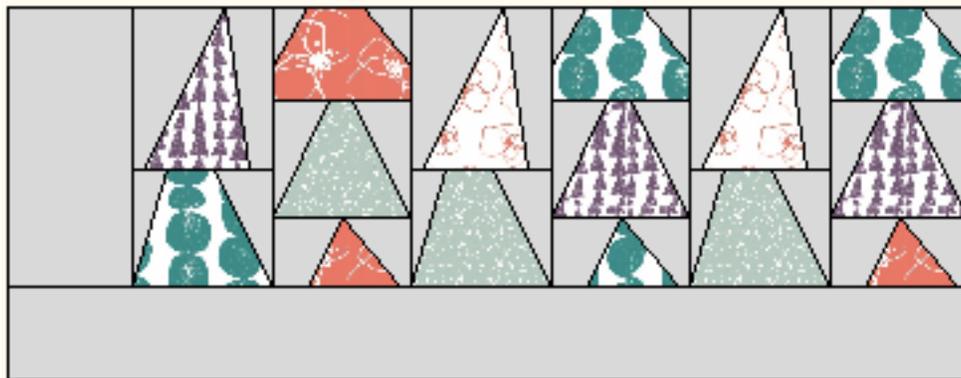


Press open and trim again. When blocks 1-5 are completed, sew together to make a block as shown on the right.



After your three blocks are completed and sewn together, remember when you cut the 5.5x16.5 inch background fabric and 2.5x41.5 inch background/bottom fabric?

Add background fabric to the end and along the bottom of your fabric to create a 40x20 inch piece.



Now snuggle up to your favorite tvshow or podcast and pull out all the paper from the back of your glorious piecing. I use a nice pair of tweezers to make this process relatively painless.

Once your paper is removed, press it, and layer it with a piece of batting. I use a spray batting. Quilt as desired. I used a triangle free-motion pattern. Note – I quilt only the two layers, the fabric and the batting.



Take your quilted piece right sides in, and sew shut the side and bottom of the bag – leave the top open.



Now it's time to square the bottom. Turn it inside out. In the bottom corner, draw a 3x3 inch square and the diagonal across from the outside point of the bag up. Flip and do the same on both sides for both bottom corners. Fold out along the diagonal lines to pop out the triangle and make your corner triangle.



Sew along the top of the triangle to create your corners. Turn the bag inside out to check your corners look right, just in case...



You can now either sew these triangle flaps down inside the bag or cut them off. Though it is difficult to sew inside the bag, I generally sew them down for extra sturdiness on the bottom of the bag. This blurry picture illustrates how fussy it is! Line the point of the triangle up with the seam at the bottom of the bag and stitch down.

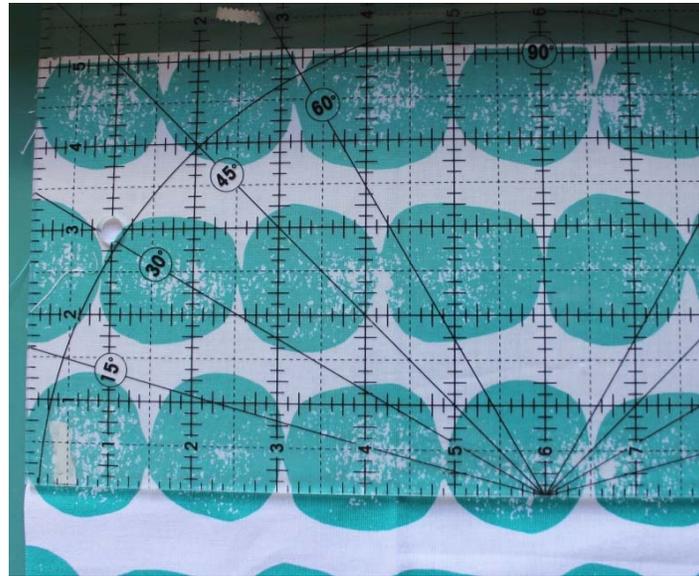


The outside of your bag is done!

### Make the handles

You'll need two pieces 5x40 inches.

To make the handles with the pebbles running up the middle, line your ruler up so the center of the line of pebbles is at the 2.5 inch mark and cut a 5 inch wide strip.



Sew pieces together to create a 40x5 inch strip. Fold right sides together, sew lengthwise along the 40 inches. Next, turn the tube right side out, and press flat carefully. The fabric should line up to create a line of stones up each side.



Topstitch along the sides of the handles. They are done! Now you need to attach them.

Lay the bag flat – Measure 4 inches in from each side and pin the handles – the outside edge of the handle should be 6 inches from the edge. The “inside” of the handles – the side with the seam - should be facing up. Make sure there are no twists!

Sew down handles. Ok, now the outside of your bag is really done!



### **Create the lining.**

Take a 41.5 x 20 inch piece of fabric, fold in half right sides in, and sew along the side and bottom. Repeat the earlier instructions to square the bottom of your lining.

With the lining right side in, and the outer bag right side out, put the outer bag inside the lining, right sides touching. Make sure the squared bottoms are lined up and the handles are tucked down.



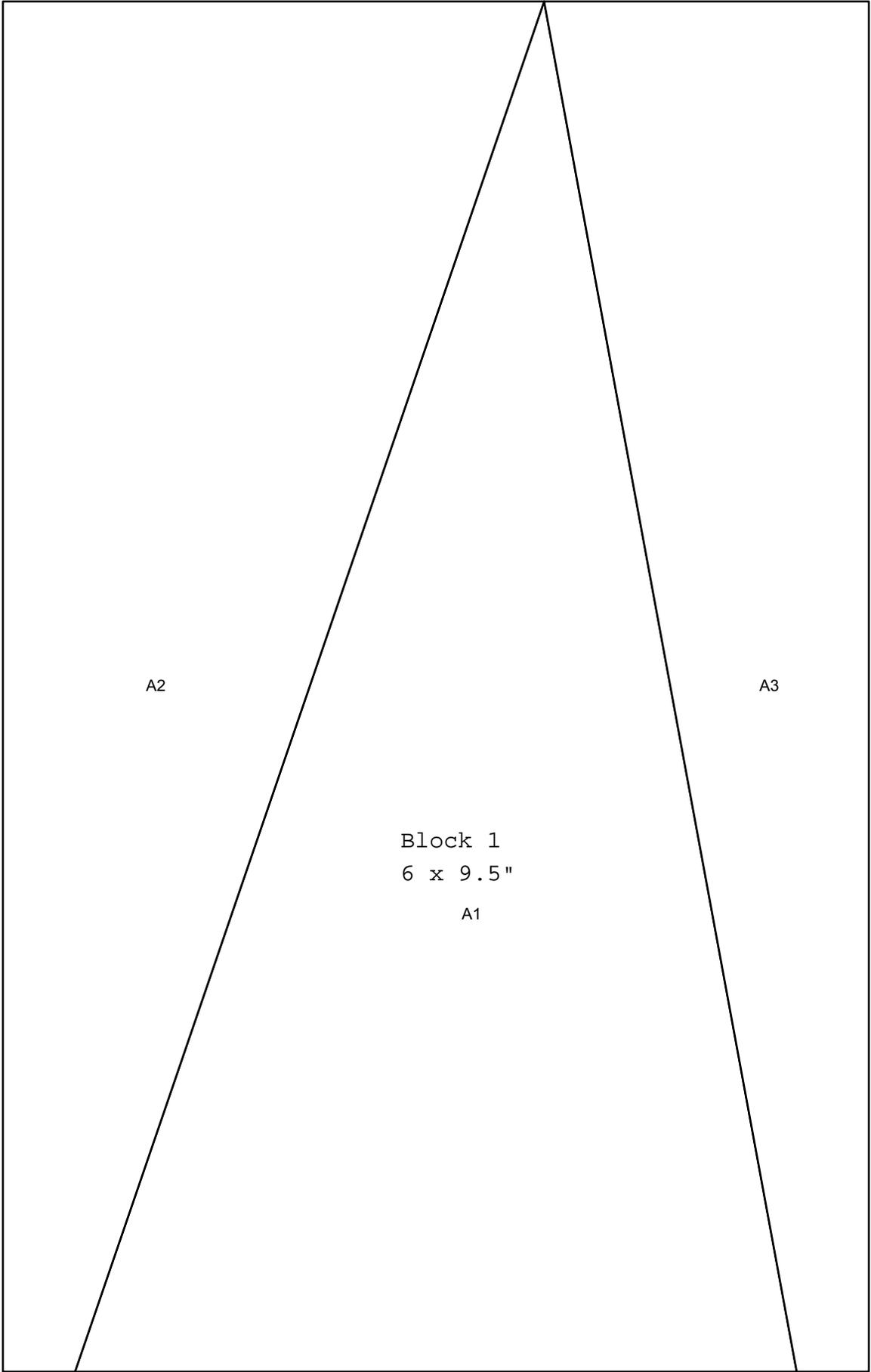
Pin along the top of the bag, then sew the top edges together, leaving a 4 inch gap unsewn. Pull the outer bag through the 4 inch gap to turn the bag right side out.



Tuck the lining inside the bag and pin along the top edge, sew along the top to finish the bag and close your 4 inch gap.

HEY your bag is done! Now take pictures of it with your cat. (Last step optional).





A2

A3

Block 1  
6 x 9.5"

A1

