Simple Gift Bags to Make

Getting the right size:

Measure the circumference of your gift and add a couple of inches wiggle room. Divide that number in half to get the flat width of one side.

Measure the height of your gift, and add 4" to 6" hem space to get the height of one side.

My bear gift is 24" round so I'll add 2" of wiggle room for 26" total and divide that by two to get 13" across. My bear is 16" high and I want substantial room for ribbon decorating so I will add 6" for a total of 22" high. My final side panel size is 13" x 22".

Making the bag

Cut two pieces of fabric (right sides together) the width and height of your measurement.

Right sides together, sew three sides giving a 3/8" seam or so. I have a serger so I can make a nice clean seam. You can choose to do a zigzag on the edge to clean it if you want. If you are using a low-fray fabric, you can skip edging.
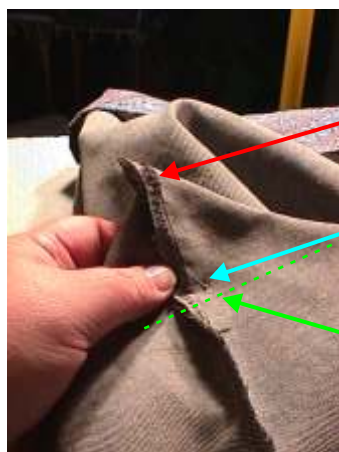
Finally, hem the opening of the bag. You can choose a thin hem, or, if you planned ahead and cut enough top space, you can make a large hem that allows the right-side of the cloth to show once you've applied the closing ribbon.

Then it is as simple as inserting your gift and choosing a variety of ribbon to use to close the top. I like to actually tack the center of the ribbon to the bag so that it stays on the bag when the bag is opened. I also like to play with the types, colors and sizes of ribbon.

Giving Depth to the Bag with a Gusset

To create a gusset (depth to your bag), on one bottom corner, flatten one side seam against the bottom seam. This will cause the bottom corner of the bag to a triangle. Measure in a couple of inches from the corner and pin the seams together then sew perpendicular to the seams across the triangle. Repeat this on the other bag corner. I then trim off the "triangle" to create a bottom side seam.

Flattening Side Seam and bottom seam causes a triangle

Measure in a couple of inches from the corner and pin the seams together

Sew perpendicular to the seams across the triangle.