



### Vintage Pillowcase Grocery Tote Tutorial

Vintage or thrifted pillowcases are readily available and highly affordable at most charity shops. This tutorial will show you how to turn one standard case into a very functional tote for shopping using every bit of the case, minimal sewing, minimal cutting and very little of your time.

#### Materials

1 standard vintage pillowcase  
sewing machine  
heavy duty thread,  
coordinating or contrasting  
iron, warmed and ready to go  
scissors

#### Basics to keep in mind while sewing

Back stitch at the beginning and end of each seam or hem, always!

Seam allowances are your preference or are otherwise noted.  
Have fun!

If you make one of these totes I would love to see it! Email me a picture at [spiderwomanknits@gmail.com](mailto:spiderwomanknits@gmail.com) or feel free to add yours to the flickr group <http://www.flickr.com/groups/vintagegrocerytote/>

This tutorial is for personal use only! Please do not sell totes made with this tutorial, I'll be very sad :( Please link back if you decide to share this tutorial with others. I hope you enjoy making these and don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns regarding the tutorial.



Let's start! Cut the hemmed edge off of the pillowcase taking care not to cut into the factory stitching as shown in the photos above. Set aside. (We will use this piece to make the straps later.)

Turn the case inside out and straight stitch across the open end leaving an opening to turn the case right side out again.



Turn your case right side out and top stitch your seam, closing the opening as you go along. Taking your hemmed edge, start to pull each side outwards separating one side of your pillowcase from the other. At the same time tuck the hemmed edge inside, forming a double layer to your bag as shown in the photos above.

Your hemmed edge will represent the center base of your bag on the inside and your bag will now be half it's height and double layered as shown in the photo below. Make sure your bag is the same height on both sides.







Now we are going to form the base of your bag. Turn your bag inside out so the hemmed edge is out. Make sure that your bag is still even and that all your corners are tucked into each other as shown in the photo on the left. Your bag is still double layered just inside out. Smooth it out. Stick your hand into each corner poking it into a triangular point as shown in the photo of the right.



Stitch about 2" in to form a corner seam as shown in the photo above. Repeat with your other corner.



Turn your bag right side out. This is what each corner should look like from the inside (left photo) and from the outside (right photo).

The base of the bag is done! Now we are going to make the handles and attach them to complete the tote!



Taking the piece of pillowcase edge you set aside before, cut in half right at the factory seam as shown in the photo on the left. Now you will have one long strip/tube. Fold that strip in half and cut at the fold so that now you have two equal strips/tubes. As shown in the photo on the right. Trim as close to the factory stitching as possible along the long edges, taking care not to cut into the stitching.

Now, you have two equal tubes of fabric. Turn each inside out and press flat. Sew about 5/8" in to the inside of the factory stitching along the long edge of one of the tubes, press. Repeat with other tube. Turn each tube right side out and press again. Now you have two straps ready to be attached to your bag as shown in the photo below!



Fold the bottom edge of your tube up once and then again to form a tidy edge pictured left. You can stitch this if you want but I just pin it on to the bag and make sure I am catching it as I top stitch the edge of the bag while attaching the handles. As you are folding pin your handles to the bag equally from both sides and each other. Alternatively if you have sewn this edge, pin your handles on evenly. As shown in the photo to the right.







With the right side of your bag out and your handles pinned on evenly begin top stitching all the way around the edge of the bag 1/2" in from the top edge, removing pins as you go and making sure you are catching your folded edge on the inside nicely as shown in the photo on the left.

Then top stitch again all the way around and as close to the edge of your bag as you are comfortable making sure you are catching your handles again and that they are smooth and flat as shown in the photo on the right.



Done! Admire your handiwork, frugality, earth consciousness all while being the most stylish lady in the grocery store! Then make a bunch more! Once you make one you won't even need to look at this tutorial! So quick, so easy, so rewarding! You'll never forget your bags again!