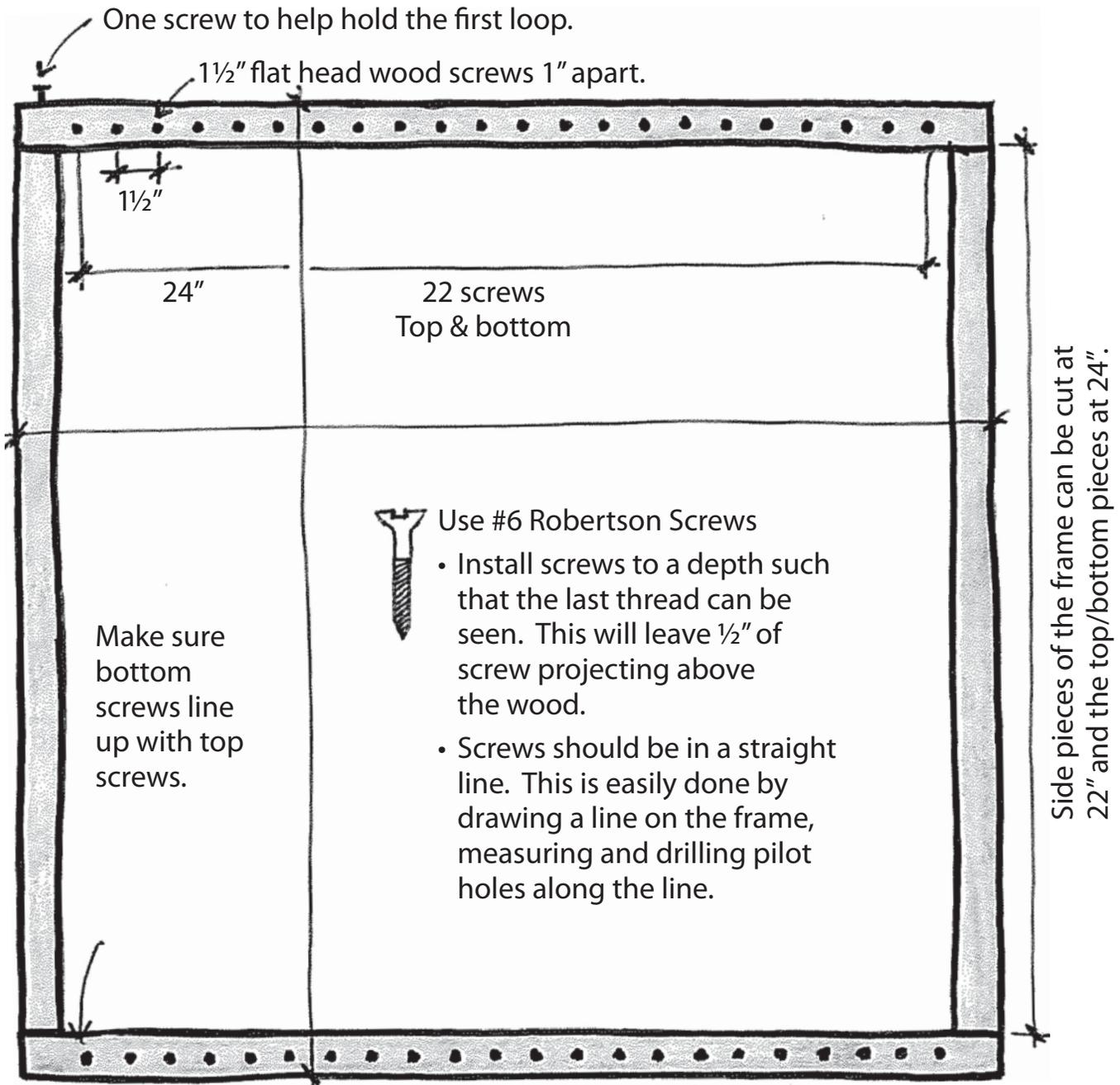


# HOW TO MAKE A MILK BAG MAT



# GETTING STARTED

## Building the frame.



### Notes:

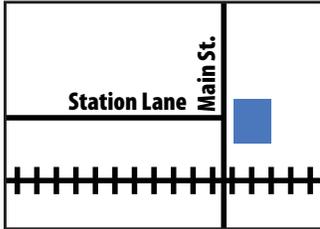
- All pieces of wood should be: 1½" x 1½".
- Wood cannot be warped and must be able to lay flat.
- Finished frame must be rigid and square.
- Use an industrial/contractor-grade glue in joints.
- L-shaped brackets should be used at all four corners to help make the frame square and strong.

# GETTING STARTED

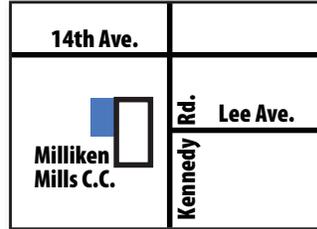
## Collecting the milk bags.

- Pick them up from one of our four Recycling Depots.
- Start a milk bag drive at your school, work, or organization!

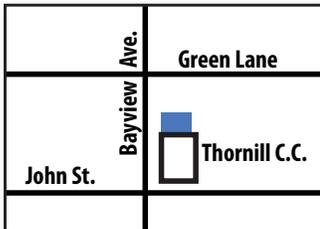
### Recycling Depots:



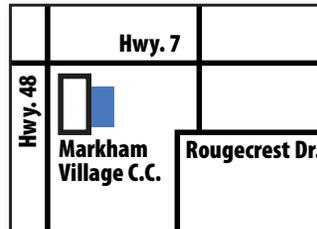
**Unionville Depot**  
 Unionville Main Street  
 (Main Street at Station Lane)  
 Monday: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
 Tuesday: 12 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
 Thursday: 12 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
 Saturday: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.



**Milliken Mills Depot**  
 7660 Kennedy Road  
 (Behind the Milliken Mills C.C.)  
 Friday: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
 Saturday: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.



**Thornhill Depot**  
 5 Green Lane  
 (Bayview at Green Lane)  
 Tuesday: 12 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
 Wednesday: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
 Thursday: 12 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
 Saturday: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.



**Markham Depot**  
 6041 Highway 7 East  
 (Highways 7 & 48)  
 Monday: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
 Tuesday: 12 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
 Wednesday: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
 Thursday: 12 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
 Friday: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
 Saturday: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.



## How many milk bags will I need?

- To make 1 large mat (approximately 40" x 80") you will need 500+ milk bags.
- Each large mat is constructed from 8 squares (2 wide x 4 long), each square measuring 20" x 20".

## Do you know?

- Plastic bags do not decompose in landfill.
- Since the beginning of the Milk Bag Project in 2011, the City of Markham has diverted over 2,000,000 bags from landfill.
- Milk bag mats are sent to developing nations that are most in need.

# BUILDING THE MAT

## Cutting the milk bags.

1. Cut off the uneven portion from the top of the milk bag.



2. Pierce bottom corner of the bag and cut along the seam.



3. Cut the bag in to even halves.



### Note:

There are different variations in cutting the milk bag strips to make the plastic yarn. This document only demonstrates one of the methods for weaving milk bag mats.

## Fun Facts

### Milk bag mats:

1. Have anti-bacterial properties and can serve as surgical mats for medical teams in makeshift hospitals.
2. Stop moisture from coming up from the ground and provide insulation.
3. Are durable, easy to clean, and can withstand the hot sun without deterioration.
4. Are mildew and bug resistant.
5. Can be fashioned into hand bags.

# BUILDING THE MAT

## Making the plastic yarn.

4. Join the two halves together by looping one through the other and pulling tight.



## Weaving the mat.

5. Hook the plastic yarn on the first nail.



6. Stretch the plastic yarn and hook it to the nail on the other side of the frame.



### Tips:

1. Make sure milk bags are clean and dry.
2. Storing the milk bags flat will make them much more compact for storing and transporting. The milk bags will be easier to cut.

# BUILDING THE MAT

## Weaving the mat.

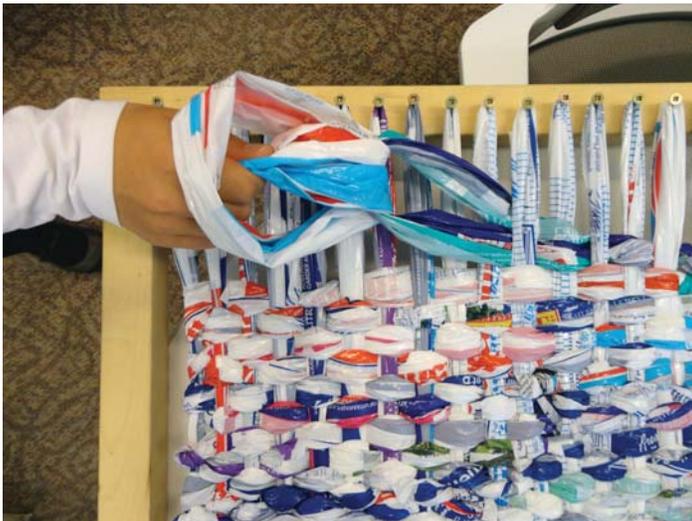
7. Continue laying the plastic yarn for each set of nails.



8. Loop a piece of plastic yarn to the outside nail and begin weaving it through the first layer of plastic yarn.



9. When a piece of plastic yarn is too short, loop another one through and continue weaving.



10. At the end of a row, wrap the bag over or under the end piece of plastic yarn and continue weaving in the opposite direction.



## Trick:

1. The plastic yarn is stickier than regular yarn so weave loosely.

# BUILDING THE MAT

## Weaving the mat.

11. Once you've woven the whole square, leave the remaining end loose.



Note:

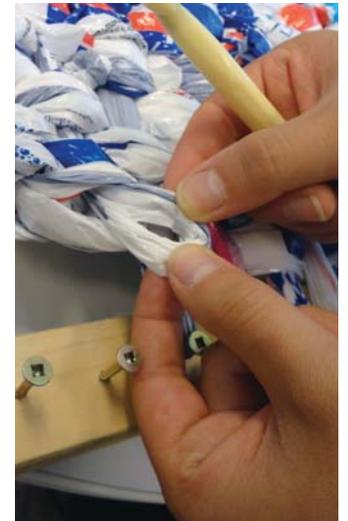
Do not use milk bags that are biodegradable.

## Removing the mat from the frame.

12. Unhook two loops from the nails. If they are too tight, use a crochet hook to assist with removal.



13. Pull the second loop through the first, pull the third loop through the second loop, and repeat until the end.



### Tip:

1. Using a crochet hook makes it easier to remove milk bags from the loom.

# BUILDING THE MAT

## Removing the mat from the frame.

14. Use the excess piece of plastic yarn and pull it through the last loop. Do the same to the other side of the mat.



15. You're done a square! You will need 8 in total to make 1 large mat.



## Putting the mat together.

16. Attach a piece of plastic yarn to the loose end at the corner of the square.



17. Spiral the plastic yarn through the edge of the squares like a wire coil on a notebook. To complete the mat, hide loose ends by tucking them into the mat.

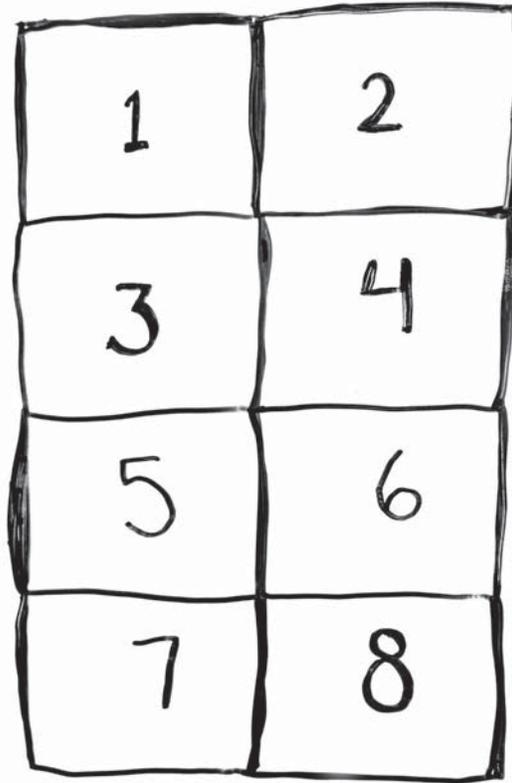


# ***BUILDING THE MAT***

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## **Putting the mat together.**

18. Attach mats as follows:



## ***WHERE CAN I DROP OFF MY MATS?***

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### **Two charities accept milk bag mats:**

#### **Milk Bags Unlimited**

902 Bathurst Street, Toronto ON, M5R 3G3

[info@milkbagsunlimited.com](mailto:info@milkbagsunlimited.com)

#### **Canadian Food for Children**

1258 Lakeshore Rd. E., Mississauga ON, L5E 3B8

905-274-9239