

Draw-string bag

This is an easy project for beginners, and a fun way to use up scrap yarn.

With this project you will learn:

- how to cast on and knit in the round
- how to do an eyelet row (includes the elusive yarnover)
- how to do a three-needle bind off
- how to knit an I-cord (so fun!)
- how to make fringes (optional)

For the Draw-string Bag, you will need the following:

- 2.5 ounces, or 150 yards, of worsted weight yarn
- a circular needle 16" in length, in whatever size the yarn label recommends
- two double pointed needles, in the same size as the circular needle
- a tapestry needle
- a crochet hook (if you want to add fringes to the end of the drawstring)

The finished bag weighs approximately 2.5 ounces, and uses approximately 145 yards of yarn.

This is a good project for leftover yarn, but if you want to acquire a new yarn for the project, get at least 150 yards of a worsted weight. I recommend you make your first bag with worsted weight yarn. Bear in mind that the skinnier the yarn, the longer it takes to knit. Once you make one pouch, you will understand how to adapt the pattern to make a larger or smaller pouch. But to start things off, make life easy and use worsted. The sample pouch that I made was knitted with Encore Plymouth Worsted Weight yarn using a size 8, 16" circular needle and two size 8 dpns for the I-cord.

Okay, okay, no more chatting. Time to get down to business.

Instructions

For the basic bag, it does not matter if you wind up with an even or odd number of stitches. The three-needle bind off will work the same either way. The number of stitches you cast on will make a difference later on if you decide to make a bag using a particular stitch pattern, such as a basketweave stitch.

For the basic bag, cast on enough stitches on your 16" circular needle that you can join to work in the round with some slack. When you get to eyelet round, you are going to reduce the number of stitches by approximately 40%. This is why you need some slack when you cast on and knit the top of the bag.

With worsted weight, you should cast on 100-120 stitches.

Join for knitting in the round, place a marker (a stitch marker, or a bit of scrap yarn tied around the needle) to mark the beginning of the round, and knit until you have 2-3".

Now it's time to do the eyelet round. For one row only, you will do this:

YO (yarn over), slip 1 stitch as if to knit, knit two together, and pass the slipped stitch over the stitch you just made. Repeat for the whole round: YO, slip one, k2tog, pass the slipped stitch over the stitch you just made.

When you get through the eyelet round stop.

Stop.

The hard part is over. Now all you do is knit. For the first round after the eyelets, the YO stitches will look odd to you. Don't worry about it. Just knit it as if it's a normal stitch.

Knit until the bag is as long as you want it to be, reserving yarn for the bind off and the I-cord, if you want to make an I-cord.

Three needle bind off:

1. Turn the bag inside out.
2. Arrange the stitches on your circular needle, with half of the stitches moving toward on one side of the needle and half moving toward the other side of the needle. Both points of the circular needle will be facing in the same direction, the stitches parallel to each other.
3. If you have an even number of stitches, do this:
 1. Hold the circular needle with the two points lined up in your left hand
 2. With you right hand, use the dpn and knit 2 stitches together from each needle
 - a. The dpn will be going through one stitch on each needle.
 3. Knit two stitches from each needle again
 4. Pass the second stitch on the dpn over the first
 5. Repeat
 - a. You will never have more than two stitches on the dpn. If you start to k2tog off the circular needle and you already have two stitches on the dpn, STOP. It means you did not pass the second stitch over.

6. When you get to the end of the stitches, cut the yarn, and use your tapestry needle to thread through the last stitch, and then weave the end into the bottom of the bag.
- b. If you have an odd number of stitches, do this:
 - i. Same as above, only you will start it off a bit differently.
 1. Using you dpn, slip the one stitch onto the dpn
 2. Knit two stitches together, one off each needle
 3. Pass the single stitch over the two stitches you just knitted together
 4. Repeat from step 2 for the even number of stitch bind off

I-cord

You will need two dpns for this, the same size as the circular needle, or smaller. Do not use a bigger dpn!

1. Cast on 2 or 3 stitches, depending on how thick you want the I-cord to be:
2. Knit the stitches
3. Slide them to the other end of the needle
 - a. ****DO NOT TURN THE NEEDLE AROUND**** I know you want to, but don't.
4. Knit the stitches again¹
5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 until the cord is as long as you want it to be
6. Bind off the two or three stitches, break the yarn, and weave the end into the I-cord
7. Thread the I-cord through the bag.

The draw-string bag is versatile inasmuch as gauge is not terribly important, you can experiment with different stitch patterns to make the bag more interesting, and you can either make an I-cord to thread through the bag, or use some ribbon. You can decorate the bag with crocheted or knitted flowers, or more ribbon, or whatever you have on hand. It's a small project, so you don't need much of any one material. Once you have made the basic bag, play around and be creative.

¹ As you knit the I-cord, you are wrapping the yarn around the back of the work, which makes the work bind around itself to form a cord. You are not knitting back and forth as you normally would. It sounds complicated in print, but when you see it in action, you will realize how simple it is. Promise!