

ACCESORIES: BAG MADE FROM PLASTIC BAGS



MATERIALS REQUIRED

Package, scissors and crochet hook.

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY

Very high.

APPROXIMATED TIME REQUIRED

10 hours.

LEARNING GOALS

How to make an eco-friendly tote bag.

ABILITIES DEVELOPED

Attention, determination, fine handling, accuracy, hand-eye dexterity, memory, creativity.

STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

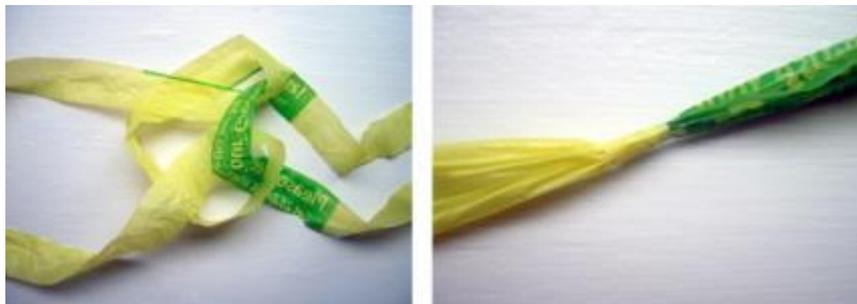
1. Flatten out your clean grocery bags and fold them in half. Cut off the handles.
2. Cut off the bottom of the bags. Place these cut off pieces into a pile for the recycling bin.



3. Flatten out the round piece of plastic you now have and fold it in half. Fold that into thirds. Fold that in half again. Cut this folded piece into 2 cm pieces, discarding the pieces from both ends. Lay 3 of the flat pieces and fold and cut them up together to save time, since we have so many bags to do. You can also cut them quickly on a cutting board with a rotary cutter and metal t-square.



4. Now we have created plastic loops that can be connected. Bring one loop through another.



5. Pull the other end of the loop through the end you just put through the first loop. They should now be connected.

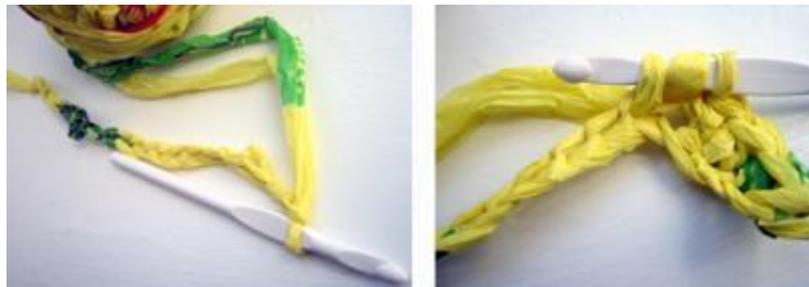


6. Slowly and with finesse, pull the loops tight. You want that connection to be as flat and smooth as possible. If your loop is weak and breaks simply put it in your recycling pile and go on to the next piece.



7. Wind your plan into a ball that feeds out of the center.

8. Create a slip knot and place it on your crochet hook.



9. Chain 20 stitches.

10. Stitch half double crochet for the body of the bag.



11. Crochet the tail in as you work.





12. Work in the round. No need to chain and turn, simply continue into the next stitch for the entire project.



13. After 4 rows of half double turn your work. It's now right-side-out and you will continue working to left instead of to the right like before you turned it.





14. Complete 14 rows of half double crochet. If your stitches are tighter or looser you may need to do more or less rows. The goal is to have your bag slightly wider than it is tall at this point.

15. Now you will use single crochet. Do 6 stitches of single crochet.



16. Now you're ready to make the first handle. Chain 20 stitches. Hold it up to the bag and see how you like that length. Want longer/shorter handles? Simply chain more/less stitches. Be careful not to twist your handle as you're chaining. Count 8 stitches from where the chain started on your work and attach your chain to the bag with a single crochet stitch.

17. Stich 12 single crochet stitches around to the other side.



18. Now you'll make the other handle. Chain 20, count 8 stitches along on your work, and attach the chain with a single crochet stitch, just like you did on the other side for the first handle. Make sure they look even. If not, find the place where they are even by holding the chain up to your bag and attach it there.

19. Now simply stitch single crochet all the way around and onto the handle, stitching into your chain stitches.





20. Continue stitching into your chain stitches, widening your handle.

21. Continue using single crochet and stitch along the other handle.



22. Stitch a few more single crochet stitches until you're at the fold of the bag and the top looks even. Slip stitch and finish the ends off by hiding them in the stitches on the inside of the bag.

23. Attach any decoration you want: flowers, butterflies, etc.





TIPS

When choosing bags, consider colour and texture. Try to keep all the bags the same density: some bags are stretchy, some are crunchy. It's best to keep your work consistent to achieve a good overall effect. When considering colour, think about combining different colour plastic bags to create a pattern of colour, random colour changes, or even create a look that doesn't reflect plastic at all. For example, brown plastic bags can look like raffia and not at all like the original material when crocheted.

While the pattern calls for a certain size crochet hook and a specific number of rows to stitch. Don't feel like you have to follow the pattern to the letter. The number of rows can differ from the pattern. The goal is to create a tote that is almost a perfect square, but not quite. You'll know when you've stitched enough rows when the height measures slightly less than the width before you've started crocheting the handles. This way you can use whatever size hook you're comfortable with, stitch as many rows as you need to make your tote look nice, and have fun doing it!

It is a complicated product to be done, so maybe extra support should be given to the participants, for instance to create the loops. Also, fingers might be damaged so take care that the trainees work well and they are really interested in crochet and in doing the bag.

Be sure that your participants are prepared to do it because it is quite complicated and takes a lot of time, so the task can be frustrating.