

WHAT'S IN YOUR BAG?

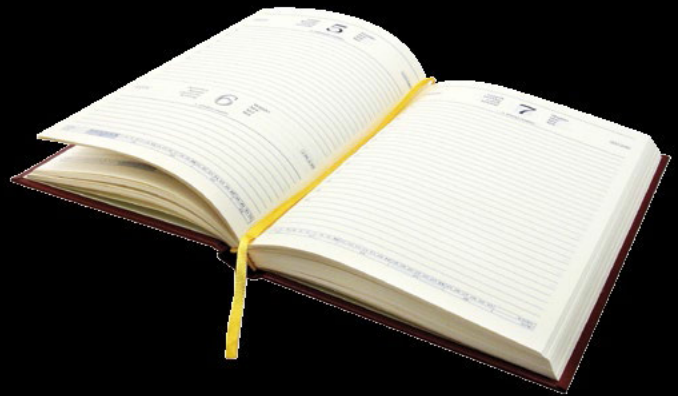
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Decorations

Decorate using any type of bag—handbags, purses or totes.

Service Ideas

1. Conduct a “gently used” purse drive. Fill the purses with trial size lotions, soaps, tissues, toothbrushes and toothpaste. Distribute them through the corps social services department to women in the community.
2. Collect plastic grocery store bags for use in the corps food pantry. This can be a year round project, with particular emphasis at the holiday time.
3. Ask women to donate a purse filled with small items like costume jewelry, make up, perfume and hair supplies. Hold an auction with the proceeds going to World Services.



Ask each woman to take one item from her purse and explain what it is, why it is important to her and why she would never leave home without it. An alternate idea is for them to share the most unusual item in their purse. Ask them to explain what it is and why they carry it.

2. Purse Scavenger Hunt

Divide the women into groups of four or five. Each team must find the items on the list following in the purses of the women in their group.

Child's toy rattle, matchbox car
Roll of LifeSavers®
Safety pin
Calendar
Brown comb
Grocery receipt
Shopping list
Pink lipstick
Ticket stub to a theater
Eyeglass case
Ponytail holder
Coupon
Starbucks® card
Dental floss

3. In The Bag

Place a number of items in a purse. Pass the purse around and allow each woman to put her hand inside for a short period of time and try to identify the items by feel only. They must write down as many of the items as they can remember. The woman with the most correct items wins the game. Include some unusual items.



IMPORTANT THINGS IN MY PURSE

As you mention the various items, remove them from a large purse.

We carry items in our purses that we think we will need in a day. But often we get up in the morning and drop in unnecessary items that can clutter up our purse and make it difficult to carry around. This clutter can obscure the vital items important to us. Here are some things I have in my purse today.

- 1. Cell Phone**—Having a cell phone is convenient and useful in many ways. It is a vital link between ourselves and the source of help and communication. Prayer is the most important communication tool that we have as Christians. It is a must in our lives. Without a prayer life, we can't keep in touch with God who is the most important person in our lives. Whatever else we may do in a day, we must keep this vital link and guard our relationship with God. *"Never stop praying" (1 Thess. 5:17).*
- 2. Keys**—All of us have lost the keys to our house or car at some time. We search high and low looking for them. I wonder how many of us look and pray in the same way, asking God to help us with our faith. The Bible says that without faith it is "impossible to please God." If we have no faith, we do not have Him. The word faith means complete trust or confidence. It is a confidence based on spiritual conviction rather than proof. We cannot see God, but we believe He's with us and wants to be an active, daily presence in our lives. God supplies faith to those who ask; then He helps us as we act on that faith and grow in fellowship with Him. *"And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to Him must believe that God exists and that He rewards those who sincerely seek him" (Heb. 11:6).*
- 3. Driver's License**—A driver's license makes it possible for us to go where we want to go legally. When I first received my license, I thought I was the most important person in the world. I was free to come as go as I pleased—a wonderful privilege would be mine as I obeyed the rules of the road and kept my license up to date. As good citizens of our country or state, we abide by its rules. Christians become citizens of heaven through faith in Christ. Without that all important "license"—our ticket through Jesus' shed blood, we have no part in the kingdom of Heaven. *"But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for Him to return as our Savior" (Phil. 3:20).*

- 4. Money or Debit Card**—Money provides for our daily needs ... and sometimes for those things we simply want. Scripture reminds us that money isn't the most important thing in our lives. Our citizenship is really in Heaven if we have become God's children. *Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be" (Matt. 6:19–21).*
- 5. Sunglasses**—On sunny days, sunglasses protect our eyes from the bright sunlight. There are many dangers in the world that could hurt us spiritually. We rely on God to protect us from such things and to show us what is truly important in life. *"The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters, He refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for His name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me" (Ps. 23:1–4).*
- 6. Package of Tissues**—There are days when we all need a tissue. Nothing seems to be going right for us. What a comfort to know that one day God will wipe away every tear. *"Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy" (Psalm 126:5).*
- 7. Hand Lotion**—We use hand lotion to keep our skin soft and protect it from the elements. It must be applied daily if we want to keep our skin looking that way. One application is not enough to protect us. Christians are God's ministers in a harsh world—like a balm that soothes a sick and trouble soul. Christ was slow to anger and gentle in spirit. If we are to be like Him in dealing with others, we must apply His word to our life daily. *"A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger" (Prov. 15:1).*

We carry with us each day important things we need as we travel this world. As God's children, we know our true citizenship is in heaven. There are spiritual necessities that no Christian should do without. Every day we need to go before the Lord and ask for His guidance and protection. Taking the time to pray and read His Word will get us through difficult days and help us to encourage others along the way. If you are carrying with you things that get in the way of serving Christ, get rid of them. Carry instead those things that please and honor Christ.