

Recycled Plastic Bag Books

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Materials

- 2 large sheets of parchment paper or blank white paper (12" x 18" or larger)
- pair of scissors
- pencil and ruler
- mat knife or x-acto knife
- iron
- plenty of plastic shopping bags (different sizes, colors, and patterns)
- awl or hole punch
- Small stack of corrugated cardboard pieces (approx. 10" x 12" in size)
- paper for book pages
- wooden clothes pins
- book-binding cord and needle, or brads for binding
- decorative embellishments like lace, buttons, sticks, etc.,

Steps

1. Cut 8-12 plastic bags into flat rectangular sheets (i.e., cut along seams, cut away bag handles, bottom and side seams).
2. Stack 6-8 sheets of plastic of equal size together. In between sheets and on top you can add embellishments or smaller pieces of colored plastic to create interesting patterns or designs.
3. Place your plastic pile sandwich between two large sheets of white paper or parchment paper. The paper must be bigger than the plastic pile so you won't melt your plastic on the iron or table.
4. Iron on medium heat. Stroke across the plastic pile slowly and evenly. Check to see if the plastic sheets are fusing together. If they're not fusing, slightly increase the temperature of the iron. Flip the layer over from time to time and iron both sides. Try to eliminate air bubbles or unfused parts. Depending on the thickness of your layer, you may need to experiment to get the right temperature.
5. Once you have a few large pieces of fused plastic sheets you're pleased with, select a portion to serve as your book covers (either a front and back cover or one longer cover that you fold over).
6. Trim your cover sizes and shape. Also prepare your inside papers.
7. Place pages inside book covers and secure with clothes pins. Place this stack on top of a small pile of corrugated cardboard. Punch holes through the front and back covers as well as your book pages with the awl or hole punch.
8. Bind your book with brads or binding cord.

It's recommended that you do all of the above in a well-ventilated room and stop the process if you smell fumes or see smoke coming off the bags (an indication that your iron is too hot).