

free projects

Fused Recycled Bag Tote



Want something useful to do with all those plastic shopping bags that pile up? Try this handy tote! First, you cut up and iron layers of bags into a sturdy, fused “fabric.” Then you cut the tote front, back, and side pieces and sew them together with easy external seams and zigzag stitching. What a simple way to help save the Earth—you’ll get raves from all your recycling friends!

Project was created by Leisure Arts in-house designer Kelly Reider for our sister Web site, www.i-Createit.com. For more ideas on going “green” and exercising your creative conscience, click on the i-Createit/Causes column.

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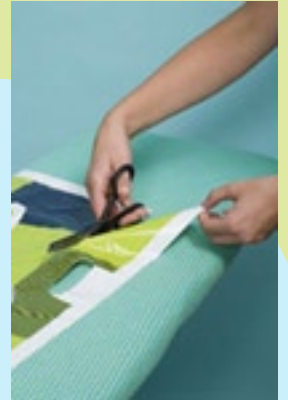
Fused Recycled Bag Tote

1. Gather your supplies.

- plastic shopping bags (We used Target and Old Navy because they're made of heavier plastic.)
- scissors
- parchment paper
- iron and ironing surface

2. Prepare your bags.

- Lay bag out flat.
- Trim off bottom and handles.
- Open bag and turn inside out so ink doesn't smear and make a huge mess during the ironing process.
- Make a stack of at least 6 bags. If you want particular inked words or patterns from the bags to be a part your design, place them right side facing with at least 1 bag over them in the stack to preserve the ink.



3. Fusing your bags.

- Place enough parchment paper under and over your bags to cover them.
- Iron one side of the parchment paper for a few seconds using a med-high temperature. (You may want to experiment with some scrap bag pieces until you get a feel for the right temp and ironing time needed for fusing with your iron.) Then, flip the bags and iron the other side for a few seconds. Be careful! The bags get hot...
- Peel back a corner of parchment paper to make sure that the bags have fused completely. The resulting fused bags should have a bumpy or wrinkled texture.
- Peel parchment paper off fused bags.

4. Fuse enough bags to cut the following pieces from:

- Cut 2—14" x 14" squares for tote front and back
- Cut 2—2" x 14" rectangles for the tote handles
- Cut 3—5½" x 14" for tote sides and bottom

5. Assemble your tote bag.

- Use external seams and a zigzag stitch on your sewing machine to attach sides to front and back.
- Zigzag bottom to sides, front and back.
- Fold in edges of handles and zigzag down the center of each handle.
- Fold over the top edges of the tote and zigzag around the edge, inserting handles where desired on front and back.

