



# The Newspaper Carrier's Bag

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Sketched-On-A-Napkin Designs

*An Original Pattern for Needleworks, Inc.*

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As seen on the left, the original version is styled like the old-fashioned canvas bags carried by paperboys (and papergirls). This bag is useful for toting lots of yarn. The version pictured on the right is a variation with handles that carries like a purse, with lots of novelty yarn to create a fantastic, one-of-a-kind accessory.

## Materials

**Yarn:** Two strands of worsted weight wool or other fiber suitable for felting throughout. Quantities are unknown, making this project ideal for a stash buster. Use yarns you have on hand and supplement as needed. Excellent yarns for felting include Noro Kureyon, Cascade 220, Lamb's Pride, and Galway. Be sure to avoid superwash wools and be aware that not all colors felt equally well, in part because the bleaching process used for lighter colors inhibits felting. Feel free to add novelty yarns as one of the two strands (or in addition to the two strands if it is very thin). Although the novelty yarns do not typically felt, the felting process makes them "pop out" of the surface, especially eyelash yarns, creating a very dramatic effect.

**Needles:** 29" circular Size US #11

**Notions:** 4 stitch markers of one color, 1 stitch marker of a contrasting color

## Abbreviations

**CO** = Cast On; **ST** = Stitch(es); **K** = Knit; **P** = Purl; **YO** = Yarn Over; **K2tog** = Knit 2 Together; **SSK** = Slip-Slip-Knit (slip 2 sts knitwise, return to left needle, and knit them together through the back); **BO** = Bind Off.

## Instructions

### Starting Top of Bag

CO 120 (140, 160) sts. PM and join into round without twisting. Knit in the round, changing yarn and placing stripes as desired. When the work measures 15" (20", 25") or desired depth (allowing for felting), begin shaping bottom.

*Hint: When knitting in the round with two different yarns (as opposed to two strands of the same yarn), you will see that each stitch forms two loops that lie side-by-side on the right-hand needle. When you knit into the stitch on the next round, the loop that was to the left of the two will be brought to the surface of the fabric. When felted, this color will dominate. To get the full effect of both yarns, therefore, be sure to allow the two yarns to "change places" occasionally as you knit.*

### Shaping Bottom

Rnd 1: Purl one round, placing four markers as follows: P6 (7, 8); PM; P48 (56,64); PM; P12 (14, 16); PM; P48 (56,64); PM; P to end of rnd.

*Hint: After placing these markers, follow the line of sts up to the cast-on edge at the top and place four markers there as well to aid in attaching the carrying strap in the correct place.*

Rnd 2: Knit this round, but work K2tog before and after each corner marker. You may alternate between K2tog and SSK if you chose, but the difference will not show once the bag is felted.

Repeat these two rounds, which will produce a garter stitch bottom for the bag that is thicker and sturdier, until you have only 2 sts remaining of the original 12 (14, 16) sts between the markers on the sides of the bag. Arrange all of the remaining stitches on two needles and create the bottom seam either by using the Kitchener stitch or by doing a three-needle bind-off on the wrong side (inside) of the bag to join the two sides.

#### Shoulder Strap Version

At the top of the bag, pick-up and knit 12 (14, 16) sts at one end of bag. Work in garter stitch or seed stitch (so that the strap will not curl) until the strap is the desired length. Although the strap will shorten somewhat as it felts, it will not shrink as much as you might expect. It will also stretch somewhat with use of the bag.

You may attach the other side of the strap in one of three ways. First, you may bind off and attach it by sewing it down with two strands of yarn. Second, you may pick-up and knit 12 (14, 16) sts from the opposite side of the bag and attach these sts to the live stitches on the end of the strap using the Kitchener st or a three-needle bind-off.

#### Handles/Purse Version

CO 9 sts and repeat the following row until the handle is the desired length, then bind off.

Row 1: K5, Sl4 wyif, turn

Knit a second handle and sew the handles to opposite sides of the bag.

#### Felting

Felt your bag. There are a number of good directions for felting (as well as an entire book devoted to the subject).

*Hint: Essentially, you want to subject the knitting to three factors: heat, agitation, and water. Many people choose to felt in the washing machine, but be sure to place the knitting inside a lingerie bag or zippered pillow case to keep the fibers that are shed in the process from being caught in the motor and valves of the washing machine, which can cause leaking and require a service call. Check the progress of the felting every 5 or 10 minutes — you can always felt more but can't ever reduce the felting that has already occurred. For this project, though, it is hard to over-felt the bag because you generally want a sturdy, thoroughly felted result. I prefer Eucalan Wool Wash to any soap for felting because it does not need to be rinsed.*

Hang your bag from the strap to dry and take it to Needleworks to show it off and fill it full of wonderful new yarns!