

Stranded Knitting Bag

By Judith Helms

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This Stranded Knitting Bag is designed with the two handed color knitters in mind. It has two pockets, one on each side-one for each color yarn. You have the option of running the yarn through the Grommets, or over the top, as you choose.

As you can see at the right, it opens up flat on your lap, holding your pattern, pencil and pad. There are many other options you can add to this lap panel to personalize it. There is a dowel on each side to help you spread it out and keep the center panel flat.



When you need to put your knitting down for any reason, you simply lift the draw cords on the outside of the dowels, and draw the bag together as shown on the left. Now you can set the work aside, and your yarns will be in place ready for you to start knitting again later.

By placing one hand on the dowels, and pushing down while holding the draw cords in your other hand, you can completely close the bag. The snap fastener, or fasteners, placed just below the dowels provide for a permanent closure, as shown in the picture to the right.



Fabric requirements:

1 1/4 yd. 45 inch fabric of choice-I used cotton

Medium to heavy weight Pellon 9 1/2 by 48

1 pkg each of 7/8 inch and 1/4 inch double fold bias tape in contrasting color

1- 5/16 inch wooden dowel

1- 5/8 inch wooden dowel *I used this to make my own dowel caps, you can buy them instead if you choose, they come with 1/4 in openings you will have to drill out a bit.

1 1/2 yd. of cording (preferably something smooth and slick)

Four # 1 or 2 Grommets Get them at the hardware store, they come with a much heavier duty grommet tool and do not split like some cheaper units),

Snap fasteners. 1 or 2 Both work well. The 2 snaps system keeps your dowels more even when the unit is closed.

Pattern Pieces

(Base A and Lap Panel B)
40 in. by 9 1/2 in.

D – Yarn Pockets
15 by 8 3/4 in.

D- Opt. Lap Panel pockets.
4 3/4 " by 7"

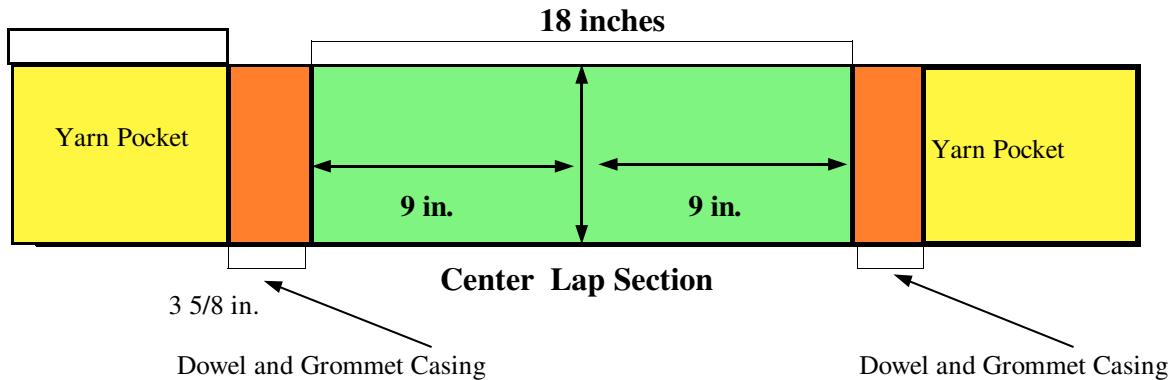
C-Side Extension Base Pattern
23 by 9 1/2 in

Cut this rectangle out of old sheeting or extra fabric as we will be reshaping and expanding this rectangle for the finished pattern piece.

Basic Layout for Lap Panel

Finished measurements

Yarn Pocket
6 7/8 in

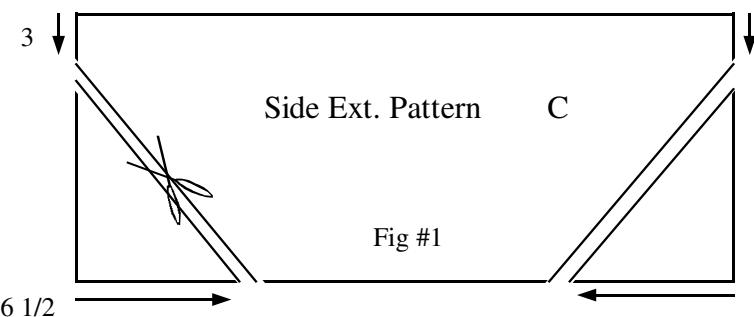


Step # 1– Making Side Extension Pattern

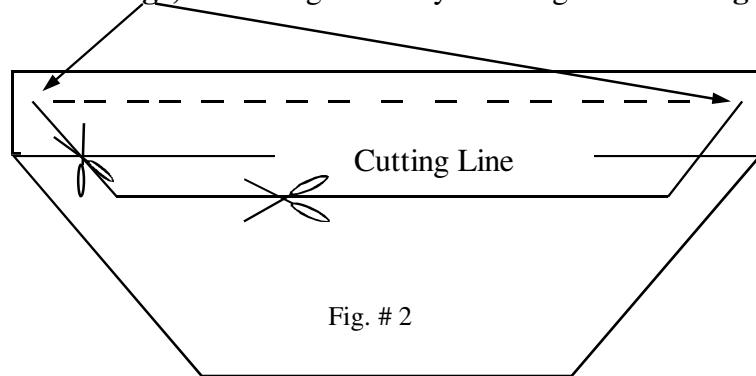
Now we are going to engineer our side extensions. To simplify the matter, we will be making our pattern from a simple 23 by 9 1/2 in. rectangle, made from pattern paper, sheeting, or just some old material leftovers.

* I find that fabric works better., although your original rectangle can be made of pattern paper which has the 1' squares to keep your work straight., then transferred to fabric.

A. After you cut your 23 by 9 1/2 inch rectangle out of a fabric scrap, make a mark 3 inches down from top edge on each side as shown in **Fig #1**. Now, make a mark 6 1/2 inches in from both bottom corners as shown. Draw a line between the two marks on both sides. Cut these corners off.

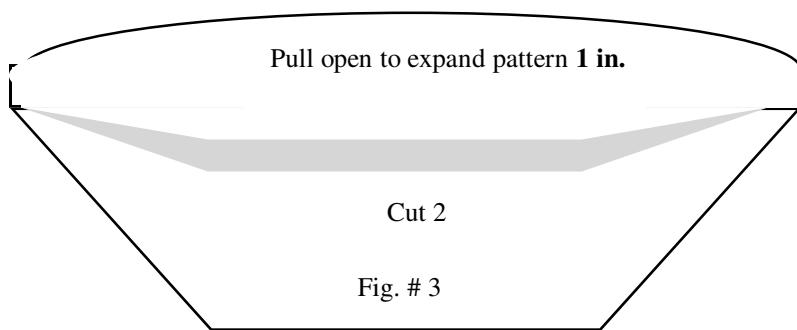


B. Measure 1 1/8 inch down from top and make a line(this is the fold line for your casing). Next, cut your pattern open as shown below, making sure that you don't cut any closer than 1 inch from the **outside edge**, and no higher than your casing fold line. **Fig # 2**



C. Place on your project fabric. Pin down bottom and sides. Holding on to center top pull open about 1 inch. This will give you a slightly rounded top. Pin down. **Fig # 3**

Cut two side extensions.



Step # 1– cont.

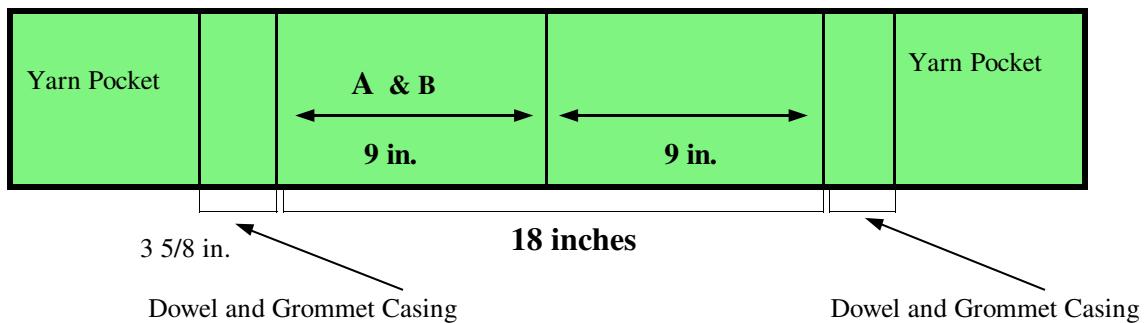
D. This is how it should look. Don't worry about the tope corners as they are going to be cropped. **Fig # 4**



Step # 2- Base Preparation

A. **Mark both lap Panels as shown.** Draw lines with ruler on WS. **Fold and press.** *These lines will assist you with placement of all other patterns pieces, and save you lots of time.*
Fig # 4

Center Lap Sections A & B- Fig # 4



B. Iron 9 1/2 by 40 inch Pellon on to WS of A .* *If you have to skimp, you can center a 28 by 9 1/2 inch piece of Pellon.* Cut the 8 inches you have left and two pieces 9 1/2 by 4 inches. Iron these over the dowel and **grommet section** (in orange) for additional reinforcement.
Fig. # 5

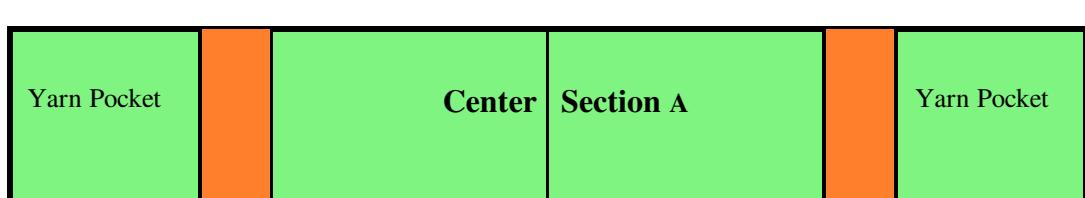
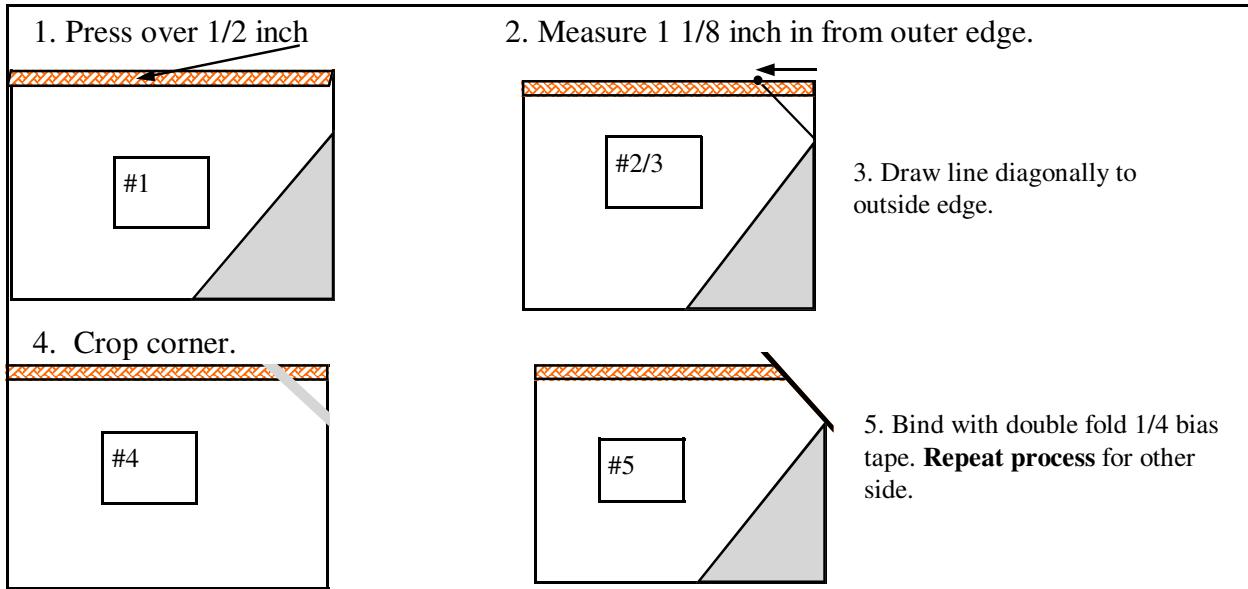


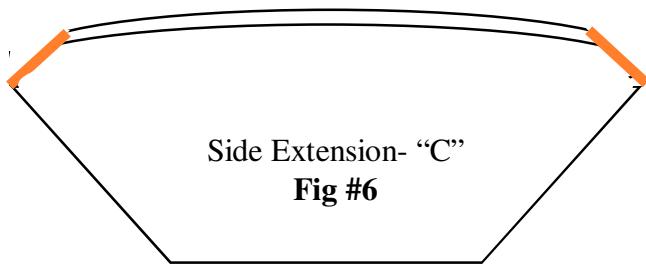
Fig. # 5

Step # 3- Preparing Side Extensions “C”.

A. Cropping the corners. Follow next 5 steps as illustrated in box below.

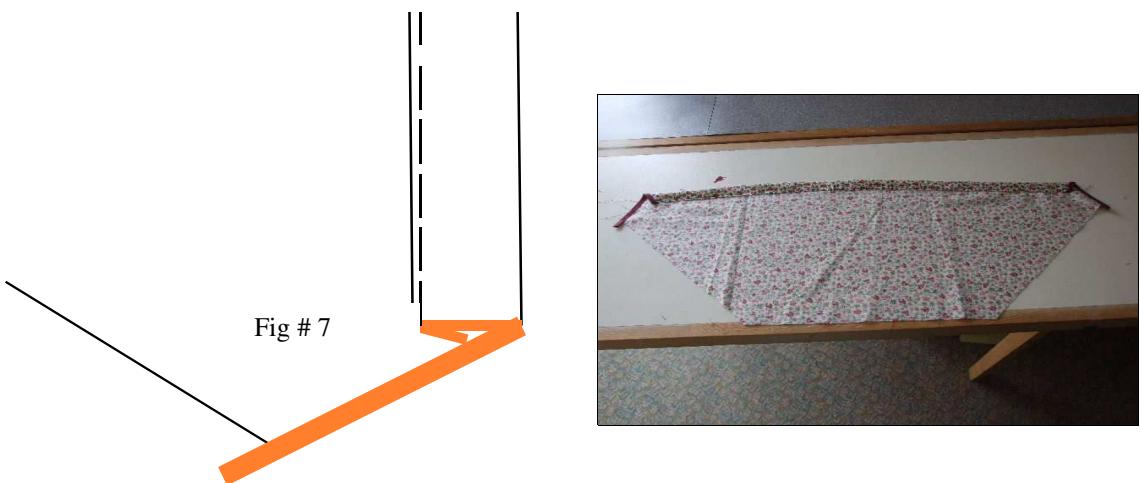


B. When finished, your Side Extensions should look like fig #6.



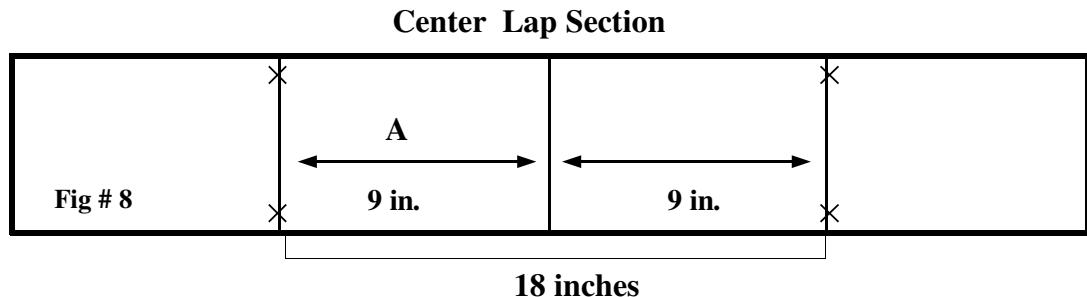
C. Now fold over 3/4 inch for draw cord casing. **Press and stitch** close to edge. **Fig # 7**

*Below, right, is photo of Side Ext. at this stage .

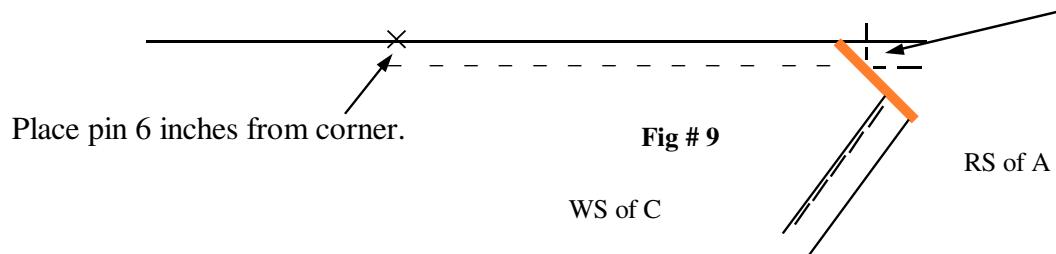


Step # 4 – Joining Side Exts. (“C”) to A (Base)

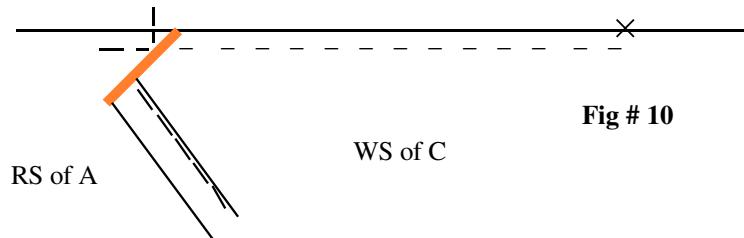
A. With RS of A (Lap Panel) facing you, mark the intersection of the 5/8 inch seam allowance and the side marks of the center section as shown. See the X's. **Fig # 8**



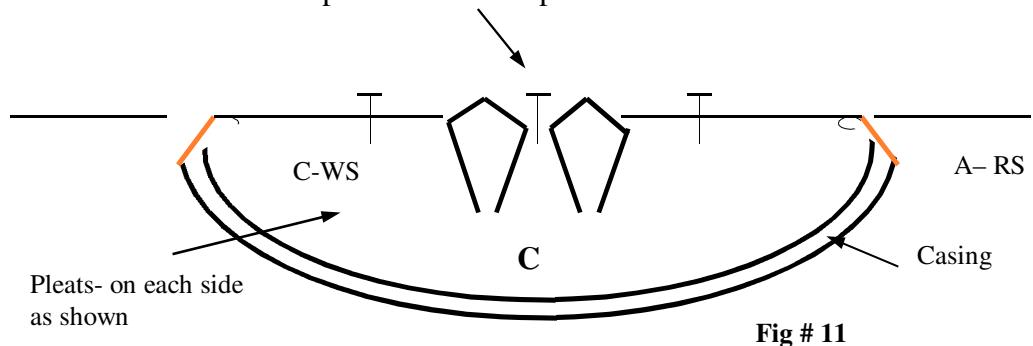
B. Match unfinished edge of the diagonal corner of C to match with intersection of mark. **Fig # 9**



* Repeat procedure on other side. **Fig # 10**



C. Pin C at center line of Lap Panel. Place a pin 1 1/2 inches on either side of center pin. away.



Pleat excess fabric as shown (Fig # 11) or pleat as desired, making sure that your fabric will remain well within the seam allowance when sewed. *You can enlarge your Side extensions by making your pattern rectangle longer, say 25 inches. Following the same procedure, you will have extra fabric to pleat in. Just check the back to see that all pleats will be secured in seam.



D. Pin down pleats



E. Lift your panel to make sure all your pleats will be caught in seam.



**F. Trim off excess fabric.
Repeat steps A-F for other side ext.**

G. Stitch down C-Ext. to A-Base Lap Pan using 5/8 inch seam.

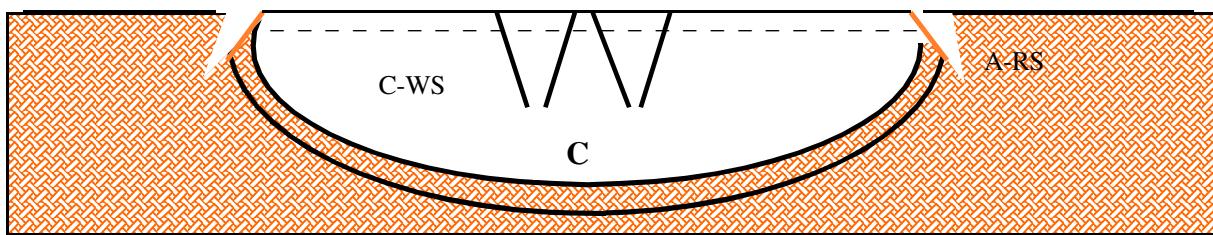
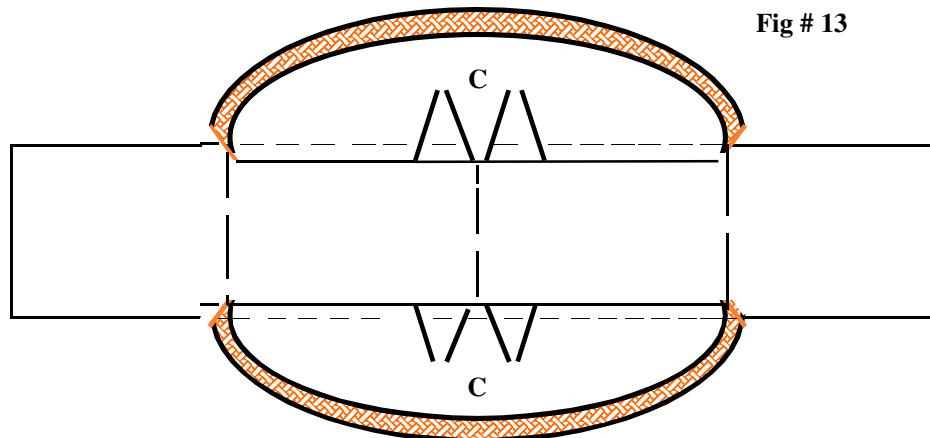


Fig # 12

H. Press toward center panel. Lay your panel open.

Fig # 13



I. Cut a 7 in. piece of double fold 7/8 in. tape. Open it up and trim off each side beyond the 7/8 in. section to 1/4 in as shown. Fold trimmed section back under.

J. With WS panel facing you, lay tape over center section of seam on side opposite from you. Pin. Stitch down close to both outside edges (Fig # 14). *This section will serve as the pocket to receive the cardboard to support your pattern.*

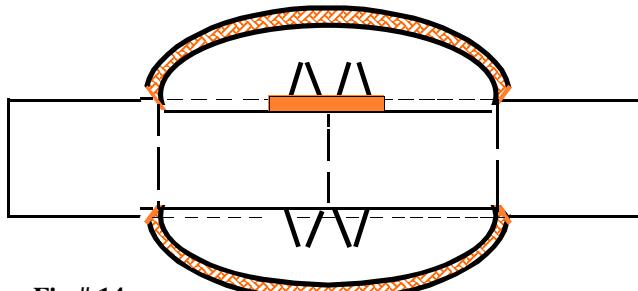


Fig # 14



Now you can set this base unit aside until we have completed “B” Lap Panel.

Step # 5 – Preparing Yarn Pockets

A. Press down $3/8$ in. Fold over $3/4$. Press. Sew $5/8$ in. from edge. This is the casing for the $1/4$ in. elastic.

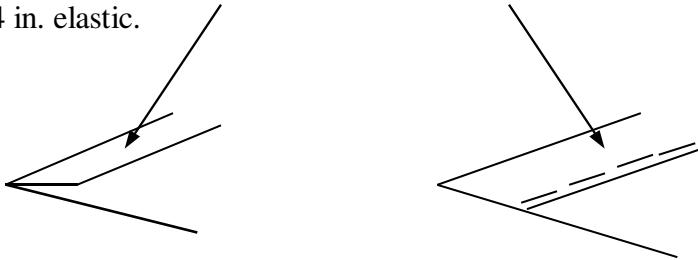
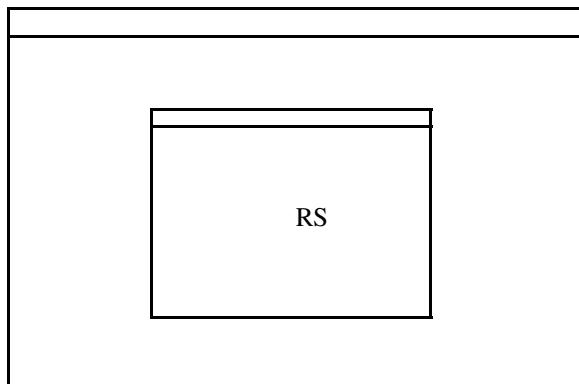


Fig # 15



**OPT. As you can see I added a small pocket in the middle for the “little” stuff. You could also add a flap with Velcro closure.*

Fig # 16

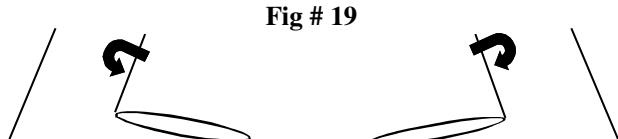
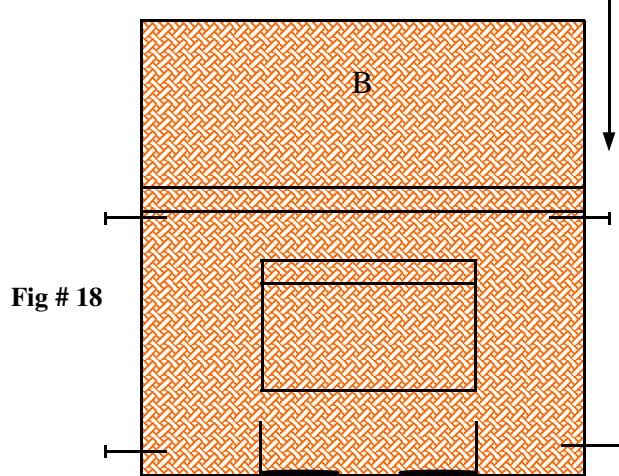
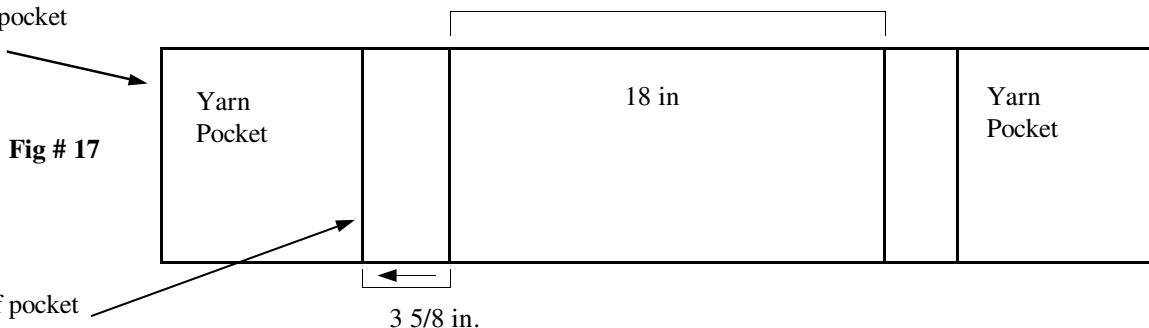


B. Cut 2, 10 inch pieces of $1/4$ in. elastic. Insert elastic into casing and extend it $1/2$ in. past outside edge, as shown. Secure elastic with pin.

Repeat steps A and B for other yarn pocket.

Step # 6 -Attaching yarn pockets to the Lap Panel B

Bottom of pocket



A. With the RS of Lap Panel facing up, and the pocket RS up, place the yarn pocket on B, matching bottom corners. Make sure top edge is set at 3 5/8 in. down from side mark of center section. Pin in place on side edges. Fig # 18

B. Take up excess along bottom edge by forming a box pleat, as illustrated in Fig. # 19.

** You can make 2 smaller pleats if desired.*

C. Stitch down pocket with 3/8 in seam.

Be sure to included your elastic.

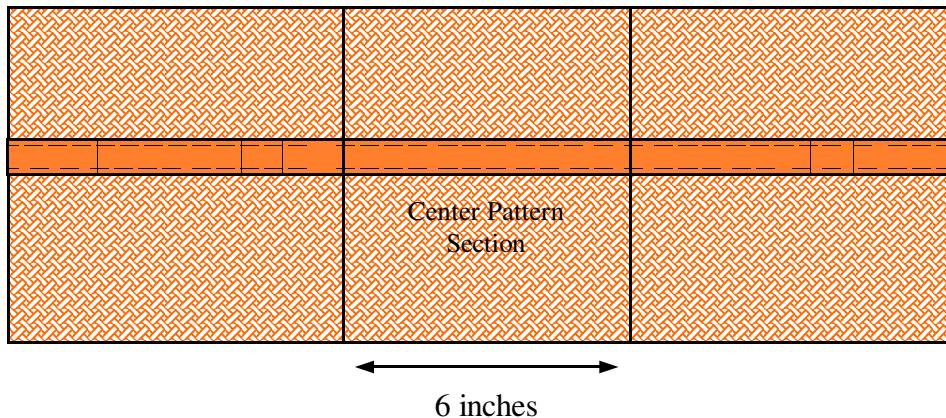
Repeat steps A-C for other pocket.



Step # 7 – Preparing Center Section of Lap Panel.

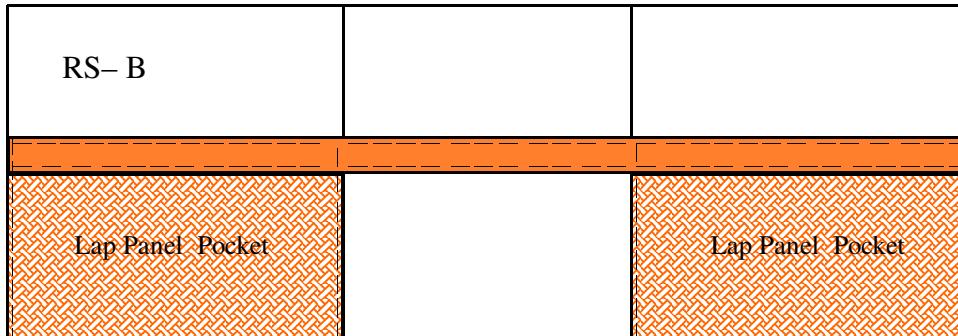
A. The simplest version, Fig # 19, is to cut a piece of 7/8 double fold bias 19 inches long. Top stitch both edges, fold under 1/2 inch on each end and place it in the middle of the lap panel as shown in #19. Then you can stitch through the tape at various intervals for whatever you think you might want to secure on your lap.

Fig # 19



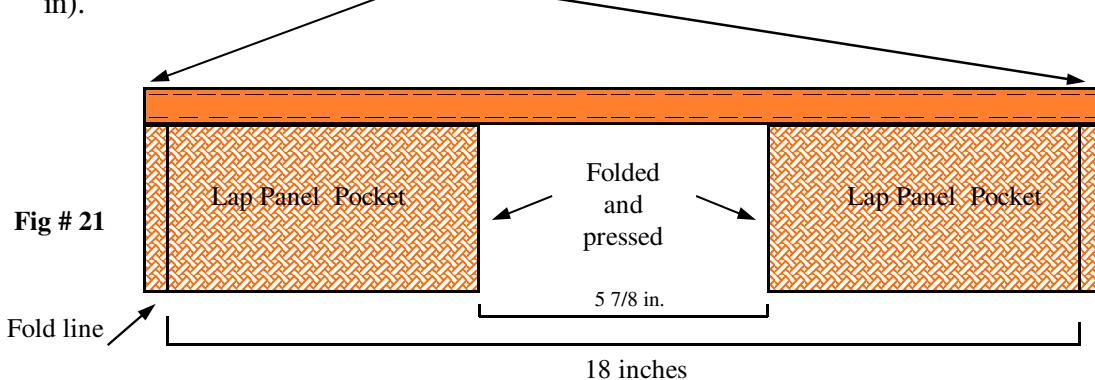
B. However, if you want to enhance your panel with some pockets, you might select the option below in Fig # 20.

Fig # 20



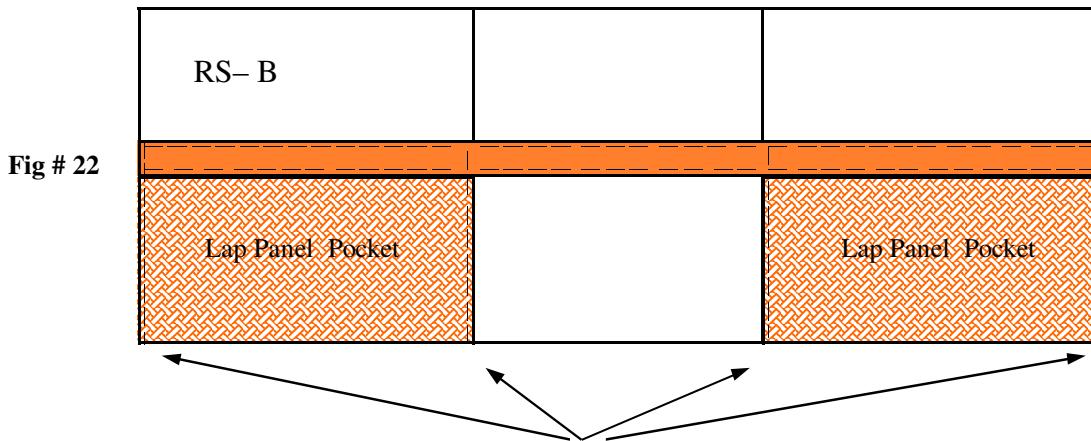
C. Cut 2 rectangles 4 3/4 by 7 inches. With each piece, fold over 1/2 inch on short (4 3/4 in.) side and press. You now 2 pieces (panel pockets) measuring 4 3/4 in. by 6 1/2 in. Cut your 7/8 in. Bias tape, 19 in. long. Lay it open. Slip one piece into each end, matching the 4 3/4 in. raw end with each end of the tape. Check the center opening to make sure it is even (about 5 7/8 in.).

Fig # 21



D. Pin pockets to tape. Top stitch tape and pockets together as shown in Fig # 21. *Don't forget to top stitch the top edge of the tape.*

E. Fold under side edge and align with side lines (your previously pressed lines) of center panel section as shown. Pin down.



F. Stitch down vertical seams as shown in Fig # 22.



G. Your piece should now look like the picture to the right. Now you can divide your pockets however you'd like, by sewing the vertical seams through the pockets and lap panel.

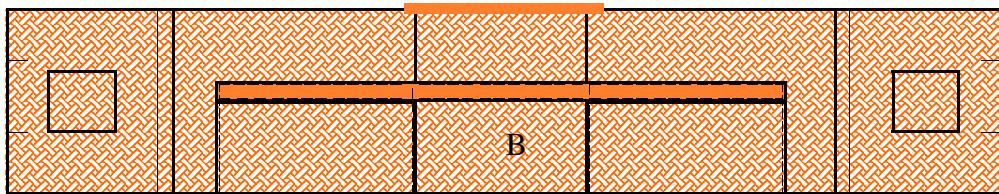
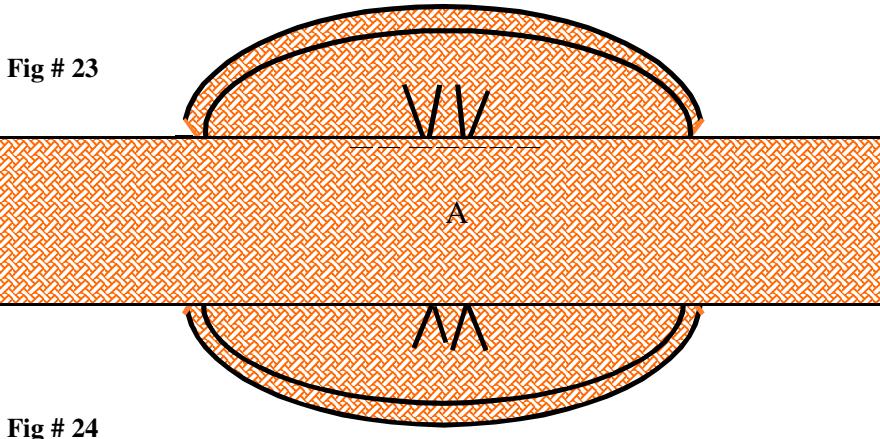
H. To finish this section, cut a piece of double fold 1/4 inch bias tape, 7 inches long, and bind the top center of the panel as shown in the picture.

This will act as a finished edge for the pattern pocket in the center.

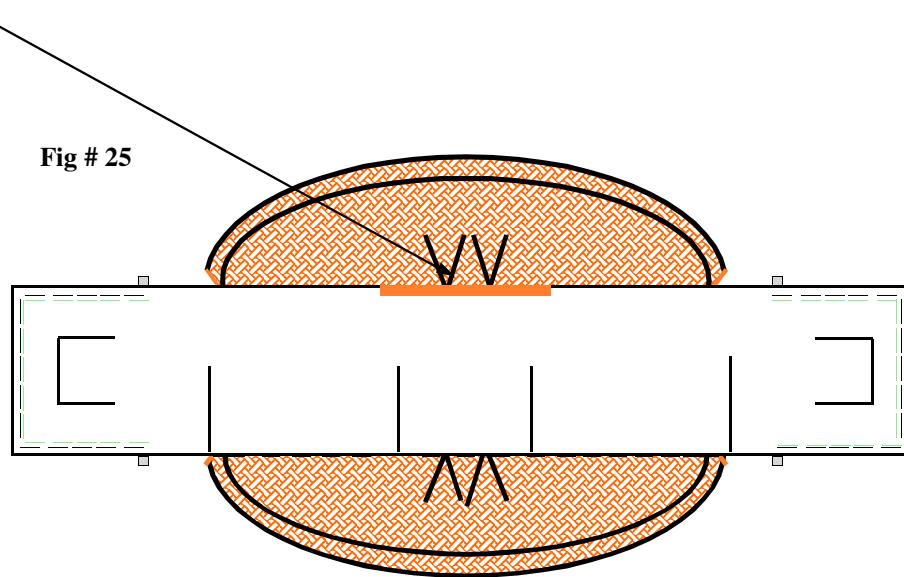


Step # 8 – Sewing A Base to Lap Panel B

A. Now you have two prepared panels, A and B. A – Fig # 23, B – Fig # 24.



B. Place B. with RS facing A. Line up center, and line up center pattern pocket opening at top.



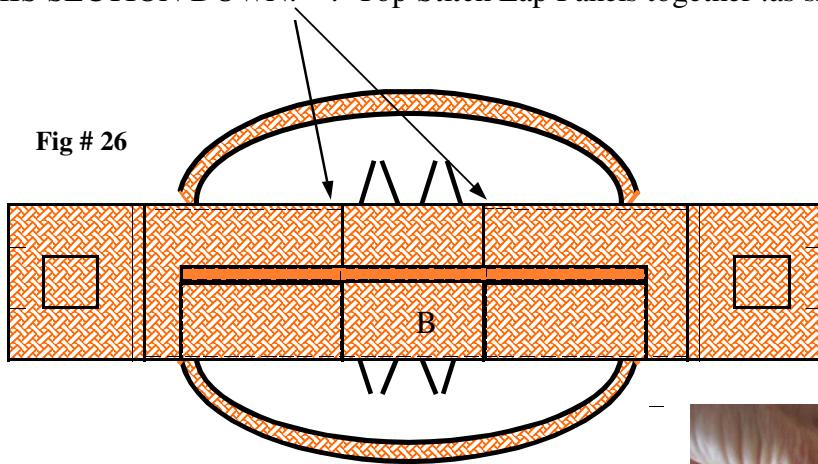
C. Pin down D (yarn pocket sections) as shown in Fig 25. Stitch pocket sections with 5/8 inch seams (green). Be careful to include the elastic. *Make sure you have 3 5/8 inch space between center panel section and yarn pockets.*

D. Trim edge and corners around yarn pocket, tapering out just before elastic.

E.. Turn pockets out . Define corners, and press.



F. Fold under 5/8 seam allowance on each side of lap panels to match each other.. Be sure to place a pin 3 inches each side center to mark the 6 inch Bias bound pattern section. DO SEW THIS SECTION DOWN. . Top Stitch Lap Panels together .as shown in Fig. # 26.

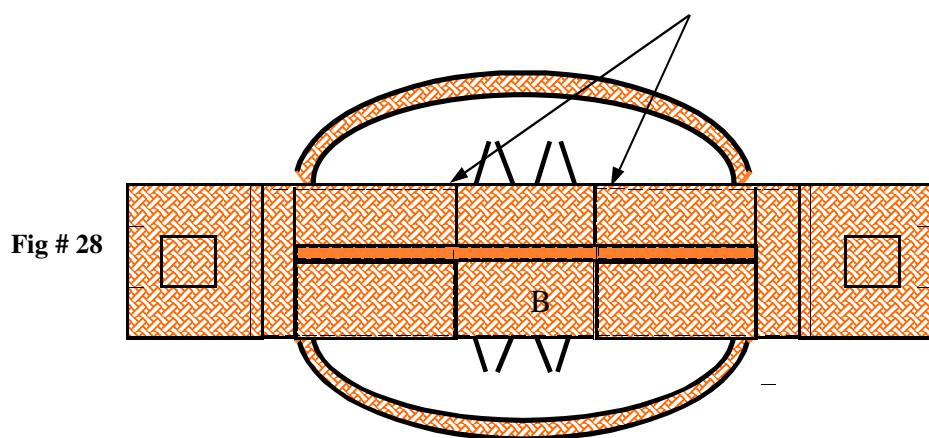


G. Be sure to start you top stitching just inside the yarn pockets, as illustrated in Fig. # 27.

Fig # 27



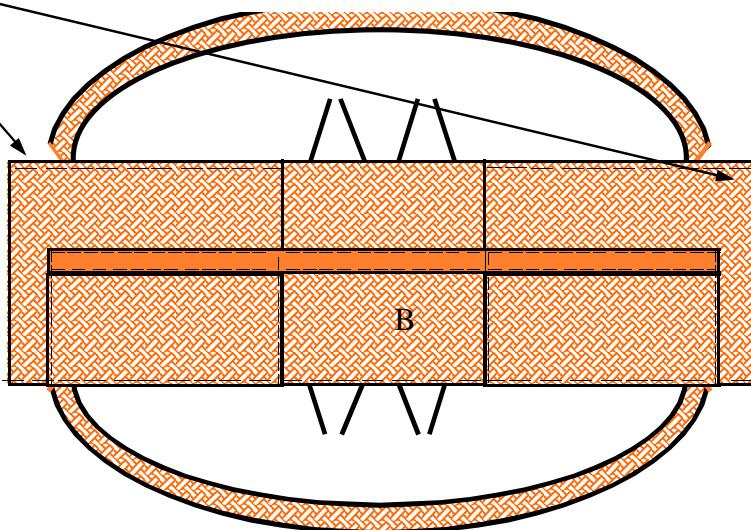
H. Stitch down each side of 6 inch center pocket. Fig. # 28



Step # 9 – Finishing Grommet and Dowel Casings

A. Fold the 3 5/8 Grommet, dowel casing section in half, making sure that 1 1/2 inches is showing on the lap center panel side. This allows the yarn pocket to set 1/8 inch below the seam for the casing. Pin sections together.

Fig # 29



B. Stitch across lap panel close to panel pocket through all thicknesses, as shown in Fig # 30. Repeat on opposite end. This casing is area designated for Grommets and snap fasteners.

Fig # 30



C. Sew a seam 5/8 inch down from outside edge of casing, through all thicknesses, for dowel casing (for 5/16 in. dowel), as shown in Fig # 31.

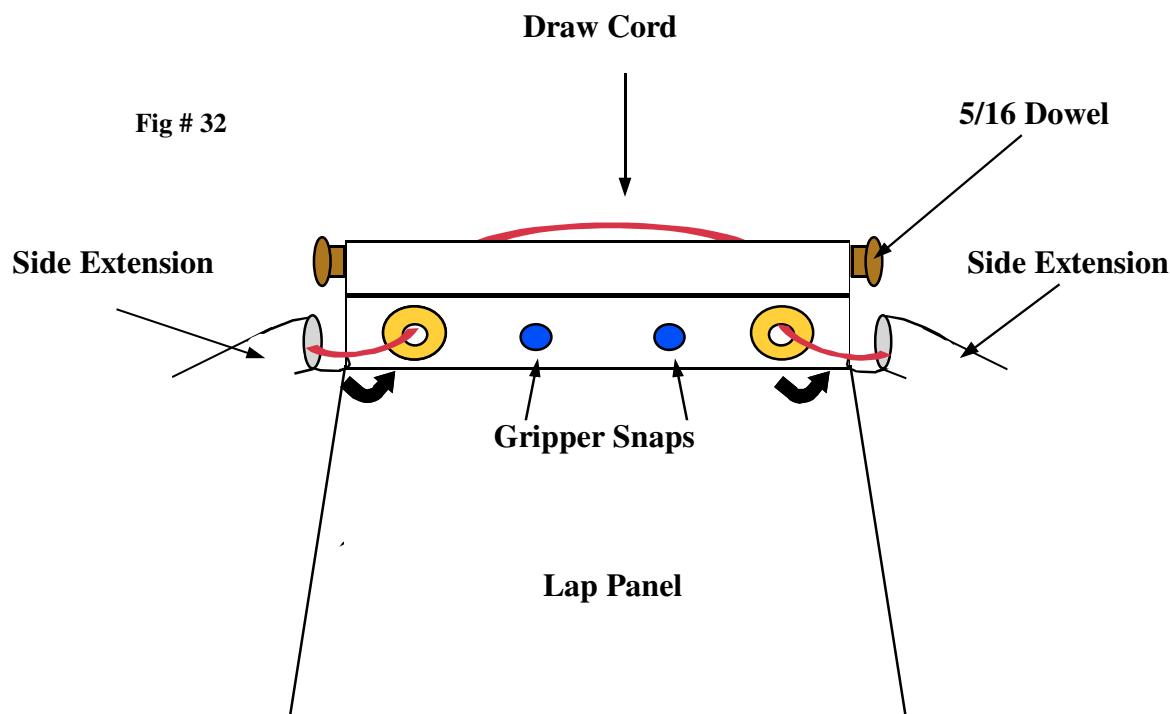
Fig # 31



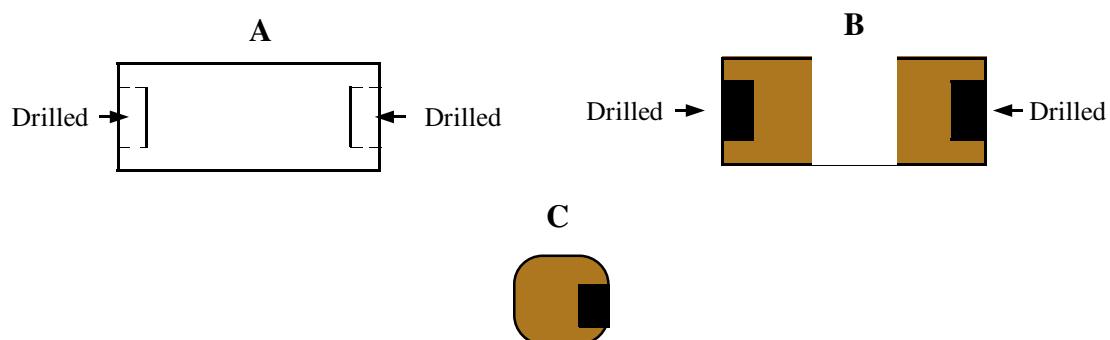
Finished! Well, almost!

Step # 10 – Assembling Grommets, Snaps and Draw Cord.

I have drawn a diagram of the placement of the grommets, and snaps. You can use only 1 snap fastener if you wish. I cut my dowel 1/2 inch longer than the casing, giving room for my caps. The draw cord is fed through the side extensions and enters the grommets from the inside of the panel as shown.. It is then looped outside the toward the yarn pocket , then back in through the grommet to the opening for the opposite side extension. Over lap and sew your cord ends and work them back inside the side extensions (C). And there you have it!



We made our own dowel caps by cutting a 5/8 inch dowel in 1 to 1 1/4 inch lengths (A). Drill out both ends 5/16 inch, 1/4 in deep. Cut each into two 3/8 to 1/2 inch sections (B), place on dowel (before gluing) and sanded the corners with a Dremel Sander (C). Now they are ready to mount on your dowel. *I used Lemon Oil on my wood before inserting it in the bag.



Options for Finishing Strand Knitting Bag.



Here it is ready to go

While making this version I came across some new techniques, so I thought I would share them with you.

I found some neat caps for the end of my dowels at the local craft shop. They have a hole in the end, which is perfect for a 4 by $\frac{3}{4}$ brass screw. All you need do is drill out the bottom hole a bit, $\frac{1}{4}$ inch deep, to fit your 5/16 dowel. Slip the cap over the end and screw it on. This lets you remove it, so you can wash your bag.

They are pictured below.



Be sure to finish your wood pieces before the assembly process begins.

Note* I lemon oil my wood pieces several times before assembling them. You could also finish them with stain, vanish, or an acrylic Polyurethane finish.

Drawing Cord Instructions

1. With a safety pin in the end of the cord, draw it through the casing of one of the side extensions.
2. Bring it through the nearest Grommet.
3. Feed it through the Grommet at other end. **You will note in Fig 1, that I have slipped on an ornamental spool. This is just another opt.*



4. Now feed it through the other side extension casing.



5. Finish as shown. Opt. Slip on another ornamental wooden bead, etc.



6. Make sure that the side extension lay right along the edge of the lap panel as shown. Cut cord, overlap and stitch.



Fig. 5

7. Making sure that you lap panel is lying flat, work the join of the cord to the center of one of the side extension casing. Stitch in place, securing cord in casing.



Fig. 6

* Yellow head of pin marks the center join in this picture. *Opt. You can also stitch down cord to the opposite extension casing as well.



Fig. 7

8. This is what it should look like when you are done to this point.



Fig. 8

Now just slip in your dowels, screw on the caps, and you're done.

ENJOY!!!