Providence New Beginnings Maternity Cinch Bags

Materials: For Bag: ½ yard cotton or cotton-like fabric (45" wide)
                                                                -or-
                                                                2 fat quarters plus two 3" x 3" squares
                        Drawstrings: ¼ yard or 2" strips pieced to form 135" in length

Fabrics chosen must be gender- and culturally-neutral – bags may ultimately be used by other family members and should not be too feminine or "too baby". Plain fabrics always work, as do blenders and geometrics.

Cutting:
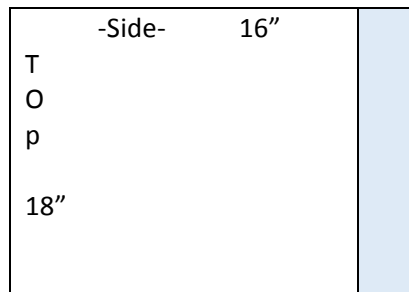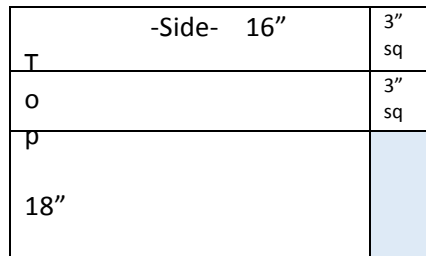Depending upon the materials you are using, cut either
                        a front and a back for the bag, each measuring about 18" x 16"   -or-
                        a rectangle measuring 18" x 32"
Also cut drawstring pieces, 2" wide and pieced to measure 132-135" plus two loop squares, each measuring 3" x 3". Drawstrings and loops may be made from same or coordinating fabric
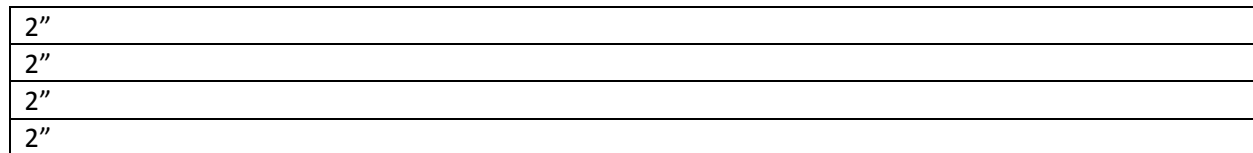
Possible Cutting Layout for Half-Yard Piece:

-Sides-　　　　　32"　　　　-Sides-	3" sq / 3" sq	7-10" leftover
T o p 18"		

Cutting Layout for Fat Quarters:

-Side-　16"	3" sq
T	3" sq
o	
p	
18"	

-Side-　　　16"	
T O p 18"	

Cutting Layout for Drawstrings:

2"
2"
2"
2"

40-42" need 4, 44-45" need 3

 Alternative: You may also stitch two or more fabrics together to form the front and/or back. Please finish all seams (zigzag or serge) and stitch seam allowances down. If there are "many" seams, consider an underlining to make the interior of the bag smooth.

Construction:

Loop Squares:
Fold the Loop Squares in half and press, to create a crease down the center. Unfold and press the two side edges in to the center crease, wrong sides together. Fold in half again, matching up the folded edges. Stitch along folded edges and, if desired, along other edge as well.
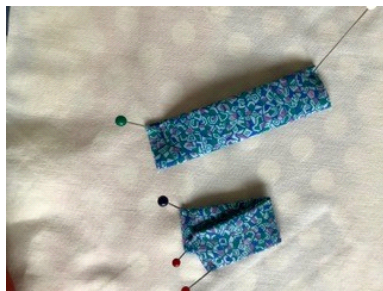

Preparation:
Finish the raw edges of the front and back of the bag by serging or zigzagging on all four sides.

On the wrong side of both front and back, mark a line 2" down from the top edge ("drawstring marks".) (If you are working with a single piece of 18"x32" fabric, these marks will be 2" in from each short edge.) Make another set of marks, at side edge, that are 3" below top edge.

Make marks on right side of fabric 1" from bottom of bag on each side of bag *back* only for placement of loop squares.   (If you are working with a single piece of 18"x32" fabric, you will need to find the center point of the 32" side and mark 1" away from that.)

 Fold loop squares in half, matching raw edges, and, with raw edges aligned, pin the loops at the 1" mark on the right sides of the bag back.

The Bag:
With right sides together, match up the front and back. Stitch the sides and bottom of the bag together, using ½" seam allowance, beginning and ending at the marks 3" below bag top. Backstitch over loop square for reinforcement. Press side seams open for about 4" below top of bag. Stitch seam allowances open for this 4" section to ease insertion of drawstring in casing.

Fold the top edge of the bag down on both sides, matching the top edge with the drawstring marks (2" below top) made earlier. Press and pin into place and sew along the finished edge of the casing. Turn bag right sides out.

Drawstring:

Stitch short ends of drawstring strips together to make strip ~135" long. Using the same technique as the 3" loops, put wrong sides together and press long edges together, making a crease at the center point. Open strip and press both raw edges up to meet at pressed center line. Fold pressed edges together and stitch along edge to form ½" wide drawstring. Cut in half to make 2 drawstrings, each about 66" long.

Finish:

To insert drawstrings, using a safety pin or a bodkin, put one of the drawstrings through one side of the casing and then bring it back on the other side of the bag. Have the excess drawstring ends approximately the same length.

Repeat this process with the other drawstring, EXCEPT, begin at the other end of the casings. When you are finished you will have two drawstring ends hanging down on each side of the bag.

On each side, put one drawstring end through the loop on that side. Overlap the raw end of the drawstring with the raw edge on the other end of the drawstring on the same side of the bag. Make sure the drawstrings are not twisted. (Ask me how I know this!) Stitch a "box" to join ends: