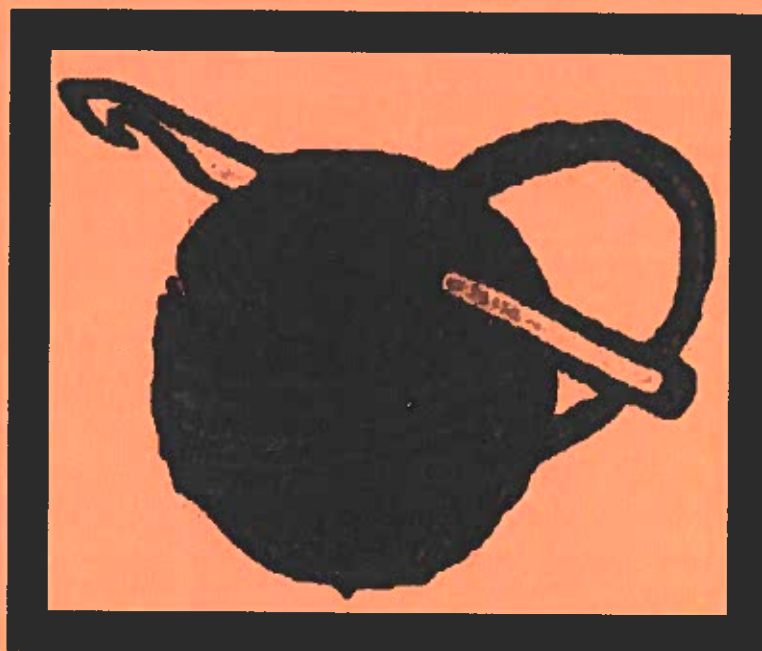


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Extension

MJ0701
Member's Manual



4-H Heritage Arts: Crochet

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Introduction

Welcome to the 4-H Heritage Arts project. Without interested individuals, such as yourself, many historic arts and crafts would be lost with the passing of generations.

You will be given the opportunity, through the Heritage Arts project, to choose from a variety of fiber, fabric, yarn arts and crafts. The projects and activities you experience depend upon your enthusiasm and the availability of resources within your home and community.

Heritage Arts is defined as the practical skills passed down from preceding generations that were developed to provide basic family needs, such as apparel, home furnishings, or decorations. It also is defined as a traditional craft and the methods that have been maintained throughout history and passed on to others, often by observation and example.

Classes on traditional crafts are available in many communities, taught by skilled local artisans. The techniques taught often incorporate new techniques and materials with the old, traditional methods to enhance the craft.



P roject Objectives

The Heritage Arts project is designed to help you:

- Learn about a variety of historic arts and crafts.
- Create a craft that connects you to the past.
- Learn about historic influences on arts and crafts.
- Have fun learning.
- Gain skills that might lead to a home-based business.

P roject Expectations

Members are encouraged to learn about and try a variety of different historic crafts. Think of fun places in your community where you can learn more. Ask about interesting, creative artisans who are willing to share their skills with you. Take a field trip to local museums that feature historic fabric and yarn displays. Take a trip to the library and look up interesting facts about a craft that is of particular interest to you. Evaluate or judge fabric and yarn crafts and do a demonstration to share your skills with others. The more activities you do, the more you learn.

To complete your project, respond to all questions on the Heritage Arts Record. Check with your Cooperative Extension office for county fair requirements *if* you want to exhibit your project.

T extile Crafts

What is a textile craft? It is defined as any method of creating a unique design with fiber, fabric or yarn. Patchwork and applique quilting are examples of textile crafts that use fabric as the main design ingredient. Needlepoint, embroidery, crochet and weaving are textile crafts that use yarns as the design tool. All textile crafts have one thing in common—they use fibers, fabric or yarn to create a design.

With some textile crafts, it means making the fabric, such as weaving, crochet or needlepoint. With other textile crafts, an already existing fabric is changed into something quite different. Quilting and embroidery can change the appearance of a fabric to create an exciting, imaginative design.

C reating a Design

Once you decide on a heritage craft, it's time to think about the design. Many books show how to create a pleasing design. There also are many printed patterns that can be purchased. There's no better way to enjoy and understand design than to try it! Designing, like most activities, can come naturally once you understand what you are doing.

A design is really a plan—a plan for using all materials so that they look good together. To begin planning the design, examine your materials—whether they are yarns or fabrics or some other material—in a special way. For example, regardless of what materials are used, these basic ingredients are the design:

- line
- shape
- space
- texture
- color

These ingredients are called the *elements of design* and they are important to your plan because they are the visible details of a design. Without a design plan, these elements may seem haphazard or clash. Let's take a closer look at each of these elements of design.

- *Line*

Line is an element that's found everywhere around us. In a garment, lines are created by a seamline, a hem, a dart, a row of trim, a plaid or stripe. A row of embroidery stitches creates a line, as does a row of crochet stitches or the pattern in a quilt square. Some lines are straight and angular, others are curved. Some are thick and sturdy, others fine and delicate. The kind of lines used in a design will affect the character of that design.

- *Shape*

When lines are connected and overlapped, they create shapes: squares, circles, triangles, any shape imaginable. The outline of an applique is a shape, the pieces in a patchwork quilt are shapes, the outline of a garment is a shape, and so on. Just as lines create feelings, so can shapes.

- *Space*

When we talk of space, we mean the actual space an object or a design occupies. When we design, we work within a specific space; so not only must the design itself be well thought out but so must the space around it. That space might be an individual quilt square or entire quilt.

- *Texture*

Texture is the surface characteristic of an object; it may be smooth, fuzzy, soft, pebbly, scratchy, or one of many other textures. Sometimes we don't have to touch an object to know its texture—we can *see* the texture. In planning a design, texture is important to think about because each one we see has a character or feeling, just as lines and shapes do.

- *Color*

When we think of colors, we usually think of color names (or hues) like red, green, yellow or blue. We can create different feelings in a design on the colors we use together. For instance, a design in yellow and green will give you a different feeling from the same design in purple and blue. But, there are other ways we use colors to give a design the feeling we want. The way we use color *values* also can affect a design (value refers to the lightness or darkness of a hue). The same hue can have lots of different values.

Think about all the different kinds of blue (baby blue, light blue, sky blue, peacock blue, navy blue and royal blue). Value can affect the feeling of a design too. Try to visualize a design in all light colors (like lime green, pink, light blue, lemon yellow). Now visualize that same design in dark green, navy blue, dark red, and gold. Does it seem different? How about the same design in lime green and navy blue? Does it seem different in style? The *intensity* of the hues we use in a design also affect the feeling we get from it. Intensity refers to the brightness or dullness of a color. Imagine a design in all bright colors—usually a design made of bright colors is more than our eyes can take! So, use bright colors sparingly!

Evaluate Your Plan—Pattern to Follow

Take a look at the materials you plan to work with—fibers, yarns, fabrics, or threads. What kind of feeling do you want to create with your design? Do the materials create that feeling in their textures and colors? Can you create the kinds of lines and shapes you want with your materials? Are the materials suitable for the space in which you've chosen to create? If you can say "yes" to these questions, you're on your way to a well-designed piece.

But it doesn't stop there. Because even with all the right materials together, designers still need some guidelines on *how* to use them together. You can think of these guidelines as a recipe for deciding just how much of each ingredient (colors, textures, lines, and other elements) to use and where to add them. These guidelines are called principles of design.

Principles of Design

- *Proportion*

Proportion is the relationship of all the parts of a design to each other and to the whole garment or article. Each part needs to be in proportion to the rest of the design. No part should overpower the others. If a garment does not have proportion, one part of the design might be too big for the rest of the design. Or, the design may be too big or too small to look good on the garment, or, there may be too much bright, shiny color that overpowers the other colors. Or, if the design is the entire garment or article, it may lack proportion because it is too overpowering for the person wearing it, or the decor in which it will be used.

- *Balance*

Balance is a feeling of steadiness, of everything in the design looking like it belongs. Balance can be formal (each side of the center is identical) or informal (the sides are different, but “weigh” the same).

- *Emphasis*

Emphasis is the creation of a center of interest. Without the center of interest, a design may seem cluttered and busy, or boring and uninteresting. If a design is not well-planned and is missing emphasis, it may be cluttered with too many colors, different textures, different lines, shapes or sizes. Or, there may not be sufficient contrast to attract attention.

- *Rhythm*

When we look at a design, the eye follows a certain route around the design. It notices differences in lines, shapes, textures, colors, and spaces. The route the eye follows is known as rhythm. In a well-planned design, the eye is led from one to another to the point of emphasis. That rhythm is created in a design by repeating something throughout the design—color, texture, shape, or size. If an item misses rhythm, it may have too many unrelated parts—too many unrelated colors or textures, shapes, lines or sizes. Or, the design may be placed so that it is spotty or scattered and doesn't seem to fit together.

- *Unity*

When we say that a design has unity, we mean that it is complete. Unity is the all the materials fitting together in a pleasing combination. If unity is missing, the characters of colors, textures, lines, shapes and spaces are not compatible, or there may not be a central theme.

Inspiration Sources

Now that you have learned something about a well-planned design, it's time to begin thinking about developing your *own* designs. How do you start?

Actually, there are several ways to begin. One of them is to become aware of the design of the objects around us. Take a good look; there are examples everywhere! Look at the grain of the wood on a table top. What kind of lines or shapes are created? How does the rhythm in the grain move your eye over the design? Can you create a similar design—perhaps with weaving or needlepoint or with embroidery?

There are many places to get ideas. Look outside at the patches of grass for ideas on shapes and colors, look at the sunsets and clouds for shapes and colors, or the cracks in sidewalks, the frost on windows, the bark on trees. Everywhere you look, there are ideas for colors and textures, shapes and lines. Design examples aren't limited to nature. Look at designs in things around the house like baskets or pictures. Perhaps there's a design on pottery that you'd like to try in embroidery, or the shape of an old bottle gives you an idea for an applique. You can find ideas in magazines, wallpaper and comic books. There are ideas everywhere if you'll just use a little imagination!

Doodle on paper to develop and crystallize a design, or try arranging yarns or scraps of fabric. Try cutting out shapes from construction paper to experiment with a design. It does not matter how, but it is important to plan a design first!

The designer whose work shows fine quality, adapts and stylizes a design to suit the materials used. A designer does not attempt to imitate real objects, such as flowers using thread. Instead, if a flower idea is chosen as a theme for the design, the designer alters it to suit the shape of the article, its purpose and the limitations of materials and tools.

Resources

There are lots of good sources to help you with the "How-to's" of the textile crafts. Your Cooperative Extension agent can help you locate commercial leaflets available for 4-H members on specific textile crafts. You may want to supplement the leaflets with films and slides. Some are available through your county Cooperative Extension office.

Your talents are an excellent resource for the club. Share your know-how and special interests to help others. Bring the tools and let everyone experiment. Bring in others from the community to share their craft knowledge. A local craft or fabric store may work with you or help you contact someone with an interest in a specific textile craft. Members may decide to make a sampler, shawl, handkerchiefs, or monograms utilizing the various techniques.

Libraries can be an excellent source of information. You can broaden your knowledge of why and how heritage crafts began by reading through historic publications. Magazines are also a terrific source of ideas. Internet web pages provide lots of interesting information as well. Perhaps you will want to clip and file ideas to share and talk about. There also are many craft magazines and pattern books that can be good sources too. Craft Organizations and Councils often provide specific information that may be helpful. Check with your county Cooperative Extension office, library or craft store for contact information.

Sharing What You Have Learned

Now that you have learned many new things about a heritage craft, why not share? This helps you learn more about the topic and become more comfortable teaching others. Making an exhibit to show at the county fair is another way to share with others. You also may share your knowledge by giving a demonstration and show how to do something.

Demonstration

Select a topic that relates to something you learned about your project and plan a demonstration. Some ideas include:

- Use of design principles and elements
- Selecting fabric or yarn for a project
- Sharing the history of a craft
- Purchasing supplies
- Steps to complete a craft item
- Can you think of others?

Evaluation or Judging

Learn the standards of quality for your craft. The exhibit item will be compared to these standards at a fair or during craft competitions. Standards are printed in the 4-H craft project guidelines, or may be found in craft publications or fair judge's guides available through your county Cooperative Extension office. When you apply the standards to a craft item, you judge or evaluate that item against the standard of quality. Evaluating your project yourself will enable you to see how well you applied the skills you learned. How well did your item compare to the standards? What did you do well? Where can you improve? Answers to these questions will help you do a better job next time.

Community Service

You can learn a great deal about your community when you get involved to help others. You can:

- Make lap robes for elderly people or AIDS victims
- Make quilts for a homeless shelter
- Work on a fund raiser for a local cause
- Go to a local nursing home and visit residents
- Help an elderly or lonely neighbor with household chores
- Help younger members with their projects
- Can you think of others?

Fair Exhibit

Remember to record all of your activities during this year. It's easier to write them down as soon as you do them rather than wait until the end of the year and try to remember them. Be sure to include in your story not only the things you made, but the experiences you had, special things you learned and how you felt about them.

You must complete the History Page of the record. Plan early to begin your search for historic information. You have several options as to what you can learn about and share. You can find historic information on:

- the craft itself,
- tools used,
- new techniques developed,
- special uses of the finished items,
- influences of wars or trade,
- interesting artisans within the community,
or
- any other related topic.

The key is that the information you provide is directly related to the craft you are exhibiting.

Two photos of your finished product(s) are optional. However, photos of Heritage Arts exhibits enable judges to see how well the items fit your intended use.

If you used a pattern, please securely attach a clear copy to your record. Patterns are most helpful to judges when evaluating the project.

Projects will be divided into three age categories for exhibit based on age of the exhibitor as of December 31 of the year prior to the show. Age categories are:

Junior— 8 to 10 years of age

Intermediate— 11 to 13 years of age

Senior— 14 to 18 years of age

All exhibit items are to be fiber-, fabric- or yarn-based arts and crafts. Crafts exhibited must be those traditional crafts which have been passed down through generations. For a complete listing of Fair Exhibit Requirements, see pages 2-3 of your *Heritage Arts Record Book*, RJ0700.

Introduction

Through crochet you will learn to express your creativity in a constructive way while developing a skill that is relaxing and fun. You will also have the opportunity to learn more about the history of crochet, when and where it originated, how it has been passed down through the ages, and more.

You may want to experiment with different yarns and fabrics to make unusual articles for yourself, others and your home. Visit with crocheters in your community to discover how they learned to crochet, what projects they have made and any suggestions they may have for a beginner. Locate resources in your local Extension office, the Internet, library and yarn shops to get new ideas. Most importantly, have fun!

P roject Evaluation

Members are encouraged to develop new skills each year in the crochet project. Check the following list to see what skills would be best for you.

Junior—8 to 10 years of age

Suggested techniques: single, double crochet, half-double crochet, slip stitch, chain stitch, increase and decrease, crochet in circles, attach new colors, treble crochet, double treble, triple treble, cluster stitch, V stitch and popcorn stitch.

Intermediate—11 to 13 years of age

Suggested techniques: open or filet mesh, block or solid mesh, open shell stitch, shell stitch, shell scalloped edge, picot, waffle stitch, long single stitch, box stitch, slanting shell stitch, and Afghan stitches such as plain stitch, purl stitch, cross stitch, feather stitch, and twill stitch.

Senior—14 to 18 years of age

Suggested techniques: knot stitch or lovers knot stitch, loop stitch, star stitch, puff stitch and cross puff stitch, hairpin lace, broomstick crochet, other advanced techniques found in reference materials or created by the member, alter patterns or create own design.

Crocheted garments or articles will be evaluated on:

Overall appearance

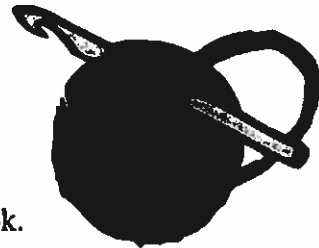
- Clean and neat
- Properly blocked
- Suitable choice of yarn, thread or other materials

Workmanship

- Uniform stitches
- Accurate pattern stitches
- Uniform tension
- Correct gauge
- Yarn ends woven inconspicuously
- Yarn attached or joined neatly
- Stitches not twisted or split
- Seams secure and neat

Members who enroll in the 4-H Crochet project more than one year are encouraged to try new stitches and more advanced patterns.

History of Crocheting



Like that of knitting, the origin of crocheting is uncertain but it seems to have begun in France. The name comes from an old French word, *croches*, or a Danish word, *krooke*, which mean hook.

There is evidence that crocheting was practiced in the 16th century by French nuns. They took it to Ireland, where it became accepted as a craft. At the time, it was used as a simple method to produce lace. Only the finest threads were used to achieve a delicate effect, which is still known as Irish crochet. The lace was used mainly for collars, trimmings and doilies. Crocheted lace is still made by hand in Italy, Belgium, France and China. An excellent type of Italian crochet work is called *Orvieto lace*.

There is little additional information available on the history of crocheting, but some scholars believe it evolved from knitting or was considered a form of knitting in its early days. Crocheting lace with fine thread has expanded to using yarn for afghans, sweaters and other garments.

Crocheting Basics

Hooks, Threads and Yarns

Thread or yarn and a hook are the basic crocheting equipment. It is important that the hook and yarn are compatible and can make the appropriate gauge for the pattern.

Hooks

Crochet hooks are made from a variety of materials in a variety of sizes. They range from a fine steel hook for fine threads to large wooden hooks for coarser yarns and loose crocheting.

Aluminum hooks are available in sizes B to K (small to large) in 6-inch lengths. Bone hooks come in size 1 to 6 (small to large), which are comparable to sizes B to G. Plastic hooks are made in sizes D to J in a 5 ½-inch length. Steel hooks range in size from large, size 00, to the very fine, size 14. They are 5 inches long. Wooden hooks are large and long, 9 or 10 inches, and are used for quick crocheting.



A special afghan hook has a straight, even aluminum or plastic shaft. It is 9 to 14 inches long, ranging in size from 1 to 10 or F to J. When the hook is sized by number, the shaft compares to a knitting needle of the same size.

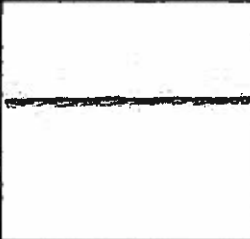
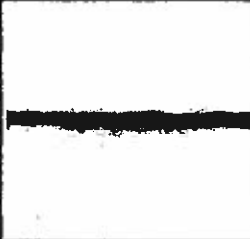


Threads and Yarns

A wide range of yarn and thread is available to crocheters. They may be made from wool, cotton, silk, linen, rayon and other synthetics. Some yarns contain a combination of fibers. Size, twist and color of yarn add dimension. Some are heavy and tightly twisted, while others are fine and loosely twisted. Textures may be smooth or rough, stiff or soft. The ply of yarn refers to the number of strands twisted together. At one time, the term, four-ply, was synonymous with worsted weight, but with the numerous fibers and advancement of manufacturing, it is no longer always true. The more common terms for yarn weights are, beginning with the lightest, crochet thread, fingering or baby yarn, sport weight, worsted weight, bulky and rug yarn. There also are numerous novelty yarns available. New yarns are developed on a regular basis, making it important to keep track of the *interchangeable yarn chart* information available at most yarn shops.



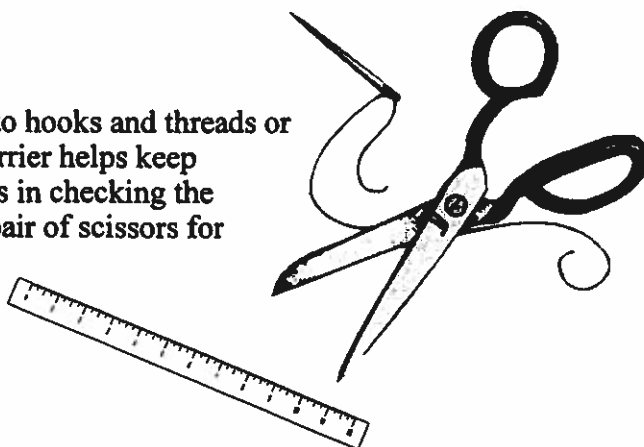
Common Yarn Sizes for Crocheting

(Note: the term weight refers to thickness of yarn)

Yarn Type	Sample	Description	Suggested crocheter hook size
Baby-weight		Baby-weight yarn is often called fingering-weight yarn. This size yarn is more commonly used for baby items or lightweight summer wear.	A, B, C
Sport-weight		This size yarn is excellent for children's clothing, and also for lighter-weight garments, both summer and winter.	D, E, F
Worsted-weight		This is the most commonly used weight. It is an excellent size yarn to work with while learning the skills to knit and crochet. The most popular items to make with this yarn size are clothing and afghans.	G, H, I
Bulky-weight		This weight is excellent for your "quick-to-work-up" projects. It is twice as thick as worsted-weight yarn.	J, K

Tools and Equipment

Tools needed for crocheting, in addition to hooks and threads or yarns, are similar to knitting. A bag or carrier helps keep equipment together. A tape measure helps in checking the gauge and the size of the work. A small pair of scissors for cutting yarn and a blunt tapestry or yarn needle for seaming are also essential.



Abbreviations and Terms

Like knitting, crocheting directions are written in a series of abbreviations. Abbreviations may vary from author to author and from country to country. Most commercial patterns include a brief chart of abbreviations used in the particular pattern.

Following is a chart of the most common abbreviations used in crocheting.

Abbreviation	American Definition	British Definition
beginning	beg	
block (solid stitch)	bl	
chain stitch	ch	
cluster	cl	
decrease	dec	
double crochet	dc	tr
double treble crochet	dtr, d tr, or dbl tr	tr tr
half double crochet	hdc, h dc, or h.d.c	h. tr
inclusive	incl	
increase	inc	
loop	lp	
pattern	pat	
picot	p or P	
popcorn stitch	pc st	
repeat	* (asterisk) () (parentheses)	
round	rnd	
single crochet	sc	dc
skip	sk	
slip stitch	sl st or ss	sc
space (open mesh)	sp	
stitch	st	
stitches	sts	
together	tog	
treble or triple	tr	long or double treble— double treble
treble or triple treble	tr tr	quad tr
yarn over hook	O, yo, yoh	

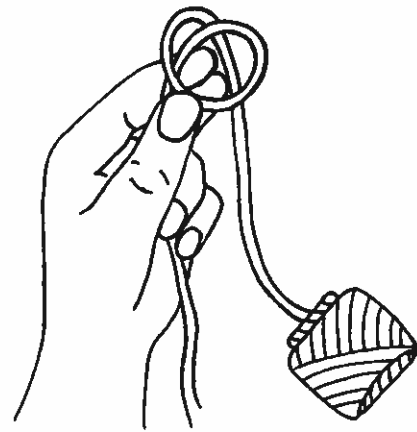
Sitches

The three basic crochet stitches are the *chain stitch*, *single crochet* and *double crochet*. Variety in patterns is achieved by combining these three stitches.

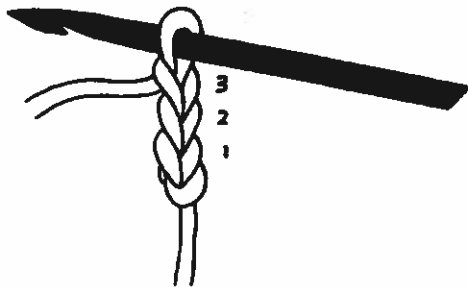
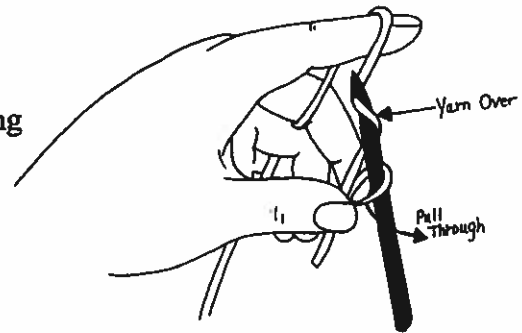
Chain Stitch

The chain stitch is used to cast on and create pattern spaces. A loop of thread is placed on the hook. The thread is wound over the hook and drawn through the loop. Almost every crochet project begins with a foundation chain, which is a series of stitches that looks like a chain. You will build rows of stitches on this foundation chain.

Make a slip knot. Place the loop of the knot on the hook.



Hold the yarn as shown. With the hook in front, bring hook under and up to catch the yarn.

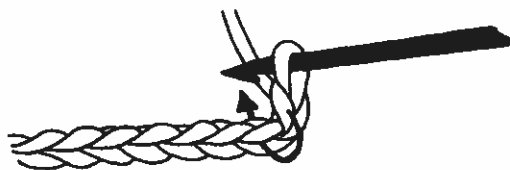
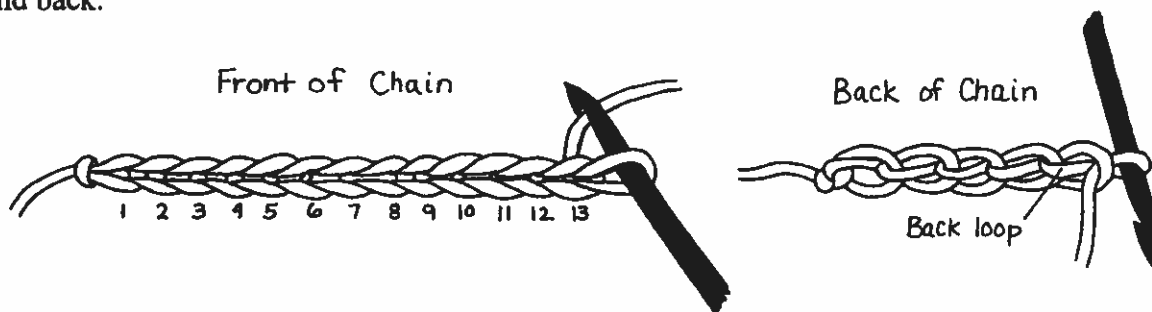


Turn the hook so that it faces downward. Slide the hook through the original loop, bringing the yarn with it (one chain completed).

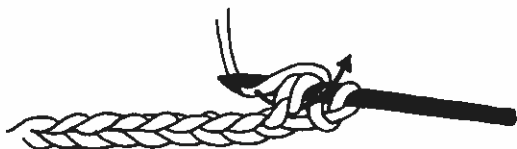
Single Crochet

Single crochet, like the chain stitch, is made by using the hook to form loops of yarn. However, the way to form the loops for single crochet is a little different than for chain stitch; single crochet uses a foundation chain as a base.

Make a foundation chain carefully study both the front and back.



Hold the chain with the front facing you. Insert the hook into the second chain from the hook. You should insert the hook under the top part of the chain in the front, and under the back loop as well.



Catch the yarn with your hook the same way you do when you make a chain stitch. Now draw the hook right through the chain, bringing the yarn with it. (Remember to keep the hook facing downward.) You will now have two loops on the hook.

Catch the yarn again with your hook in the same way you did before, and draw the hook through the two loops on the hook. (One completed single crochet.)



To make the next stitch, insert your hook into the very next chain stitch and follow these steps.

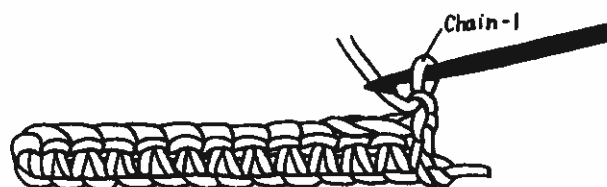
Continue to work across the row, working one single crochet in each chain stitch.



Count your stitches at the end of the row. You should have one less single crochet than you had in your string of chain stitches since you skipped the first chain.



Make one chain stitch (this is called a “turning stitch”) then turn your work around so the hook is on the right side.



For additional rows:

Working additional rows is a little different than the first row, since now you will be working into single crochet stitches, instead of a foundation chain. Once you insert the hook, however, the stitch will be made exactly the same way.

The tops of the single crochets will look like chain stitches. Slide the hook under the two strands that form the chain on the top of the first stitch.

Catch the yarn as you usually do (this is called a yarn over), then draw the hook back through. There should be two loops on your hook.

Now yarn over again and draw the hook through the two loops (one completed single crochet).

Continue working across the row, making one single crochet in each single crochet from the previous row.

This diagram shows the placing for the last stitch.

Now chain one and turn your work around again so your hook is on the right.

In all crochet it is customary to pick up the two top loops of each stitch as you work, unless otherwise specified in the pattern.

Double Crochet

You will find that double crochet is similar in some ways to single crochet. Many of the same basic steps are used, but they are combined in a different way to work double crochet.

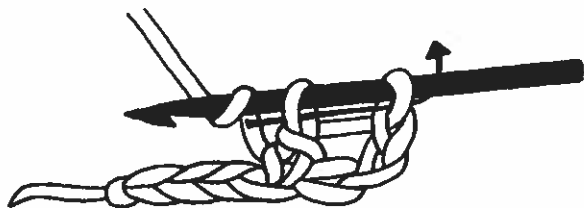
Make a foundation chain. Holding your foundation chain with the front facing you, yarn over and insert the hook into the fourth chain from the hook, in the same way as you did for the single crochet.



Yarn over again, and draw the hook through the chain. You should now have three loops on your hook.

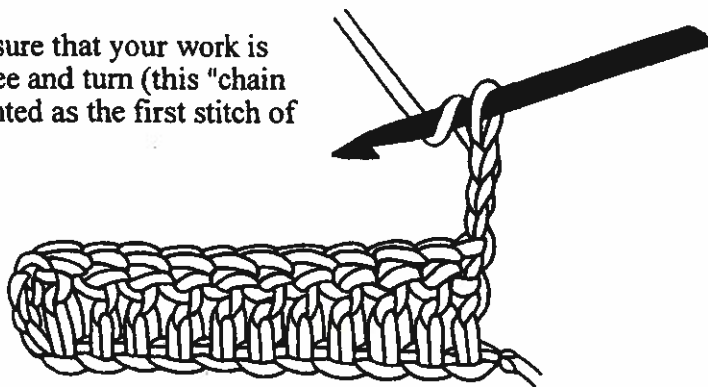


Yarn over again and draw the hook through the first two loops on the hook. You will now have two loops on the hook.



Yarn over again and draw the hook through the remaining two loops on the hook. You should now have one loop on the hook (one completed double crochet). Continue across the row, making one double crochet in each chain stitch.

Again, count your stitches to ensure that your work is progressing correctly. Chain three and turn (this "chain three" turning chain will be counted as the first stitch of the next row).



For additional rows:

To begin an additional row, yarn over and insert your hook into the second stitch of the previous row. Now work a double crochet.

Work a double crochet in each stitch across the row. The last stitch should be worked into the turning chain of the previous row. You should insert the hook into the top chain.

Count your stitches and then chain three and turn.

Blocking

Blocking is an important step to complete a hand-made garment. It gives the article a smooth, finished look. Pieces of a garment may be blocked separately before sewn together, or blocked after it is complete. However, many garments need to be blocked again after each washing.

It is important to check yarn labels for blocking directions. Some synthetic yarns need to be machine washed and dried to look finished. Others must be hand washed and dried flat.

Damp Towel Method

This method uses only moisture and is good for mohair, wool, cotton, synthetics and highly textured yarns.

1. Lay a wet towel on a flat surface. Shape the wet or dry garment or pieces on the towel, using a tape measure to be sure the measurements of the pieces are the same size as the pattern pieces.
2. Avoid the creasing in seams and sleeves by placing rolled and crumpled white tissue paper inside the seams and sleeve.
3. Cover the garment with a wet towel and leave in place until completely dry. This could take a few days, depending upon the weight of the yarn.

Steaming:

This method is risky because it is easy to ruin a garment if not done properly. *Never* place an iron directly on the article; the heat and weight can crush the fibers, which will not recover.

Use steam only if absolutely necessary, working carefully under the supervision of an adult.

1. Place the garment on a towel-covered flat surface. Cover the garment with another light-weight towel.
2. Hold a hot-steam iron 1" to 2" above the top towel, pausing along seams and areas that require more blocking. Allow the top towel to cool before checking the garment. More than one steaming may be required.

Dry Cleaning:

Some crocheters prefer to have their garments blocked by dry cleaning. This is a bit risky, because dry cleaning can cause severe shrinking and/or matting.

Unless a dry cleaning establishment has an excellent reputation for good work, dry cleaning should be the last resort for blocking hand-made garments.

References

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The Complete Encyclopedia of Stitchery, by Mildred Graves Ryan: Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, New York (1979).

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4-H PLEDGE

I pledge my head to clearer thinking,
my heart to greater loyalty,
my hands to larger service,
and my health to better living,
for my club, my community, my country, and my world.