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How to Cover a Textbook with a Grocery Paper Bag

Introduction:

These instructions will guide you through the basic steps of how to cover a textbook with a grocery paper bag. Why is it important to know how to properly cover a textbook? Read and follow these instructions thoroughly because by keeping your books in excellent condition, you will receive great economic rewards when you sell your books at the end of the semester. If you do not properly cover and protect your textbooks, you will increase the risk of significant damage to the books.

No previous technical ability or experience is necessary to complete this task. Covering your textbook will take approximately five to six minutes. An open, flat space is necessary. A flat table will work just fine. **Also, be careful not to cut or tape the textbook itself as you follow these instructions in order to avoid unnecessary damage.** If you have never covered a book before, do not worry. Once you begin, the process is actually quite intuitive, and it turns out to be rather fun. Before you know it, you will become a professional book coverer for you and your friends. Let's begin!

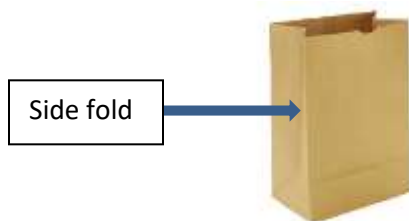
Obtain all of the following materials before starting:

1. Brown paper grocery bag (with or without handles) from your local grocery store
2. A second grocery bag if you make a mistake (it does happen)
3. Scotch tape
4. Duct tape (optional)
5. Scissors
6. Textbook
7. Open, flat surface
8. Ruler (optional)

How to cover a textbook step-by-step:

1. Open the paper grocery bag and stand the bag straight up on the open, flat surface as shown in **Figure 1** below.
2. Start at the open end of the grocery bag. Use the scissors to cut downwards towards the bottom of the bag and cut along one of the side folds. See **Figure 1** below to help you locate the "side fold" of the grocery bag.

Figure 1: Side fold of a paper grocery bag



3. Cut all the way around and along the bottom edges or the bottom perimeter of the bag. Discard this bottom piece.

4. Flatten out the bag. Place the bag flat down on a smooth, open surface.

Your bag should look like a flat rectangle with approximate dimensions of 17 inches by 36 inches. Make sure that the paper is more wide than it is tall when you place it on the surface. If you do not want the advertisement or the store's logo to be visible on the final product, place the advertisement face up towards you before you move to the next step.

5. Center the book on top of your rectangular, flat piece of paper and open the front cover. Position the book on the paper so that when you fold the paper over the book, there are about 4 inches of paper to the left and to the right of the book and about 3 inches of paper above and below the book.

Trim and discard the excess paper (if any). You may use a ruler for this step, but precise measurements are not necessary to complete this task effectively.

6. Next, take the 4 inches of paper to the left of the book and fold that paper inwards so it wraps over the front inside cover of the book. Make a crease in the paper along the side edge of the front book cover.

7. Similarly, take the 4 inches of the paper to the **right** of the book and fold that paper inwards so it wraps over the **back** inside cover of the book. Make a crease in the paper along the side edge of the **back** book cover.

CAUTION: To prevent damage to the book, be careful not to cut the book or the book's pages when you cut slits into the brown paper bag in steps 8 and 9. Take your time when using the scissors to perform these steps.

8. Close the book, and stand it up on its spine. Start with the 3 inches of paper sticking out of the top of the book and cut slits toward the book along both sides of the spine.

9. Similarly, take the 3 inches of paper sticking out of the **bottom** of the book and cut slits toward the book along both sides of the spine.

Now, you have two loose, dangling flaps parallel to the spine and sticking out of the top and bottom halves of the book. The purpose of the paper flaps is to provide reinforcement to the top and bottom edges of the spine since the spine is usually the most easily damaged part of the book.

10. Place the book flat on the table and open up the front cover. Fold and tuck in the loose, dangling flaps you just made in steps 8 and 9 so that these flaps are covering the top and bottom edges of the spine and are no longer visible or sticking out of the book. In other words, wrap the flaps over the spine.

Tape is unnecessary for this step.

11. With the front cover still open, take the 3 inches of paper above the book and fold that paper inwards so it wraps over the front inside cover of the book. Make a crease in the paper along the top edge of the front cover.

12. Similarly, take the 3 inches of paper **below** the book and fold that paper inwards so it wraps over the front inside cover of the book. Make a crease in the paper along the **bottom** edge of the front cover.

CAUTION: Do not to tape the book itself in step 13 in order to avoid serious, costly damage. Put tape on the brown paper bag only.

13. Tape (with scotch or duct tape) the 3 inches of paper (you just folded in steps 11 and 12) to the front inside cover of the book. Duct tape is more durable, but scotch or duct tape is acceptable.

Make sure to use enough tape so that the folding stays flat on the book and the paper cover is not loose.

14. Repeat steps 11-13 for the inside **back** cover.

15. Open and close the book a few times to break in the new cover.

Conclusion:

Close the book up. Check that the **entire** book is covered by the paper grocery bag like in **Figure 2** below. If not, patch up the bare spots on the book with small, cut up pieces of brown paper. If the cover is loose or if the folding does not stay flat, you may want to try adding extra pieces of tape to achieve a more snug fit. If the paper cover fits snugly and if your book looks like **Figure 2** below, you have successfully finished covering your textbook. Congratulations! Now, go show off your wonderfully created, brand new cover to your family and friends. Enjoy your cover and happy reading!

Figure 2: Properly Covered Textbook

