

The Ultimate Recycled Market Bag

by Amanda Steves



This bag has been pronounced, “the ultimate recycled market bag” by one of the managers at my local HEB supermarket, from which the *plarn* was obtained. *Plarn* is made from cut-up plastic bags, and this pattern uses those ubiquitous plastic grocery store bags.

The photo shows the bag loaded with 1/2 gallon of milk, a can of tomatoes, a package of veggie burgers, and 6 packs of M&Ms. It is very strong, and believe me, this bag can carry a lot more.

You can make 5 bags, fold 4 of them vertically, and slide them into the fifth one. It's easy to carry the set on your shoulder while shopping. Store them in the car so you'll have them when you need them.

Skill Level Easy

Yarn (for 1 bag)
plarn made from 20-25 lg grocery store bags

Additional Materials

- crochet hook: US M/9mm or N/10mm
- removable stitch marker

Finished Measurements

Unstretched: 10"/25.5cm x 10"/25.5cm

After Use: approx. 13"/33cm x 11"/28cm

Note: The bag will stretch when in use, and after the first use it will stay stretched out a bit, giving it a good working size for loading up and carrying on your shoulder.

Gauge Not necessary. Just try to work loosely to make it easier on your arms and hands.

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How to Make Plarn (PLastic yARN)

1. The easiest type of plastic bag to work with for this pattern, is the kind you get at the grocery store. It's not very stretchy, and it's fairly thin. Don't use produce bags--they're too thin.
2. Smooth the bag out flat. Fold it vertically 3 times, smoothing flat each time, until you've got it about 1 1/2" / 2.5cm wide.
3. With scissors, snip off the bottom seam and the handle section at the top. Save as packing material, or recycle.
4. Starting at one end of your folded bag, snip off 1/2" / 1cm sections. When unfolded, each will be a loop.
5. Connect the loops the way you would connect rubber bands. Lay out two loops with the left loop overlapping the right one. With your left hand, reach through the left loop, come up under the right loop, and grasp the overlapping right end of the left loop, then pull it back the way you came: down through the right loop and back up through the left loop, until tight--making sure the two sides of each loop are even. You can hold the last-made knot in your right hand to help with this. With plarn, don't pull too tight or the loops will break.
6. Keep adding loops on the left, using the last-connected loop on the right.
7. Roll the connected loops into a ball, and you have plarn!

Pattern Notes

- U.S. crochet terms are used in this pattern.
- Hook Size – if your plarn is wider than 1/2" / 1cm or made of thicker plastic than an ordinary grocery bag, you might need a larger hook, such as N/10mm or P/15mm.
- Spiral Rounds – the bag is worked in continuous rounds in a spiral. A removable marker is placed in the last stitch of the round, and at the end of the next round, there's no chaining or connecting. Just work the stitch before the marker, move the marker to the loop on the hook, and proceed with the next round.

Pattern

Bag

Foundation Ring: Ch 3, sl st to first ch to form a circle, place stitch marker in loop on hook.

Rnd 1: Work 10 dc into the circle, pm in lp on hk.

Rnd 2: Work 2 dc into each st, pm in lp on hk (there will be 20 st in this round).

Rnd 3: [Dc in first st, 2 dc in next st], repeat across round, pm in lp on hk (30 st in this round).

Rnd 4: [Sc in first st, ch 2], repeat across round, pm in lp on hk (30 loops in this round).

Rnd 5: [Sc in first loop, ch 2], repeat across round, pm in lp on hk.

Repeat Rnd 5 for 18 more times, for a total of 20 loop rounds including Rnd 4 and Rnd 5.

Top

Rnd 1: 2 sc in each loop across round, pm in lp on hk (60 st in this round).

Rnd 2: Sc across round, pm in lp on hk. Do not cut the plarn. Continue with the foundation chain for the first handle, below.

Handles

Foundation Chain: Ch 37 *loosely*.

Row 1: Starting in 2nd loop from hook, sc across to top of bag, sc in the top of bag st that's next to beginning of chain.

Row 2: On inside of bag, sc in the top of bag st where you started chaining, sc in the top of bag st on the other side of the chain, sc up the other side of the foundation chain, connect the loose end of the handle 1/4 of the way around to the top of the bag with 3 sc sts on the inside top, sc another 1/4 around top of bag.

Repeat for second handle--make a new foundation chain and work Rows 1-2.

Tie off, remove stitch marker, and work in ends.

Important: Be sure the handles are attached very firmly.

Care

Bags made of plarn can be machine washed on the gentle cycle, in cold or warm water. Air dry. They will melt in the dryer.

Stitch Abbreviations

ch – chain stitch

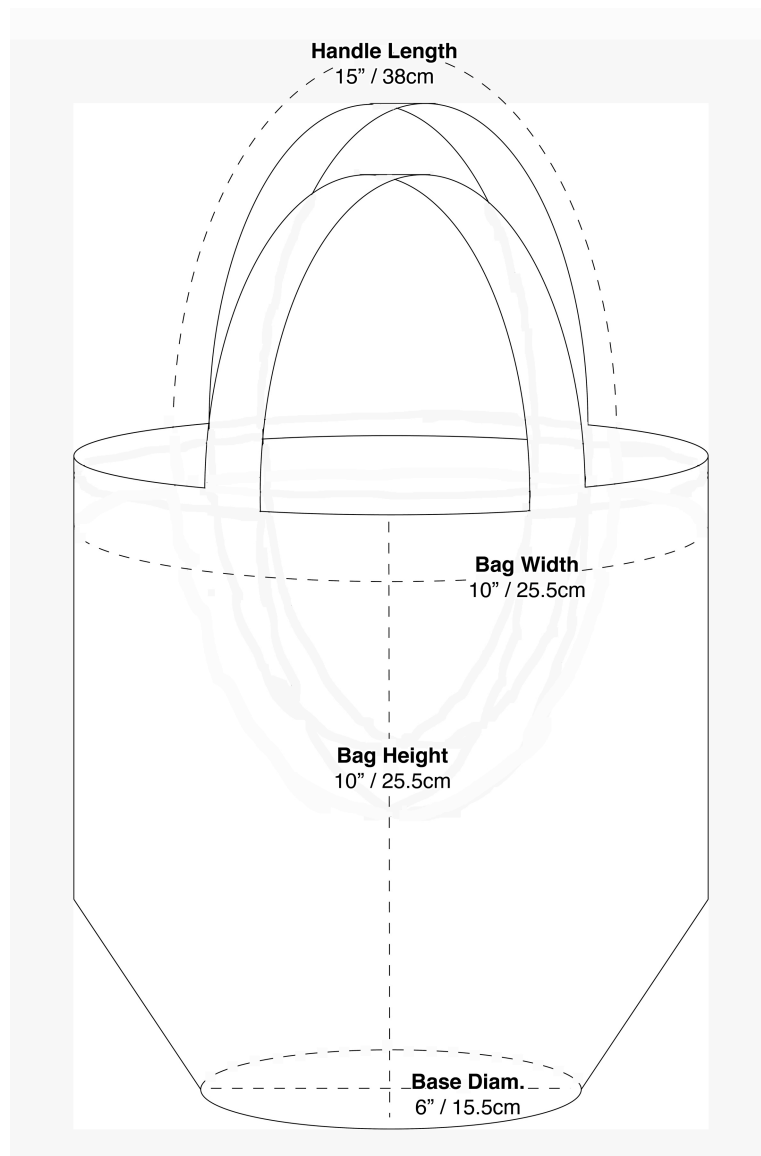
dc – double crochet

pm in lp on hk – place marker in loop on hook

sc – single crochet

sl st – slip stitch

Schematic: measurements are of bag before use.



Check my blog for tips and variations on this pattern.
<http://amandashappyhearth.blogspot.com/>