

Twice-Recycled Bag

Carry-all tote bag with a (mostly) square bottom, straight sides, and criss-cross handles.



Yarn: You will need four colors of an Aran-Weight yarn. I used Elsebeth Lavold's Twice Tweed (purchased at [Knitting Today](#)), three skeins of color 0009 Black Pepper (a very dark brown), and two skeins each of these: color 0004 Lacquer Red, color 0010 Floe Blue, color 0011 Prussian Blue.

Gauge: 18 stitches = 4 inches, 24 rows = 4 inches. Gauge is not critical, but if your gauge is different, then you'll end up with a different sized bag.

Needles: Size 7 circular needles (29" long), size 7 double pointed needles, and a tapestry needle to weave in loose ends, and some stitch holders.

Pattern Notes: You will start by knitting a square bottom, knit up the sides, knit the two handles up from each of the four sides, kitchener stitch the handles. *Then the fussy work begins.* You will edge the handles with i-cord. Then it's time to emphasize the squareness of the bag by knitting i-cord around the bottom, and doing some embroidery on the sides.

How to knit this bag:

Bottom: (measures 9¼ x 8¾) With circular needle cast on 44 stitches with the main color (I used the Black Pepper) and work stockinette stitch back and forth until piece is mostly square. Leave stitches on the needle and do not break the yarn. **If you want, you can use the less-stretchy linen stitch on the bottom which is what I used, but you can google that.**

Sides: Starting at the corner of the bottom with the last stitch knit, pick up roughly 44 stitches along each side, join and change to darker (Prussian Blue) yarn color. Work 15 rows. **(as you can see, I put a lace pattern in the middle of those 15 rows, but I was tired of it and couldn't imagine doing it a few more times, so I abandoned it, making it a design feature!)** Change to Lacquer Red, knit 15 more rows. Repeat this for the Black Pepper yarn (15 more rows) and the Floe Blue (15 more rows). I decreased a few stitches at the corners as I went up the bag and had 168 stitches. The bag is about 10 inches high.

Handles: Joining the Black Pepper yarn, knit one row and place stitch markers at each corner. From this point, you will be working each quadrant (42 stitches) separately, binding off and decreasing for handles. Start on one quadrant, and working back and forth bind off 11 stitches. Knit to next marker, turn and bind off 11 more stitches in purl. Continue working this handle portion by decreasing one stitch at each edge every other row until only 10 stitches remain. Knit these 10 stitches until this part of the handle is 9 inches long (or desired length), leaving the 10 stitches on a stitch holder. Repeat this for the quadrant *opposite* this one, and then use kitchener stitch to join the handle halves seamlessly (look up kitchener stitch tutorials on youtube). Repeat for other two quadrants (which should be *opposite* one another).

Embellish: Using lacquer red yarn and double pointed needles, work i-cord around the bottom square of the bag, leaving a yarn tail to help join the i-cord beginning & end. Using Prussian Blue yarn, start at one corner of the bag and work i-cord edging around the handles. This is sort of a moebius effect, in that while working the edging you will go round twice and end up where you started. Finally, work simple embroidered x's on the corners of the bag in colors of your choice.

One Last Note: I purchased a small plastic crate to help give the bottom of this bag some shape.