

# The Claire Tote Bag

## Designed by Amy Drossner

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A small, uniquely designed tote bag that is flat on the bottom, has squared sides, and is worked all in one piece, with no cutting, sewing or joining pieces together.



I hope you enjoy The Claire Tote Bag as a unique way to carry small one-skein projects, a book and reading glasses, a snack, or even to give as a gift that contains another gift.



## Pattern notes:

- Use any heftier worsted weight or aran weight yarn. You want the yarn to be a sturdier worsted weight to help the tote bag maintain its structure. Thinner worsted weight has a lot of drape and won't hold structure well. If the sturdiness and drape effect aren't important to you, then of course go for it if that is what you have. You'll still have a beautiful tote bag in the end.
- Aesthetically, solid colors, heathers, and yarn with long, gradual color changes will look best. Busy variegated yarn, or yarn that has short, sudden color changes, will not look ideal with the stitch pattern or the texture that this bag has. Again, you will still have a beautiful bag in the end, so go for it if that is what you have to work with.
  - I've used the following yarn, but any hefty worsted/aran weight will do. Keep in mind the taller the bag, the more yarn you'll need. This is based off of a bag that is 8-8.5" tall:
    - Caron Big Cakes - Great for long color changes. *The Caron Big Cakes options, at 603 yards, will allow plenty of yarn for two bags and some left over.*
    - Hobby Lobby I Love This Yarn Print - 1 skein, 252 yards. *My bag used 232 yards of this skein.*
    - Yarn Bee Soft and Sleek Low Pill Fiber. *My bag used up one 186 yard skein for most of the bag's body, plus some of a second skein to complete the body, handles, and top edging.*
    - Bernat Color Pop - Great for long color changes. *These cakes are 280 yards. The bag will use approximately 265 yards.*
- In all, you will need between 235-280 yards for a tote bag that is 8-8.5" tall. A "plushier" yarn will use around 235 yards, depending on bag height, while a less plushy, less hefty yarn will need up to 280 yards, depending on bag height.
- Hook size H/8 (5 mm)
- This tote bag is worked in rows on the bottom, and in rounds for the bottom edging and the body. The straps are worked in two rows followed by the reverse slip stitch.
- A chain 1 at the beginning of a round or row never counts as a stitch.
- Stitch markers are an absolute necessity with this pattern.
- Optional embellishments: Any tassels, beads, buttons, tokens, charms, or fringe to suit your preferences and tastes on the finished bag.



Stitches and abbreviations used:

Foundation sc	sm - stitch marker
sc - single crochet	blo - back loop only
dc - double crochet	sl st - slip stitch
ch - chain	sc2tog - single crochet 2 together
sk - skip	invj - invisible join
st - stitch	FPDC - front post double crochet
hdc - half double crochet	FPSC - front post single crochet
hhdc - herringbone half double crochet	Reverse sl st

Let's begin!

### **Bottom of bag:**

*Note: The initial chain 2 of the foundation sc row does not count as a stitch.*

Row 1: Foundation sc for 26 st. Ch 1. Turn.

Row 2: Sk 1st st, sc in next, \*sk next st, (sc, dc) in next st, repeat from \* until 2 sts remains, sk 1, sc in last st. 11 sets of (sc, dc) Ch 1, turn.

Row 3: sc in first st, \*sk next st, (sc, dc) in next st, repeat from \* until one st remains, sc in last st. 11 sets of (sc, dc) Ch 1, turn.

Repeat row 3 until the piece measures approximately 4" of rows. *Note: You'll need the piece to be tall enough to comfortably work 12 hdc down the side just before reaching the next corner, so you may or may not need another row beyond the 4" measurement. Mine measures between 6.5" x 4" and 7" x 4.25," depending on the yarn. Do not turn at the end of your last row.*

### **Bottom edging:**

Round 1:

Ch 1, 1 hdc in same space as last st of previous row. Place a sm in this first hdc. Hdc 11 evenly down the side edge, placing the 11th hdc in the last space before the corner. 2 hdc in corner. Place a sm in the blo of each of these 2 hdc. Moving around this corner, work 26 hdc along the long edge. Work 2 more hdc in this same corner space. Place a sm in the blo of each of these 2 hdc. Moving around this corner, place 12 hdc evenly along the side edge, placing the 12th hdc in the last space before the corner. 2 hdc in corner. Place a sm in the blo of each of these 2 hdc. Work one more hdc in this same corner space. Moving around this corner, work 23 hdc along the long edge. Work 2 hdc in next st. Work 2 hdc into the space in the corner just before the first hdc of round. Place a sm in the blo of each of these 2 hdc. Join with sl st to first sc where the sm is. **84 total hdc around** (1 + 11 + 2 + 26 + 2 + 12 + 2 + 1 + 23 + 2 + 2)



Round 2: Ch 1, working in blo, sc in blo in same st as join. Place a sm in this first sc to mark the first st of this round. Sc blo in next 11 sts. Working in blo, sc2tog the next 2 sts in the corner where the sm is. Move the sm to the newly created post of the sc2tog st. Sc blo in next 26 sts. In blo, sc2tog the next 2 sts in the corner where the sm is. Move the sm to the newly created post of the sc2tog st. Sc blo in next 12 sts. Working in blo, sc2tog the next 2 sts in the corner where the sm is. Move the sm to the newly created post of the sc2tog st. Sc blo in next 26 sts. In blo, sc2tog the next 2 sts in the corner where the sm is. Place a sm around the newly created post of the sc2tog st. Join with invisible join to first sc. **80 total sc around.** *Note: the corners of the piece should have started to pull in at this point. This is intentional to help with straightening up the sides of the body of the bag.*

### **Begin body of bag:**

Round 1: Ch 1, sc in NEXT st (*not same as join*). Place a sm in this first sc. Sk 1, \*(Sc, dc), sk 1, repeat from \* 3 times for a total of 4 (sc, dc) sets. *Remember to skip the next st after the 4th set of (sc, dc).* Sc in next st. FPDC around the corner sc2tog post from the previous row, where the sm is. Sc in next st. sk 1, \*(Sc, dc) in next st, sk 1, repeat from \* 10 times for a total of 11 sets of (sc, dc). *Remember to skip the next st after the 11th set of (sc, dc).* Sc in next st. FPDC around the corner sc2tog post from the previous row. Sc in next st. sk 1, \*(sc, dc) in next st, sk 1, repeat 3 times for a total of 4 (sc, dc) sets. *Remember to skip the next st after the 4th set of (sc, dc).* Sc in next st. FPDC around the corner sc2tog post from the previous row. Sc in next st. sk 1, \*(Sc, dc) in next st, sk 1, repeat from \* 10 times for a total of 11 sets of (sc, dc). *Remember to skip the next st after the 11th set of (sc, dc).* Sc in next st. FPDC around the corner sc2tog post from the previous row. Sc in first sc, where the initial sm is. Do not join - you will be working in the round from here on. **72 total sts.**

*Do not join from here on. Since you will be working in the round, mark the first st of every round from now on with a sm. For clarity, I tell you in the instructions for rounds 2 & 3 exactly where to place the sm.*

Round 2: 2 hhdc in next st. Move the sm to the first of these hhdc to mark the first st of this round. 1 hhdc in next 7 sts, 2 hhdc in next st, 1 hhdc in next 2 sts, 2 hhdc in next st, 1 hhdc in next 21 sts, 2 hhdc in next st, 1 hhdc in next 2 sts, 2 hhdc in next st, 1 hhdc in next 7 sts, 2 hhdc in next st, 1 hhdc in next 2 sts, 2 hhdc in next st, 1 hhdc in next 21 sts, 2 hhdc in next st, 1 hhdc in last 2 sts. Do not join. **80 total hhdc.**

Round 3: Sc in next st, where the sm is. Move the sm to this first sc to mark the first st of this round. Sk 1, \*(Sc, dc), sk 1, repeat from \* 3 times for a total of 4 (sc, dc) sets. *Remember to skip the next st after the 4th set of (sc, dc).* Sc in next st. FPDC around the FPDC from round 1. Sc in next st. sk 1, \*(Sc, dc) in next st, sk 1, repeat from \* 10 times for a total of 11 sets of (sc, dc). *Remember to skip the next st after the 11th set of (sc, dc).* Sc in next st. FPDC around the FPDC from round 1. Sc in next st. Sk 1, \*(sc, dc) in next st, sk 1, repeat 3 times for a total of 4 (sc, dc) sets. *Remember to skip the next st after the 4th set of (sc, dc).* Sc in next st. FPDC



around FPDC from round 1. Sc in next st. sk 1, \*(Sc, dc) in next st, sk 1, repeat from \* 10 times for a total of 11 sets of (sc, dc). *Remember to skip the next st after the 11th set of (sc, dc).* Sc in next st. FPDC around FPDC from round 1. Sc in next st, where the initial sm is. **72 total sts.**

*Once the corner post stitches are established, the stitch markers at the corners may be removed.*

Round 4: Repeat Round 2.

Round 5: Repeat Round 3, placing FPDC around each previous FPDC at each corner.

Continue alternating rounds 2 and 3 until the bag is just under 8"-8.25", keeping in mind that two additional rounds of sc will add ¼-½ inch of height. *(Remember the amount of yarn called for in this pattern will result in a bag 8"-8.5" tall, with maybe a bit left over. You could make a tassel or fringe with any bit of leftover yarn 😊).*

Be sure to end with a Round 3. *My tote bags are around 8" tall at this point.*

### **Top edging & handles:**

Round 1: At the end of your last repeat of Round 3: After moving the sm to the first st of this round (*which is where the sm was at the end of round 3*), sc in next 9 sts. FPSC around post of corner post, drawing up the loops of the fpSC even with the current row before pulling through and finishing the stitch. This will ensure that the corners are even with the row and will not dip down relative to the sides of the bag. Sc in next 23 sts. FPSC around post of corner post, drawing up the loops of the fpSC to be even in the same manner as the previous corner post st. Sc in next 9. FPSC around post of corner post, drawing up the loops of the fpSC to be even in the same manner as the previous corner post sts. Sc in next 23 sts. FPSC around post of corner post, drawing up the loops of the fpSC to be even in the same manner as the previous corner post sts. Sc in first st, where the sm is. Do not join. **69 total sts.**

Round 2 (handles):

*Note: The directions here will result in handles that are approximately 8.75-9" long, with a "drop" of approximately 4". The handle length is easily adjustable to your preference, as long as your foundation sc chain is an even number.*

Step 1: Sc in next 14 sts. Make a tight sl st in the next st, then foundation sc 40. Ch 1, turn. Sk 1st st, sc in next, \*sk next st, (sc, dc) in next st, repeat from \* until 1 st remains after the last skipped st, sc in last st. 18 sets of (sc, dc). **Do not turn.** Make sure that the right side of the work is still facing you. *Do not worry that the strap may be curved a little bit. It will straighten out in Step 2.*



Step 2: Reverse sl st in each st for the length of the handle. (37 reverse sl sts). Work one more reverse sl st in the 37th st, then another in the end of the strap. Work 2 or 3 more reverse sl sts around the corner to reach the opposite edge at the 38th st from the beginning of the strap. *Tip: Go to the beginning of the strap on this opposite edge and count back 37. This way you'll know exactly where you should be after working in the end of the strap.)* Continue working 37 reverse sl sts down the opposite long edge, arriving back at the beginning. Work one more tight reverse sl st around the bottom corner/bottom edge of the beginning of the strap. Making it a tight sl st will help minimize any bulk along this join.

Step 3: Fold the strap down to the inside of the bag so that the wrong sides are together and the edges of the strap and the bag are even. Working through both layers, sc by inserting hook in the same st as the sl st in the 5th st of the top edging from Step 1 and through the same space as the last reverse sl st on the strap. Continuing through both layers, sc in next two stitches of top edging and strap. Sc in next 10 sts.

Step 4: Taking care that the strap is not twisted, place the other end of the strap so that the wrong sides are together and the edges of the strap and the bag are even. Working through both layers, sc in the next 3 sts. Continue with a sc in the next 4 sts. At this 4th st, you should be at the corner. Continue with sc in the next 10 sts. You should now be at the next corner. Continue with sc in the next 4 sts. Sl st tightly in the 5th st, then foundation sc 40. CH 1, turn. Sk 1st st, sc in next, \*sk next st, (sc, dc) in next st, repeat from \* until 1 st remains after the last skipped st, sc in last st. 18 sets of (sc, dc). **Do not turn.** Make sure that the right side of the work is still facing you.

Steps 5-6: Repeat Steps 2-3.

Step 7: Taking care that the strap is not twisted, place the other end of the strap so that the wrong sides are together and the edges of the strap and the bag are even. Working through both layers, sc in the next 3 sts. Continue with a sc in the next 4 sts. At this 4th st, you should be at the last corner. Sc in the next (*the last*) st, where the sm is.

If you choose not to complete the final finishing round (see note below), sl st in next st, then finish off with a yarn needle and invisible join. Bind off and weave in end.

Final finishing round: *This round could be considered as optional, but does give the top of the bag a finished look and helps to smooth out and reinforce the handle joins:*

Reverse sl st in each sc around. When working the reverse sl st into the sc across the handles, insert the hook into the front and back loops of the sc as normal, but also insert the hook under a loop of the stitches at the base of the handle itself before yarning over and pulling through to complete the reverse sl st. This will help even out and reinforce the stitching across the handle joins. Finish off with an invisible join to first st with a yarn needle. Bind off and weave in end. If you wish, embellish with any sort of tassel, beads, buttons, tokens, charms, or fringe to suit your preferences and tastes.



*Thank you so much for your interest in my pattern. Be sure to share photos and feedback of your Claire Tote Bag with me ♥*

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