

## SLEEPING MATS MADE FROM PLASTIC BAGS

**Supplies:** scissors or rotary cutter with used blades  
8 mm or any large crochet hook  
Clean plastic supermarket bags (500-700 per mat)  
Thicker bags or thinner bags can be used with modifications to size of strips.

### Directions:

Flatten bag

Fold in half lengthwise, then fold in half again lengthwise

If using regular supermarket bags, cut guide strips 2.5" – 3" in width.

For thicker bags cut guide strips 2"-2.5".

For thinner bags, like dry cleaner uses, cut strips 3.5-4"

Strips used should be strong enough for crochet knot but not so thick to be bulky.

Cut them long enough to fit across folded bag.

Cut off handles and bottom seam of bags. Recycle these.

Using guides cut folded bag into strips.

Using a rotary cutter with old blades will be easier on hands than scissors.

Tie rings of plastic into yarn.



1. Pick up two rings.



2. Loop one end through the other.



3. Loop end of the second ring through itself.



4. Pull till tight.

5. Repeat steps adding on to this first string.

6. Roll completed strips into a large ball.

## **Crochet Steps**

Make little loops to form a chain that is 28"-36" long.  
Crochet loose rings with generous space between loops.  
Make one extra turning chain at end of mat.  
Go back into 3<sup>rd</sup> loop to make next row.  
Continue this way until you have made a 6' length mat

Chant as crocheting to remember how to stitch:

“Go through, pull through 1.  
Loop around, pull through 2.

Crochet from front to back.

Problems that may occur:

Side seam is bumpy, not straight. Could be caused by using yarn that is too thick or by adding/ leaving out a stitch. Not too important how it looks as long as mat is useable.

**To make strip to tie around mat:**

Crochet 2 rows of single loops to make an 80" strip.  
Weave 2 ends together with scraps to form a circle.

Donate to groups that go out to feed homeless.

Mats will keep moisture away from body, create heat and be soft to sleep on.

Unfortunately, many of our veterans are homeless. The Catholic Diocese of Columbus (Ohio) Office for Social Concerns is connecting different groups in the diocese in order to create sleeping mats for veterans who are living on the streets, in camps, and under bridges. The mats are functional, light, easy to clean, and durable.

Currently, high schools students are recycling plastic bags and turning them into the “yarn” that members of several parish Prayer Shawl Ministry groups are using to make sleeping mats.

This is a great cross-over project that focuses on the concerns of the veterans with an added focus on ecology, recycling, and inter-generational activities.