

Weaving Plastic Bag Yarn (Plarn) on a Pizza Box Loom

Instructions provided by Jane Hiller

Materials:

18" pizza box – material to reinforce the box (cardboard strips or tubes) – pencil – yardstick – scissors - (56) 3" nails – rubber bands – Plastic grocery bags



Directions:

1. Reinforce the inside perimeter of your pizza box by taping strips of cardboard or cardboard tubes stuffed with plastic bag scraps.
2. With a pencil and ruler, draw horizontal and vertical lines through the center of the pizza box. Then align one of the edges of the ruler with your center lines and trace lines against the other edge of the ruler to draw a grid. You will have 14 squares each way. (A tighter grid can be drawn by measuring and marking smaller boxes. This will produce a sturdier mat but may be challenging for younger children.)
3. Push one nail into the end of each grid line around a perimeter. This takes a total of fifty-six 3-inch nails, with 2 inches of each nail anchored into the box and reinforcement material and 1 inch sticking up above the box to form a peg. NO nail is needed in the four corners of the grid.
4. Make Plarn: Gather normal size plastic grocery bags - 13 of one color, 6 of a second color, and 7 of a third color. Lay each bag flat on a table. Fold each bag in half vertically, aligning the handles. Then fold once more vertically. Cut off the bottom hem and the handles. Then open each bag to form a large loop. Save scraps to reuse to stuff projects* or gather in an intact grocery bag and recycle at a local store.
5. Weaving: Stretch 13 loops of alternating colors (your second and third colors) peg-to-peg horizontally. Then weave the 13 matching colored loops (your first color) vertically, starting on top at a peg and ending on bottom looped around a peg. Be sure loops are loose on the pegs. Secure loops to peg with rubber bands if needed.

6. Finish the edges: Pull the end of one loop through the end of the one next to it, making your way around clockwise. For a demo, go to <https://craftprojectideas.com/how-to-use-a-weaving-loom-to-make-a-potholder/> and start at step 9 or check out this video <https://youtu.be/pFdTSldow44?t=986> (but you'll use your fingers instead of a crochet hook).

You can now:

- Use your mat as a “sit-upon” in your outdoor classroom or a knee mat in your school garden.
- Lace two mats together and add a braided handle to make a tote bag.
- *Lace two mats together and stuff with the plarn scraps to make a pillow.
- Lace several mats together flat to make an appropriate size nap-pad for Pre-K students.

Recommended book: *One Plastic Bag: Isatou Cessay and the Recycling Women of Gambia* by Miranda Paul. Great projects and lesson plans online.

