

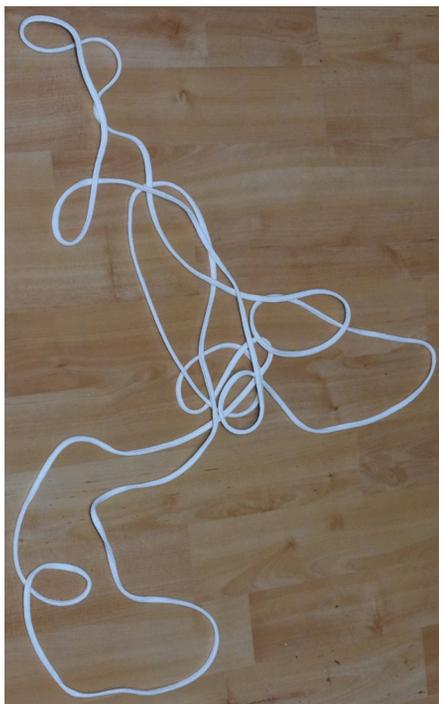
Yards of Drawstrings for Christmas Gift Bags

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I've been producing a ton of drawstring gift bags recently -- hubby hates wrapping, so he loves them, and as it happens, so do our best friends. . . .

The embroidered bags have been fun to make, but one of the challenges I've had is to find drawstrings that will work -- not too stiff, not too chunky, smooth enough to draw easily, and especially, not too expensive.



I tried sewing narrow tubes out of scrap material and turning them with my loop turner to make drawstrings, and that worked pretty well, but it was time-consuming and difficult to get strings of sufficient length because the loop turner can handle only a fairly short tube.

As well, the fabric didn't always survive the process of turning such a narrow tube, so all that work was for naught.

In the midst of cutting worn t-shirts into rags, I was inspired by how the knit fabric curls onto itself along the cut edge -- an annoying trait if you're trying to sew it, but with great potential for drawstrings.

I happened to have a piece of single knit I'd been saving from an abandoned T-shirt project, and I decided to try cutting it into strips to make the strings.

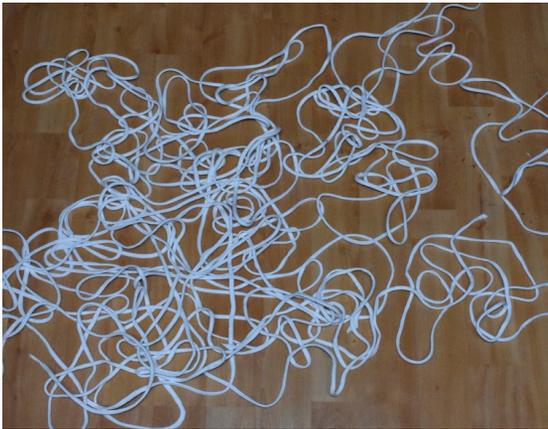


I cut my strips across the width of the fabric in 1" increments, so that the stretch runs lengthwise along the strip.

This one piece of fabric yielded quite a lot of 1" strips -- they'll keep me supplied with enough drawstrings to make a couple dozen bags.



To make the strips into drawstrings, all I did was pull them firmly. The edges will curl in on themselves, producing a reasonably smooth, firm cord.



When you pull the strips into string, the length more than doubles (depending on the stretch of the fabric). Here's how much string I got from cutting up my left-over t-shirt project!

Best of all, these strings are quick -- there's no sewing or turning of narrow tubes, and you can get quite a long string from a single strip.



So far, I've made strings from worn t-shirts and golf shirts, and from a couple of new lengths of knit fabric I picked up at the thrift store for \$2. The cost of the resulting strings is mostly a bit of time. Finished off with pony beads, they add a festive touch to the bags.