

Recycled Plastic Yarn (Plarn) Crocheted Tote Bag

Measurement of finished bag: (approximate)

Bottom: 6" X 15"

Body: 12" X 16"

Handles: 3 ½" wide attaching to body,
narrowing to 2" at top, widening again to 3 ½"

Handles: about 25" long

Crochet hook: N 15 (or M 16 can work too)

Material: used plastic bags

See attached instruction page for making "plarn".

Use double strand of looped plastic bags.



Abbreviations:

st = stitches

ch = chain

sc = single crochet

de st=decrease a stitch

in st=increase a stitch

Directions:

Bottom:

Ch 22 st. Sc in 3rd ch from hook. Continue sc in each ch to end of row.

Row 1: Ch 1, turn, sc 1 into the first sc st, sc in each st to end of row.

Row 2-?: Repeat row 1 until bottom is 6" wide and 15" long.

Body:

Sc 1 more st. in the last you just completed in the last row. You are forming the corner. Sc until you reach the next corner. Sc 2 st into the second corner st. Sc along the second edge of the bottom until you reach the third corner. Sc 2 st into the corner st. Sc to the fourth corner which you have already formed the corner.

Row 2: Continue in sc around the bag until you reach the desired height, between 12"-14".

Do not increase at the corners.

*Tips**You will begin to notice that the rows around the bottom will begin turning up slightly. This is good, as you are now starting the formation of the sides. In fact, you want the sides to stand vertical so you can keep it looking uniform, counting st per sides may not keep it looking uniform. The plastic bags are not all the same thickness, the bulkier ones taking up more space in a st than the thin ones. You may have to decrease st rather than add them. As you work, the piece should stand up on it's own without the opening becoming smaller than the size of the bottom. If you see that the sides seem "floppy", or wider than the bottom, you may need to decrease a st or two on the long sides of the bag.*

***To decrease a st, skip one st and sc in the next one. If you need to reduce more than one sc on the long side, evenly space the decreases, possibly reducing one or two st each row on the long sides. Spreading out the decreases will keep a "waist" from forming in your bag. If you need to increase because you notice the bag pulling together to much where you are working, sc (2) st in same st, spacing them evenly along the long sides. Again, spread out the increases over several rows so as not to get it looking to full or wide in proportion to the other rows.*

Handles: (one handle should begin and end on the same side of the bag)

With the bag lying flat, measure about 3 or 4" from both sides of the bag toward the center of the last completed row. Place markers where the handle will begin and end, by pulling a detached plastic loop with your hook through a st at the 3 or 4" spot. Turn the bag over and do the same with the other side of the bag. Pick up the loose ends of all four loops and hold the bag up to see if it balances properly and the handles will be evenly spaced. If not, move the marker loops a st or two to the rt. or left to balance the bag.

Row 1: Sc to the first marker. Pull out the detached loop and sc 7 st, ch 1.
 Row 2-3: Turn and sc 7 st, ch 1.
 Row 4: Turn, sc 2 st, de 1 st, sc 3, ch1.
 Row 5-7: Turn, sc 6 st, ch 1.
 Row 8: Turn, sc 1 st, de 1 st, sc 3, ch 1.
 Row 9-10: Turn, sc 5 st, ch 1.
 Row 11: Turn, sc 1 st, de 1 st, sc 2 st, ch 1.
 Row 12-20 Or until total length of handle is 12 or 13": Turn, sc 4 st, ch 1.
 Row 21-28: Turn, sc 4 st, ch 1.
 Row 29: Turn, sc 2 st, sc 2 st in next st, sc 1 st, ch 1.
 Row 30: Turn, sc 5 st, ch 1.
 Row 31-32: Turn, sc 5 st, ch 1.
 Row 33: Turn, sc 2 st, sc 2 st in the next st, sc 2 st, ch 1.
 Row 34-35: Turn, sc 6 st, ch 1.
 Row 36: Turn, sc 3 st, sc 2 st in the next st, sc 2 st, ch1.
 Row 37-39: Turn, sc 7 st, ch 1.
 Row 40: Attaching the end to the bag. See following directions.

Removing the hook, place the right (or outside) of the handle against the right (or outside) of the bag, placing the edge of the handle next to the marker. (Sc right sides together of the handle and tote, puts the ridge seam on the inside of the bag instead of on the outside.). Sc 7 st of the handle to the bag, continuing around the top of the bag to the other side and stopping when reaching the marker for the second handle.

Follow the above procedure for the second handle. When the second handle is attached to the bag, sc a few st past the attached handle. Weave the end into the finished bag.

Things to think about:

1. *The material you are using is inconsistent, so you may have to decrease st or increase st.*
2. *Stretch and shape the bag as you crochet it.*
3. *The material will probably not let you crochet with a tight stitch. Pull up on the stitches while they are on the hook, to keep them loose. If you stretch too tightly, the plastic will stretch and possibly break.*
4. *Stray loops show up if you accidentally drop one of the 4 strands you are using or if the new loop wasn't centered on the loop in which you were crocheting. Just sc it into the next row and it won't be noticed.*
5. *To get the random color look, I cut up a variety of colored bags and dumped them all in a large paper bag, mixing them so that when I pulled out a handful, the color was assorted as I attached them.*
6. *Remember, this project is for USED bags.*
7. *If you "google" online you'll find a number of patterns for plastic bag art.*