

18 Ways to Reuse Plastic Bags



Here in the U.S. alone, we use around 100 billion plastic grocery bags every single year. While some cities have banned the bag, most of us aren't lucky enough to live in a town that's nixed those ubiquitous, flimsy grocery bags.

Despite always bringing a reusable bag to the store, plastic grocery bags seem to make their way into my life. Maybe a well-meaning friend uses one to bring over snacks for a night of board games or I accept a used one to tote some goodies home from an unexpected garage sale.

No matter what the reason, I can never bring myself to get rid of all of that plastic. If you've got an ever-growing collection of plastic bags making you feel guilty, too, don't despair! **Here are some practical and crafty ways to use those bags over and over, and you can share your favorite ways to reuse plastic bags in the comments!**

1. Dirty Clothes – Stick a plastic grocery bag into your suitcase to tote home your dirty clothes while you're on vacation. It's nice to be able to separate your clean clothes from dirty ones, and this lets you do it without taking the plastic bag that most hotels provide.



2. Make Plarn – You can cut those bags up and make yourself a ball of plastic yarn for use in all sorts of knit and crochet projects. How cool would it be to upcycle a flimsy plastic bag into a well-made, crocheted one?



BEFORE



AFTER

3. Fuse It -
You can use your iron to turn those plastic bags into durable fabrics.

D.I.Y: FUSE PLASTIC BAGS

PICS: ETSYLABS.BLOGSPOT.COM



4. Scoop the Litter Box – Flushing cat litter is a bit controversial, since cat waste contains toxins that's harmful to aquatic life, and unfortunately, scooping is a fact of life for cat owners. You've got to put that smelly litter somewhere. You're probably using a plastic bag already, so you may as well RE-use one instead.



5. In the Glove Box – If you or someone in your family is prone to car sickness, you can keep a plastic grocery bag in the glove box, just in case you're not able to pull over in time to avert disaster.



6. At Concerts – Amphitheater shows and multi-day music festivals come with a lot of waste, and the trash and recycle bins seem to always overflow by the end. Instead of piling your empties on top of an overflowing bin, use a plastic grocery bag to take your recyclables home at the end of the show.

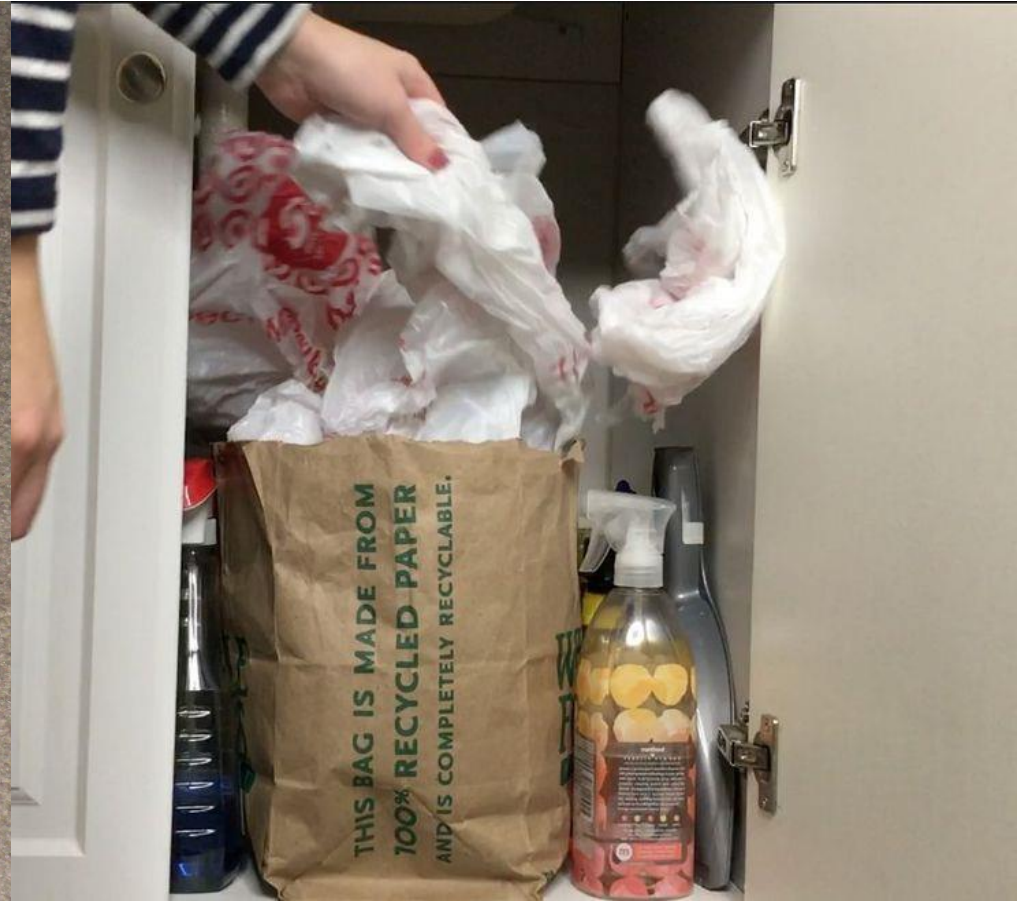




7. Dog Waste – It's only polite to pick up after your pet, and many areas even provide disposal areas for dog waste. Rather than grabbing the plastic bag provided, you can re-use a plastic bag that made its way into your house.



8. Use Them Again – It may not be as fancy as pulling out a canvas grocery tote, but if you've got a bunch of those plastic bags around the house, bring them to the store to tote another load of groceries home.



9. Line a Paint Tray – Next time you're painting a room, use a plastic bag to line the paint pan, rather than a disposable plastic pan liner. It takes less plastic, and it's reuse to boot!



10. Protecting Valuables – Whether you're packing to move or storing breakables in the attic, you can wrap them up in plastic bags to cushion them against damage.



11. Protect Your Paint Brushes – If you're taking a break from painting, you can wrap the brush in a plastic bag to keep it from getting dry and hard. Just stick the wrapped up brushes into the fridge until you're ready to get back to it.



12. Small Trash Can Liners – Reuse a plastic bag to line small trash cans, like in the bathroom, instead of buying new plastic can liners.



13. Save Energy – Instead of sand, you can stuff a draft dodger with plastic bags.



14. Donate Them – Places like libraries and food banks often need bags.



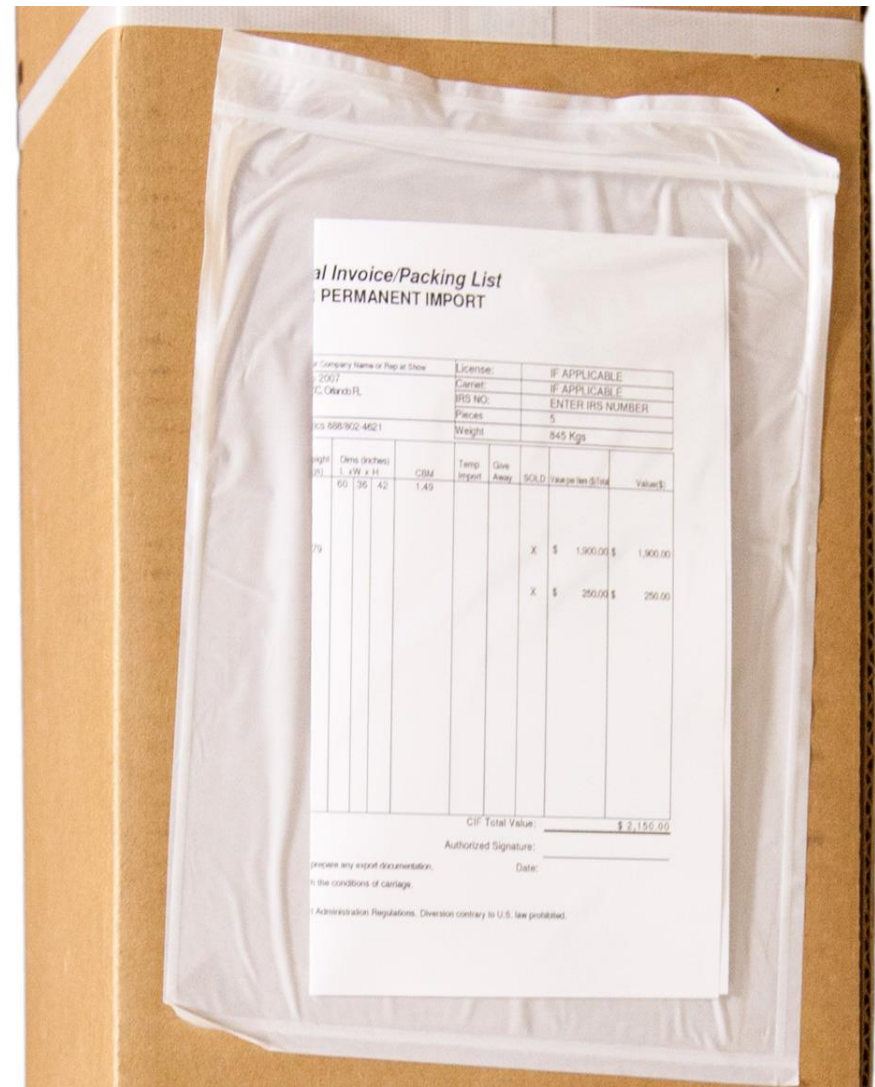
15. Protect Plants from Frost – Protect your plants from a freeze by wrapping them securely in a plastic bag overnight and removing the bag in the morning.



16. In Your Suitcase – When you're packing for a trip, stash your shoes in a plastic bag, so they don't dirty up your clothing.



17. Shipping – If you're mailing something fragile, wrap it in plastic bags instead of new bubble wrap.



18. Gardening – Tie a couple of plastic bags around your knees to add some padding while you're working in the garden.



If worst comes to worst, you can also recycle those old plastic bags, instead of sending them to the landfill. Stores like Publix, Target, and Lowe's will often take plastic bags for recycling. Make sure you call the store before you show up with a haul, though, since that policy can vary from town to town.

I bet that there are other ways to reuse those plastic bags. Let's keep the ideas going in the comments!