

# T-Shirt Tote Bag

Paper or plastic? How about neither. Both bags produce environmental waste and take months (or in the case of plastic, hundreds of years) to break down in landfills. Instead, choose cotton. Pick one of your most righteous shirts—one that reflects your athletic prowess, musical tastes, or political agenda, then turn it into a tote that's shaped just like a plastic supermarket bag (to help you with the emotional transition). Make a difference, "in style," as you load up on berries and broccoli at the local green market.

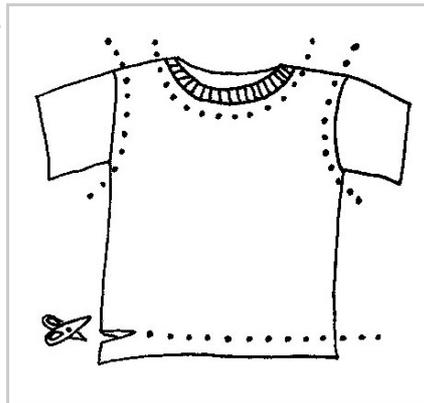
## What You Need:

- 1 T-shirt (L or XL)
- Chalk marker
- Scissors
- Needle
- Thread

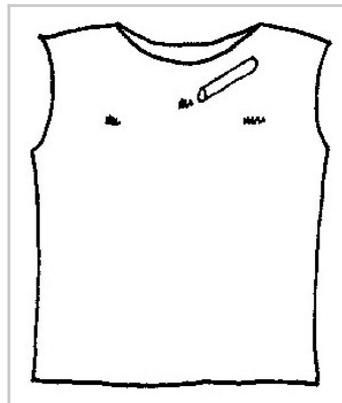


## What You Do:

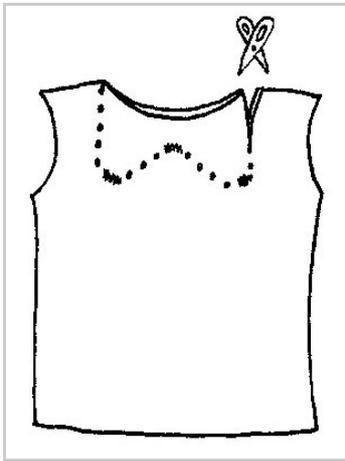
1. Lay the T-shirt flat. Cut off the sleeves just inside the seams, cut off the hem, and cut out the neckband. Note: You can use an already existing plastic bag as a pattern, but in case you already eliminated all plastic from the premises . . .



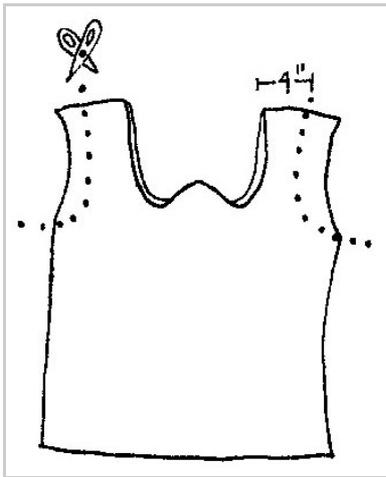
2. Mark about 7 1/2" down the front of the shirt from each side of the neck hole. Then mark about 6 1/2" down from the center of the neck hole.



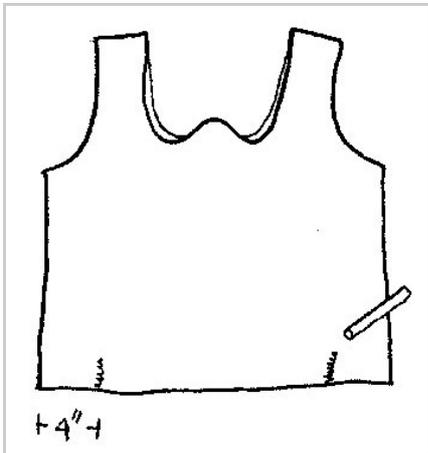
3. Draw a wavy line connecting the sides of the neckband with each of the three marks (it should look like a rounded letter "W"). Cut along the line through both layers of fabric.



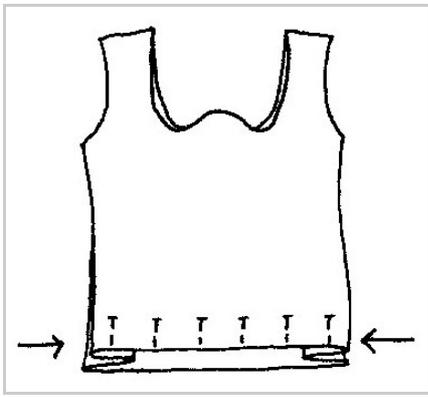
4. Mark 4" along the "shoulder" from each side of the neck hole. Draw a curved line from each mark, connecting it to the sleeve bottom. Cut along each line to remove excess fabric.



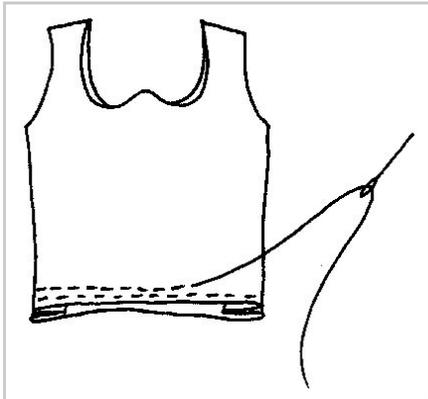
5. Mark 4" from each corner along the bottom on both sides (front and back).



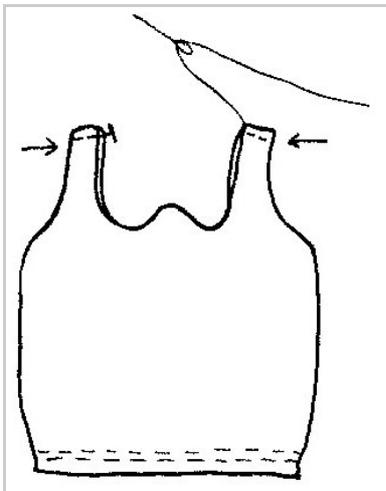
6. Push the left corner of the T-shirt between the front and back layers of the shirt, toward the center, making a kind of pleat, until the marks on the front and back are aligned as shown. The result is a small accordion fold. Pin in place.
7. Repeat on the right side. Pin the front and back sides together along the entire bottom edge.



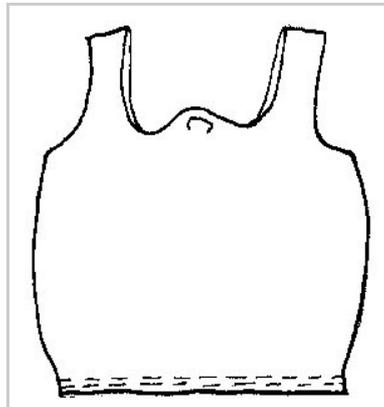
8. Sew two parallel rows of running stitches along the bottom edge, one 1/4" from the edge and the second 1/2" from the edge for reinforced edges. Remove the pins.



9. Fold the 4"-wide handles in half lengthwise, wrong sides in, making them just 2" wide. Sew a running stitch along the shoulder seam, securing the fold and reinforcing the handles.



10. What are you waiting for? Go shopping already! Optional: Make two small arced cuts at the "peak" in the "W" to mimic the tabs on plastic bags.



**Tips:**

- If you have a spare T-shirt, insert another identical layer inside (attaching the layers at the seams) to make the tote "double-bagged" for reinforcement--those canned beans get heavy!
- Make a more breathable produce sack by cutting alternating slits to create mesh.

*Excerpted From "Generation T: Beyond Fashion" Copyright 2009 by Megan Nicolay. Used by Permission of Workman Publishing Co. Inc., New York All Rights Reserved*

*Downloaded from Education.com*