

How To Make A Pouch Sling

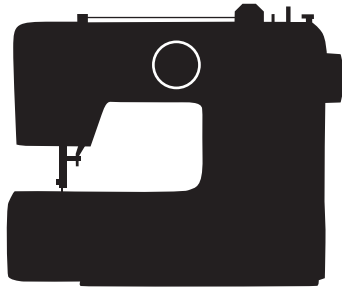
You Need:

Approximately 30" wide and 2 yards long
Approximately 75cm wide and 2 meters long

Exact length calculated in first few steps of tutorial!

This fabric is:

without any stretch
thick like men's pants
natural fibers like cotton or linen
machine washable



Sewing Machine

It is NOT recommended to hand-sew
weight bearing stitches.
Any basic full size machine should be fine.



Sewing Machine Needle

Heavy Duty or Denim Needle
Size 14-16


Start with a new needle and have backups!



Thread

Regular All Purpose
100% Polyester
Gutterman is a good recommended brand!

Symbols:

 sew here

 stitching from
previous steps

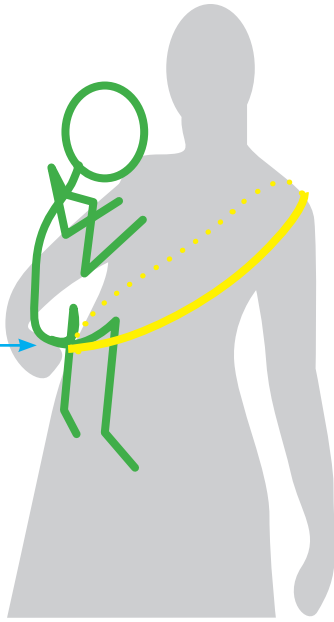
Step 1: Measuring for your sling

Pouch slings must be carefully sized to the wearer. A too-small sling is unusable, and a too-large sling is unsafe and uncomfortable.

Measure in a loop around the crest of your shoulder, around your torso, down to where you want baby's bum to be. This will be centered and high on your torso (likely at the bottom of your ribcage) for a small baby, and may be much lower (closer to your hip bone) and off center for a bigger baby who is sitting up on their own or a toddler.

This measurement will likely be somewhere in the range of 45-65 inches or 115-165 centimeters, but could be outside of this range if you are much smaller or much larger than average.

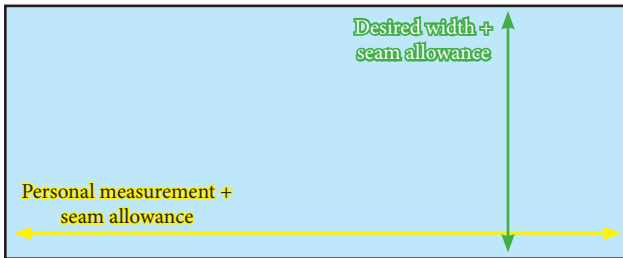
Desired location for baby's bum.
Hip or natural waist for older baby or toddler.
Front and center above waist for a smaller baby.
Toddler size shown.



Step 2: Cut your fabric

Add 2 inches or 5cm to the measurement from the above step. This will be your seam allowance for the french seam that will join the fabric into a loop.

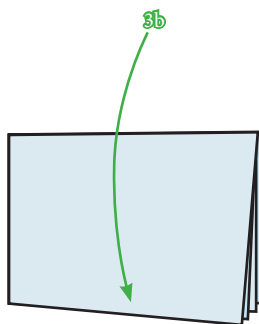
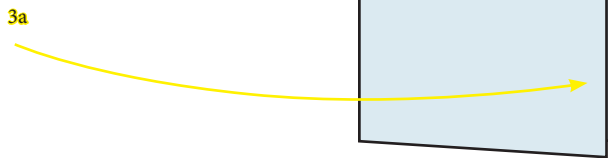
Cut your fabric to width, adding about 2 inches or 5cm for a hem seam allowance. A finished pouch sling can be as narrow as 20 inches or 50cm, but I find that a wider 30 inch or 75cm wide sling to be better. The extra width bunches along the rails and provides extra cushion.



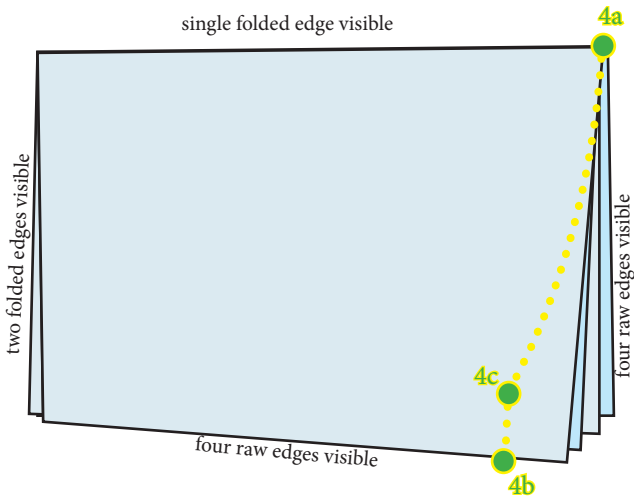
Step 3: Fold

Fold the fabric in half so the two short edges line up. (3a)

Then, fold the fabric in half again in the other direction so it is folded in quarters. (3b)



Step 4: Draw and cut the curve



Your folded fabric should be oriented so that along the top edge, you can only see a single fold of fabric. Along the left, you should see two folded edges. Along the right and the bottom, you can see all four raw edges.

The end you are cutting is the two short ends of the fabric, folded down on top of each other. The fold along the top is the centerline down the length of the sling.

Mark the top right corner right at the edge. (4a)

Along the bottom right, measure 2 inches or 5cm in to the left. Mark this point (4b) and draw a line straight up, parallel to the right edge, about 2 inches or 5cm. From this point (4c), draw a soft curve out to the top right point.

Cut along this line carefully.

Once you unfold it, you should have a long piece of fabric with the two short edges curved outwards. (4d)



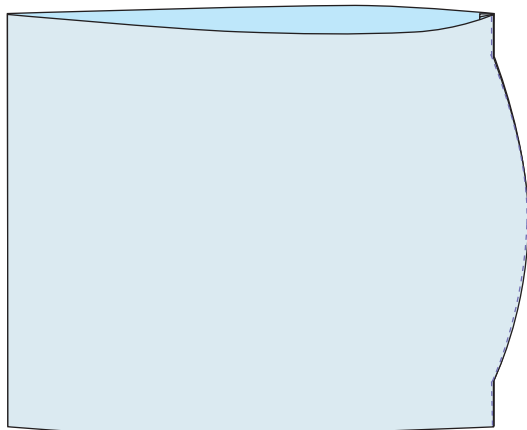
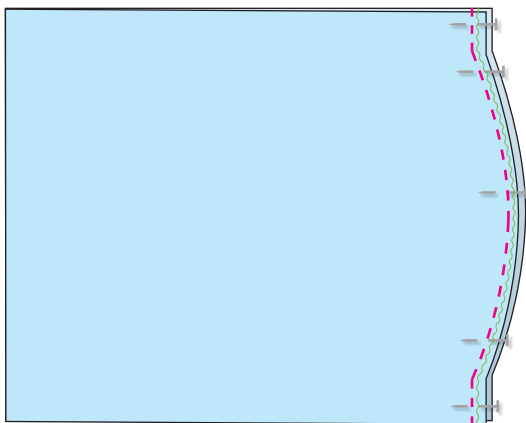
Step 5: Sewing the first seam

Fold it in half down the length again so that you have WRONG sides together (if it matters) and the two curves lined up. Pin the two curved edges together.

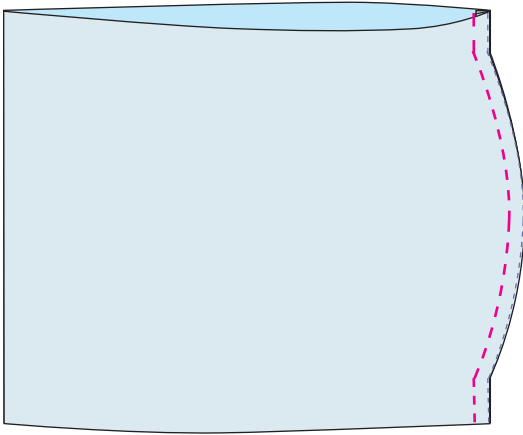
Using a straight stitch, sew a straight line of stitching along this edge leaving a narrow 1/4" or 1cm seam allowance.

If you are using a scrap of a woven wrap or a loosely woven jacquard tablecloth, you can run a tight line of zigzag stitching in this narrow seam allowance or use an overlocker to keep the edges from unraveling through the seams.

Remove the pins, turn the sling inside out, poke out the curves to make sure no fabric is bunched up inside, and iron the seam flat.



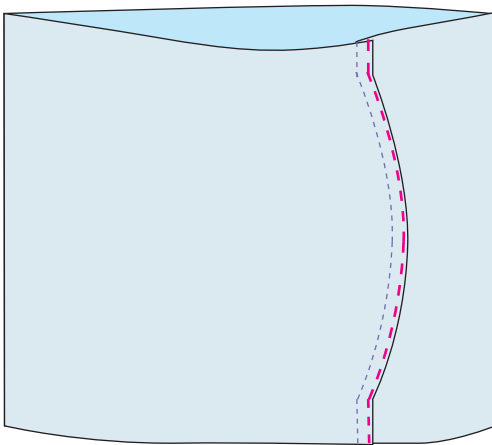
5a:



Step 5: Sewing the French seam

Sew another straight line of stitching along the curved edge again, this time leaving a 1/2" or 1.5cm seam allowance. Make sure the seam allowance is wide enough to completely encase the original seam allowance. (5a)

5b:



Optional: if you don't like the "flap" of fabric along the seam, lay it down to one side flat against the lining, iron it down, and run a line of stitching down the edge of the flap to keep it pinned down. (5b)

Step 6: Hem the edges

Fold each edge over 1/2 inch or 1cm and press with an iron, and then fold it over one more time and press. Pin or use hem clips if you prefer.

Sew a straight stitch around the inner fold of the hem. These stitches are not weight bearing, so feel free to use a decorative stitch or hand stitch if you prefer.

Hem Detail:

Fold and iron



Fold again and iron. Pin or clip if desired.



Sew.



Step 7: Putting it on and wearing

To put the sling on, put the sling on over one shoulder and under the other, with the seam in front of you. Baby's weight will be on the shoulder than the sling goes over, and if you want to wear baby off-center or on your hip, they will be on the opposite side. The seam should be wherever baby will sit: centered on your body for a small baby, and typically off to the side that goes under your arm for a larger baby or toddler. Smooth out the sling so that it isn't twisted anywhere around you, and bunch up the shoulder by your neck.

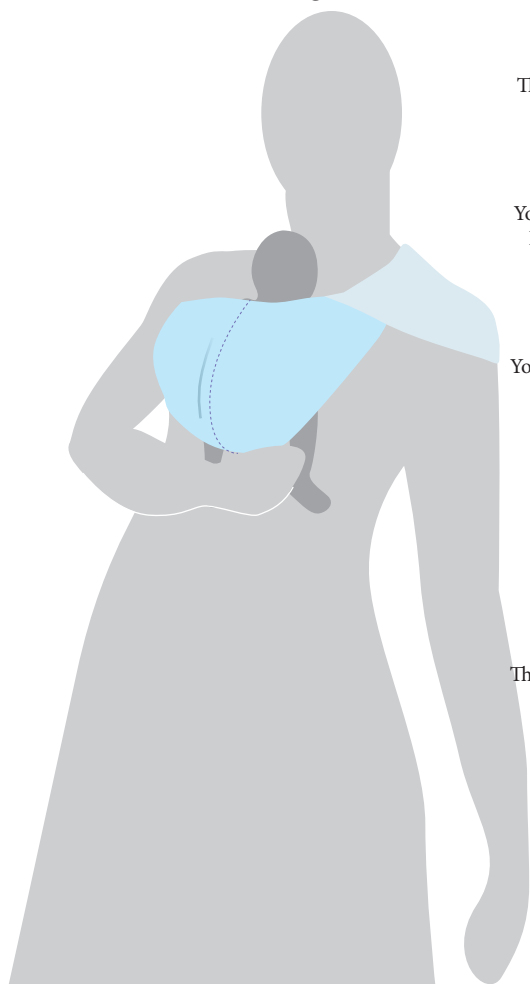
You can load baby into the sling from the top or bottom. Holding the top edge up at baby's neck (for a smaller baby) or right under their armpits (for an older baby or toddler who can sit up independently), position their knees up into an ergonomic "M" position, and then pull the remaining width of the fabric down and tuck it under their bottom. The fabric should support from one knee all the way to the other.

While still using one hand to hold the top edge in place and support most of baby's weight off the sling, use your other hand to pull the top rail that is by your neck down over your shoulder and down your arm, capping the shoulder. Experiment with where the excess width on the shoulder feels best; for me, I prefer most of the excess width bunched at the bottom across the top of my arm, and just a little bit bunched up by my neck. Capping the shoulder should tighten the top rail up to support baby's spine.

At this point, you should be able to relax the hand that is supporting baby's weight, and they should settle into a good seat, with their knees and bottom supported evenly and their spine held in a natural curved position. Their chest should be held gently but firmly against you. If they can lounge back and create a lot of excess space in between their chest and yours, the pouch may need a deeper curve to the seam. If your baby is positioned lower than you would naturally carry them in an upright position, the whole pouch is too big.

Safety note: while it is absolutely possible to safely use a pouch sling for a cradle-style carry that does not hold the baby in a fully upright position, it can be tricky to make sure that this style of carry is done correctly to ensure that baby's airway is protected. I would recommend only practicing this position with an experienced educator in your local babywearing group. Likewise, when wearing a newborn, it is helpful to work with an educator who can assure that the baby's body is properly positioned and the airway is open.

Newborn Positioning:



Tight

The carrier should fit snugly. You should not feel the need to support baby with your hands.

In View

You should clearly be able to see your baby's face. It should not be obscured, hidden, or covered with fabric.

Close Enough to Kiss

You should be able to kiss your child on the top of the head without straining your neck.

Keep Chin Off Chest

You should be able to easily fit two fingers between baby's chin and their chest to make sure their airway is not closed off.

Supported Back

The carrier should thoroughly support the natural curvature of the spine.

Toddler Positioning:

