

Got a bunch of paper grocery sacks sitting around at home? Here's a fun way to reuse them – weave a basket! Perfect for May Day, Easter, or, really...anything at all!

Supplies:

Grocery sack

Ruler

Clothes pins or other clips (at least four)

Glue (doesn't have to be glitter, haha!)

Pencil

Scissors

Tape (sorry, forgot to include in below picture!)



Cut the paper bag carefully along the back seam.



Once you get to the bottom, continue to follow the seams along to the edges, so the paper bag will open and lie flat as a long, large piece of paper.





Like so! You'll have some excess bits at the bottom, so go ahead and cut those off, trying to keep as much of the main piece of paper in tact as possible.





You should end up with a piece that looks like below.



Fold the whole thing in half and make a strong crease.



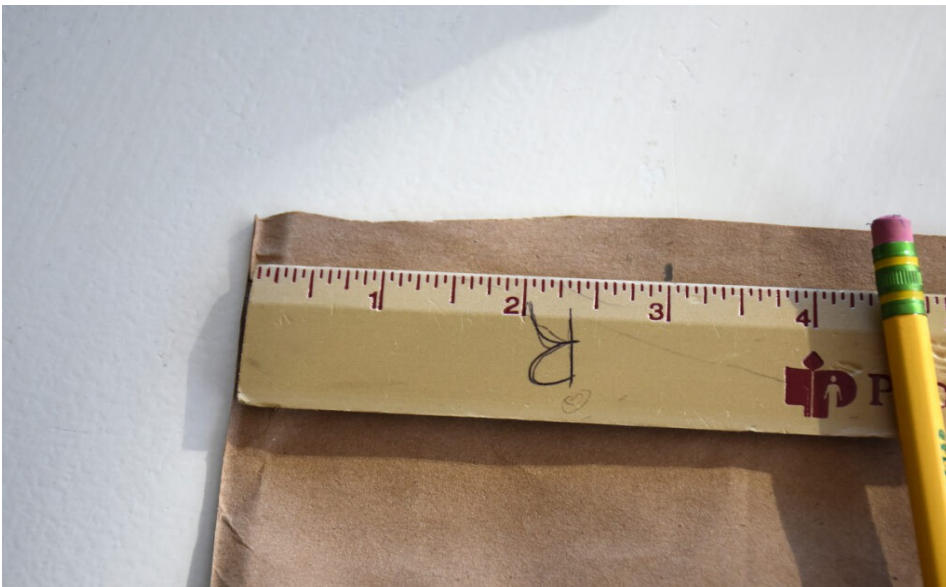
Cut along the crease so you have two pieces of paper now.



Turn them so they are just slightly taller than they are wide. We want longer strips so the basket is the right height (the shorter the strips, the shorter your basket).



Mark every three inches along the top and bottom of each piece of paper – we'll need nine marks because we will be cutting nine strips.



There will be an excess of about five inches or so, like the below strip. Set that aside for later.



Fold the paper bag along the three-inch marks (we marked both sides of the paper so you can have a more even fold). Make a strong crease.



Once you've creased, cut along the fold to make your three-inch strips.



As mentioned, you should end up with nine relatively even three-inch strips (don't worry, they don't have to be completely perfect, just do your best to keep them somewhat even).

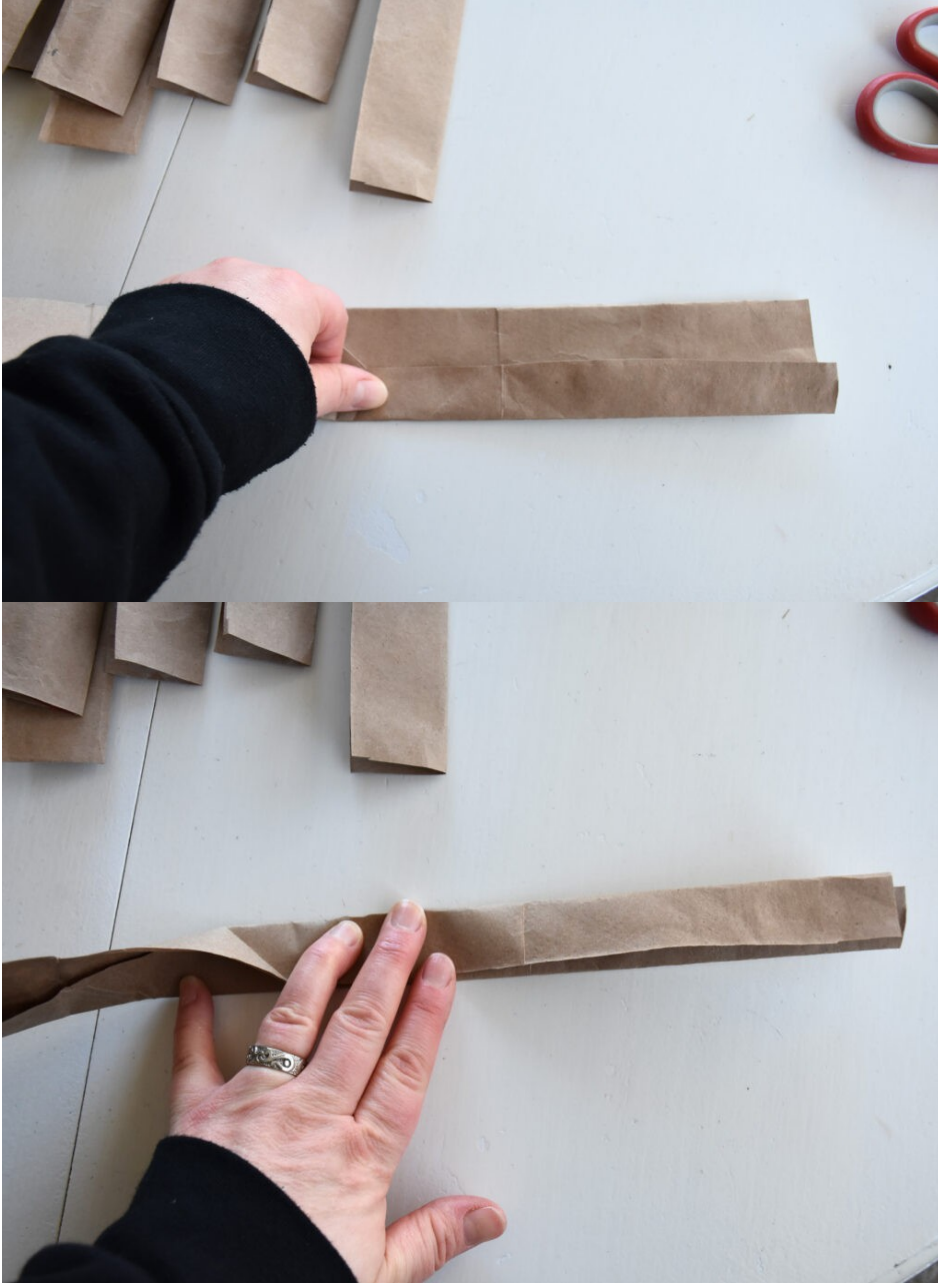


Pick the least-pretty strip to be the handle. Below is the one I picked!

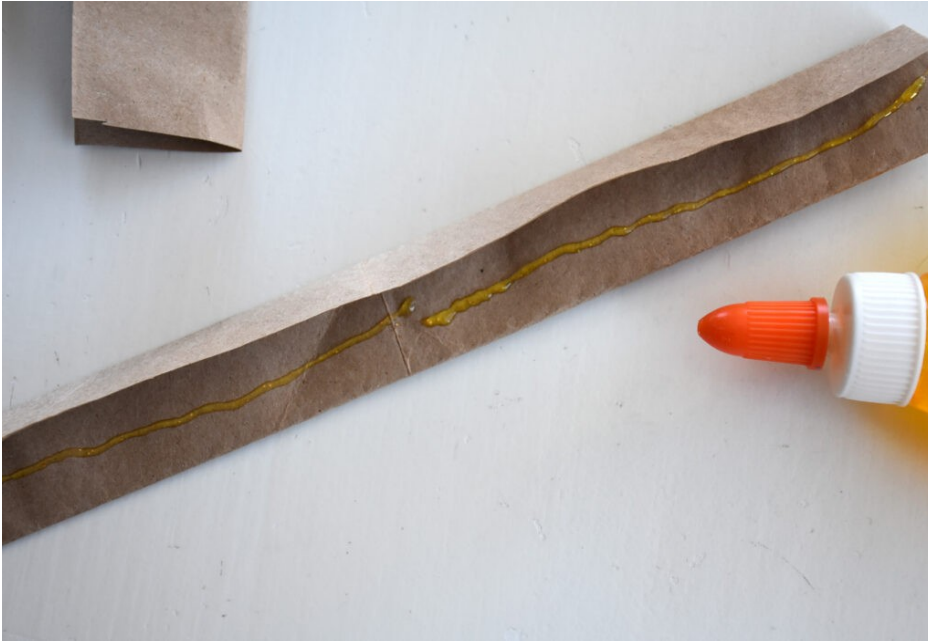


Grab that strip and fold it into thirds (we'll be folding the rest of the strips in half, not thirds).

Make a strong crease along the folds.



Then glue the folds together and set this strip aside to dry. Tip: use a clip to keep it together while drying!



Next, start in on the rest of the strips. Fold each in half and make a strong crease.



Tip: I like to use the side of my scissors to make the creases even better!



If there is writing on your paper bag, decide whether you want it to be visible once your basket is finished, or not. If you want to hide the writing, fold the strip so the writing is inside the fold.



Once you're finished, you should have eight strips that look something like this!



Time to start weaving! Get four strips arranged vertically, then work the other four strips in horizontally, carefully weaving them – under one vertical strip, over the next, under the next, over the last. Like so:



With the next strip, do the opposite (over one vertical strip, under the next, over the next, under the last).



Once you're done, it might look like this! Now it's time to straighten up the strips and tighten the weave!



Use your ruler to make sure there's an even amount of paper sticking out on each of the four sides (it should be about 6.5 inches). Make sure the ends are even on each side as well.



Once you've gotten the edges and the amounts sticking out even, keep the weave as tight as you can and tape along the middle square to hold it all in place.



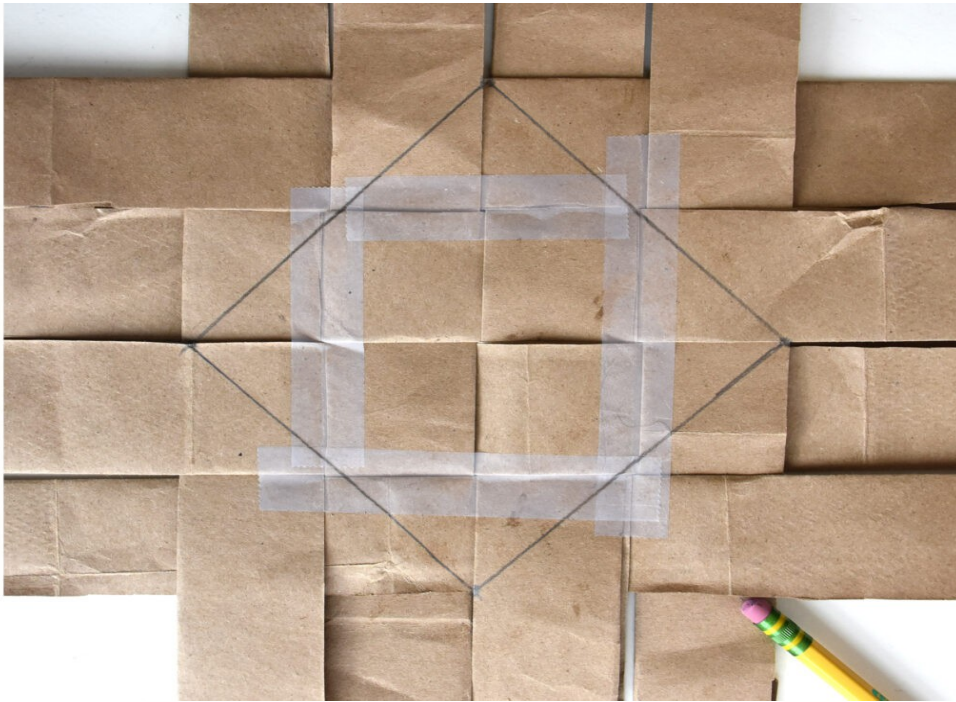
Place a dot in the middle of the four strips on each side, like so:



Use your ruler to make a line connecting the dots.



When you've done that, it should look like this:



Use your ruler to make folds along these lines. Do all four sides.



After those folds, it's time to start forming your basket! Get your clips ready, and start with two strips on one corner.



Fold one strip over to the left, and fold the other strip across it, like so:



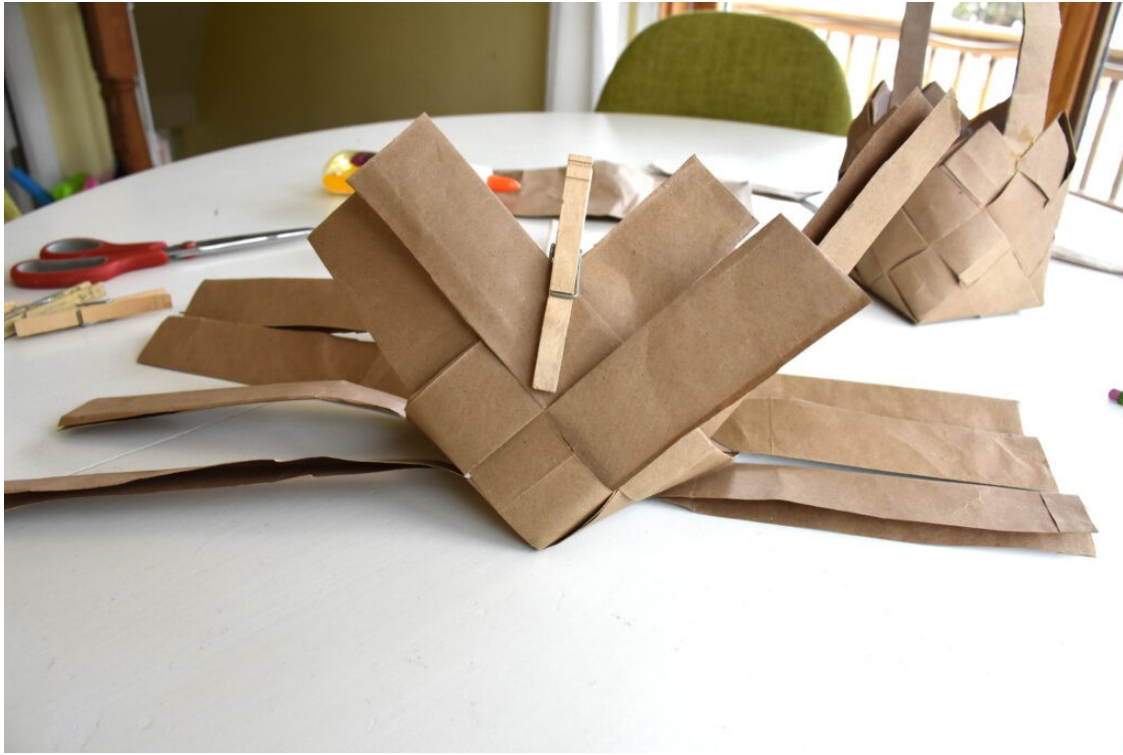
Grab the next strip to the left, and work it in opposite (weaving). Pull the strips taut – it should

automatically start forming your corner. This can seem a little messy as you're going, but you can tighten the basket up once you get to the top layer.



The weave at that corner is complete once you get to a point where you can't make another weave with the current strips you're using. You'll be folding the excess pieces over eventually, but for now, just clip it in the middle and move on to the next corner





As mentioned, it can get a bit messy, but don't worry. It'll work out! Here's my basket with one corner to go.



Get your final corner to its top weave and pull it as tight as possible. Then, start your folds. Fold the strip that's on the top of the weave down over the other strip, like so:



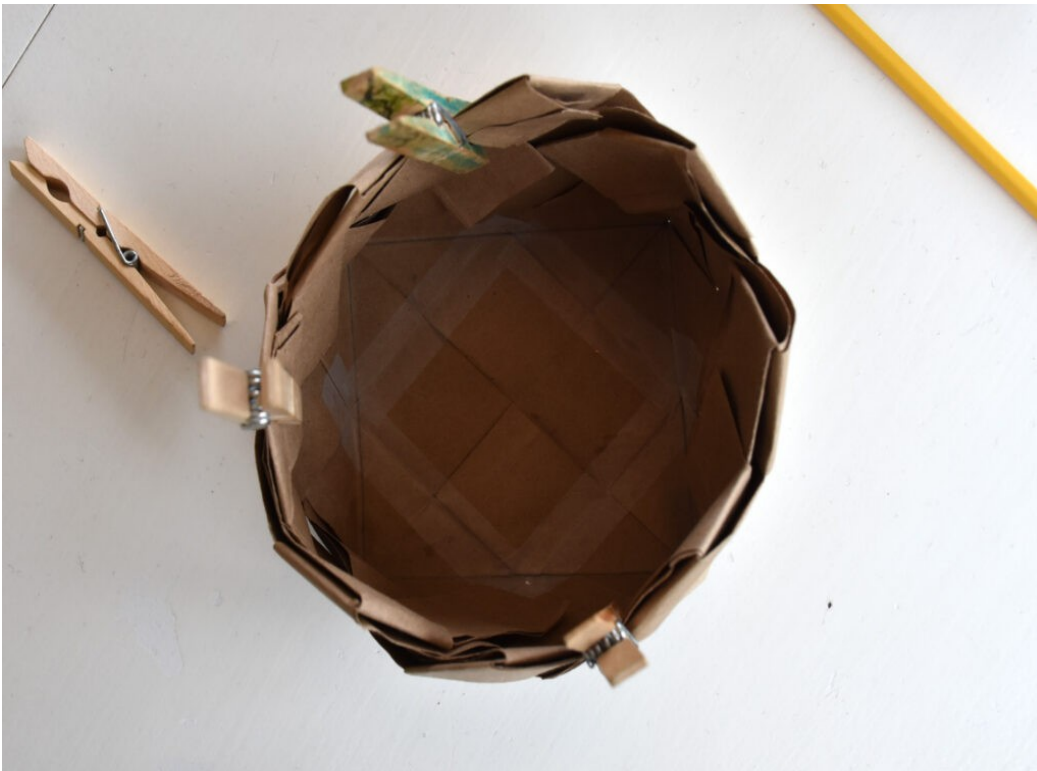
Tuck it into the basket and tighten your fold.



After you've folded all the strips down on that corner, clip it again and move on to the next corner.



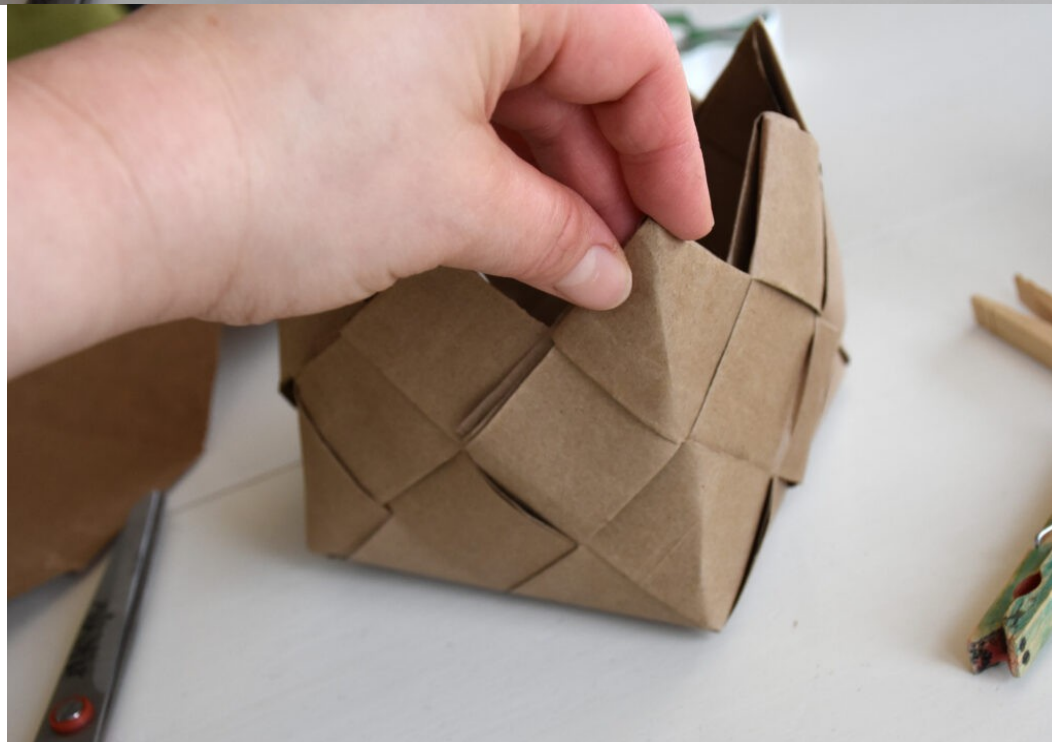
If you can, you can tuck longer strips into the next piece inside the basket. Once you've done all your sides, it should look like this inside your basket.



For the strips that didn't get tucked in, glue the tabs down, then clip again while it's drying.



If you'd like your corners to have more shape, you could crease at the tip of each corner, then continue that crease all along that corner.



Next, grab that excess piece of paper sack you set aside at the beginning. Roll it into the basket to see how much is sticking up – you'll be cutting that down to size.



Cut the part that stuck up out of the basket off all the way around, and then trim the length so it'll fit neatly inside the basket. This piece will tidy up the inside of your basket, and help make it sturdier.



Put a liberal amount of glue on your now-sized-up sheet, then roll it into the basket.



The clips can come in handy here again. Push the sheet into the corners to help the basket hold shape.



Almost there! Now it's time for the handle. Grab the strip you folded into thirds and glued at the very beginning, and shape it a bit so it makes the rounded handle you're wanting it to be. Like so:



Now, put a dot of glue on the inside and outside of one side of the handle, and tuck it in between your stabilizing sheet and the inside of your basket (so you don't see the handle end).



Do the same on the other side of the handle, then clip until it dries.



And you're done! As you can see, you can follow this method for lots of different sized baskets – the tiny one below was with an 8.5 x 11 sheet! The wider one had more strips (you can make larger baskets by using more strips – the only requirement is that you use an even number on the strips you use for horizontal and vertical, for example – 8 & 8 or 6 & 6). Happy weaving!

