



Operation Bed Roll:

Conserve, Crochet, Care

A partnership between City of Greensboro Field Operations and the Police Department



How to Make Plarn (Plastic Bag Yarn):

The following is a tutorial on how to create plarn in a few steps, with scissors or with a rotary cutter and cutting mat. Visit www.greensboro-nc.gov/plarn for links to instructional videos.

Materials needed

- clean plastic bags
- scissors, or a rotary cutter and cutting mat

Tips and Tricks

- Plarn is very forgiving, so you don't need to worry about being exact. Cutting wide strips makes it less likely to break when you are crocheting.
- If a plarn loops break, simply knot the ends together.
- For projects that require a lot of plarn, it is easier to cut many bags at once, then sit and loop them together.
- Store plarn string in a reusable grocery bag. It won't tangle like regular yarn, so it doesn't need to be balled up.

Scissor Method

Step 1.

Lay plastic bag flat, neatly tuck in the folds of the bag so it is smooth, flat, and rectangular. The easiest way to do this is to stick one finger in the corners and pull on the handle at the same time. Do this for both sides.



Step 2.

Fold plastic bags lengthwise.



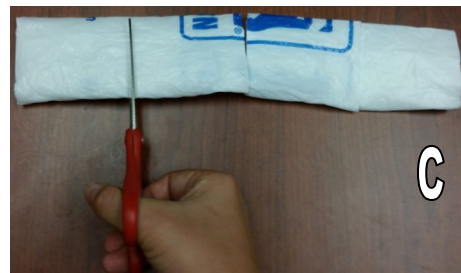
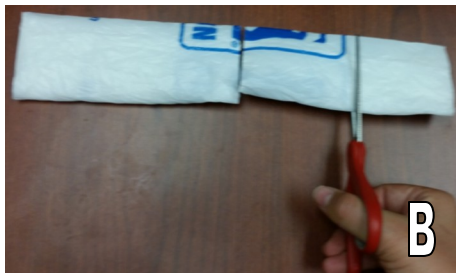
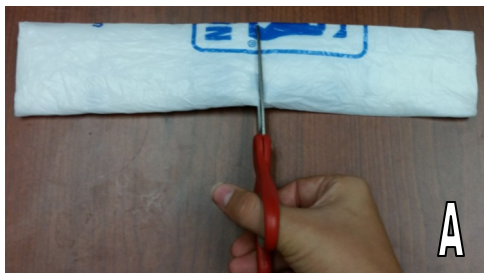
Step 3.

Cut off the handles and the bottom seam of the bag. Be sure to collect the plastic remnants to be recycled at a local store.



Step 4.

Cut horizontal bag in quarters.



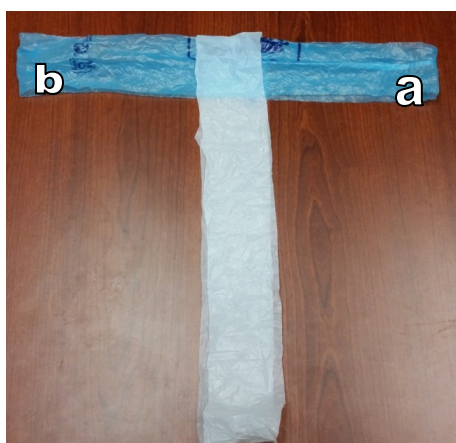
Step 5.

Unfold strips. You should have four loops per bag. **Tip:** If you didn't get loops, make sure that you are cutting the bags horizontally, from side to side, not top to bottom.



Step 6.

To loop the plarn together, you will use a lark knot. Feed one loop into the other to make a "T" shape.



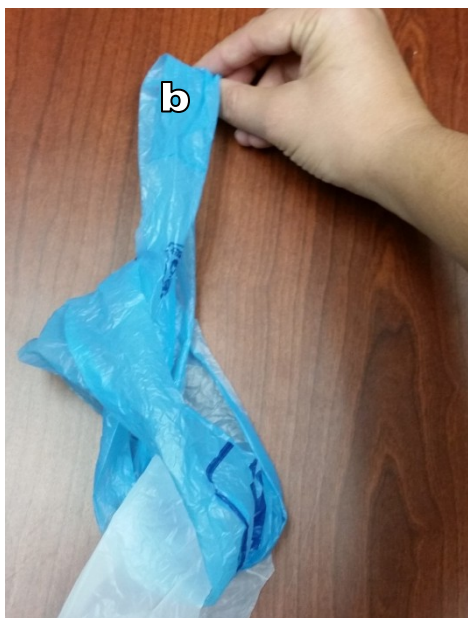
Step 7.

Reach through the "a" end of the horizontal loop, then grab the "b" end.



Step 8.

Pull the "b" end of the loop through the "a" end of the loop.



Step 9.

Continue to pull until you have a small knot. **Tip:** Be careful not to pull too hard or the plastic will rip.



Step 10.

Repeat Steps 6-9 with the remaining loops to create a plarn string.



Rotary Cutter Method

Rotary cutters provide a faster way to create plarn. Be cautious when letting young crafters use rotary cutters.

Step 1.

Lay your plastic bag flat with the folds tucked in. (See Step 1 of Scissor Method for illustration.)

Step 2.

Layer bags on an appropriate cutting mat. Make sure that the bottom seams line up evenly. **Tip:** You can cut up to about 10 bags at a time once you learn this method.

Step 3.

Cut off handles and bottom seams of the bags. Collect the scraps to recycle.



Step 4.

Cut bags into quarters.



Step 5.

Follow Steps 5-10 of the Scissor Method to create your plarn string.

Plastic Bag 101

Here is your not-so-fun fact of the day: Plastic Bags have a “use lifetime” of 15 minutes. These bags are designed to be used to carry your newly purchased items from the checkout to your car, then inside your home.

What happens next?

Most people think that because they are made of plastic that the bags can be put in your recycling bin at home. Many plastic bags even have the recycling symbol printed on them. But plastic bags are not recyclable through Greensboro’s residential recycling program. They have to be taken back to the grocery stores to be recycled.

If plastic bags go in your recycle bin, they wreak havoc at the recycling processing centers. Plastic bags, sheets, tarps, electrical cords, hoses, and other items called “tangles” do just what their nickname suggests — they tangle around the machinery that sorts the recyclables.

They tangle so much that the assembly-line style plant must shut down four or more times a day to have employees climb in and around spokes, cogs, and other dangerous mechanisms to cut the tangles out.

Now that you’re armed with this knowledge, spread the word!