

The flour-sack towels required for wild-bread making are easy to gussy up for gifts, especially when including a 5-lb sack of starter flour. Embroidery is always an option, or you can transfer an image using iron-on transfer paper (available at most office-supply and craft stores). But using Citra Solv to make a photocopy transfer creates a beautiful, vintage-look image. Here's how ...

**You'll need:**

- white flour-sack cotton towel
- 8 1/2" x 11" black-and-white photocopy (make sure the design you choose has extra-wide, thick lines)
- Citra Solv (don't substitute other citrus degreasers; they won't work)
- painter's tape
- small bowl scraper or bone folder used for paper crafting
- small paintbrush
- gloves

I think it's safe to say I know a thing or two about flour-sack towels. My favorites for size, durability, and absorbency are available online at Amazon.com.



Measuring 28" x 29" before washing (28" x 28" after), I love the look and feel of the unbleached, 100 percent cotton flour-sack towels, sold in a 12-pack by ACS Home and Work.



Measuring 28" x 28" before washing (28" x 27" after), Utopia Kitchen is my choice for a bleached cotton 12-pack of flour-sack towels.

1. Wash, dry, and iron your towel. (Most fabrics have sizing on them, and washing will make the transfer bond stronger.)
2. Have several photocopies handy, as you may want to try testing this technique on scrap fabric before you apply the transfer to the towel. The key is using a toner-based image, since it's the toner that will transfer from the paper to the fabric (inkjet printers won't work). But not all toners work equally. Laser copies work fine when freshly copied, although the longer you let them sit, the lighter the print (we tried a week-old copy and got very faint transfer results). We found that Xerox-style photocopier copies made the most consistent transfers, no matter the age of the copy. Looking for an old photocopier to use? Independent printers, libraries, banks, and grocery stores often still have that type of copier available to the public. We tried a color laser print and found that while it did lightly transfer, all the color washed out right away, so black-and-white toner seems to work best. (Make sure to mirror or reverse images with words so they transfer correctly.)
3. Position your photocopy, printed side down, on your towel. Because a flour-sack towel shrinks about 1" in length when washed, you'll need to compensate by positioning the point of your towel 1" or so to the side. We positioned our flour girl roughly 10 1/2" from the point, and about 5 1/2" from each side. Tape along the edges to keep it in place.
4. With a pencil and ruler, mark the straight and cross grain of the towel onto the back of the print, off to the side of the toner area. This will help you keep in mind the grain of the fabric as you are rubbing the transfer.
5. Work on a cleanable, flat, hard surface (soft surfaces can make the fabric stretch). Wearing gloves, brush on a small amount of Citra Solv in a small area along the top of the design. You will see the toner design show through the back of the paper. Make sure you get the design area wet without over-saturating it; otherwise, the toner can bleed. With the bowl scraper, rub the design in that area 1–2 minutes while holding the paper flat with your other hand. It's best to work with the grain of the fabric, as it will stretch the towel the least. Don't lift your paper until you're done, because lining it up again can be difficult.
6. Continue to paint on the Citra Solv and rub in small sections, working down the design.
7. When finished, peel away the paper.
8. To permanently set the transfer, iron with a hot iron and launder with mild laundry soap.



## Now you're ready to swaddle your sack of flour.

1. Spread the towel out in a diamond shape so the design is on the backside with the top of the design facing down in the furthest corner from you.
2. Center your 5-lb sack of flour about 9" from the bottom corner.
3. Fold the bottom corner up over the flour, using a piece of tape to keep it in place.
4. Fold the left side over the flour, keeping the towel parallel above it. Fold any part of the wing that extends beyond the side of the flour back on itself to keep the layers smooth.
5. Repeat #4 for the right side.
6. Fold the top corner down on itself, then fold the top down over the sack to reveal the design, making sure the top fold does not wrap to the back of the bag, and that your design is centered.
7. Tie each corner with a bit of twine, catching some of the flour sack along with the towel.

