

♥
TEACH YOURSELF

How to hold the work, chains, double & treble crochet, slip stitch and more

How to Crochet

OUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO CROCHET IS AVAILABLE AT www.stylecraft-yarns.co.uk



♥
WE LOVE!
This stunning blanket and bolster design in Stylecraft Malabar DK Pattern 9285

Text © Inside Crochet/Claire Montgomerie. Illustrations © Inside Crochet/Sean Miles

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

Stylecraft



I have always believed that anyone can learn to crochet, so long as you follow one simple rule: don't try to run before you can chain! The chain is the most simple of stitches and therefore ideal for

practising the all-important hold, which helps create the perfect tension for forming all the following stitches. When my mother taught me to crochet, she followed her grandmother's lead and helped me to hook metre upon metre of chain before I was shown any further stitches. It was a fantastic foundation for learning the more difficult techniques. Once your chains are looking even and feel comfortable to create, then progressing on to the stitches becomes much easier.

We've teamed up with the lovely people at Stylecraft yarns, who have a wide range of affordable, high-quality yarns, perfect for beginners and more experienced crocheters, to bring you this mini-guide to getting started or rekindling your passion.

Crochet is well known for being relaxing and fun, so my biggest tip is to find a comfy chair, some free time and just enjoy it!

Claire x

TURN THE PAGE FOR ALL YOU NEED TO GET STARTED

Double crochet creates a dense fabric ideal for designs such as this handy storage pot cover from Stylecraft Pattern 8849

THE BASICS

To crochet smoothly and efficiently, you must hold the hook and yarn in a relaxed, comfortable and consistent fashion. This will also ensure that your tension is even and accurate. There are two main ways of holding the hook and two main ways to tension the yarn. You can choose whichever combination feels more natural for you, or a variation on these.

HOLDING THE HOOK



KNIFE GRIP

Hold the hook in your dominant hand as you would a knife.



PENCIL GRIP

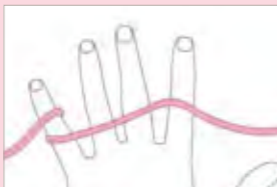
Hold the hook in your dominant hand as you would a pencil.

HOLDING THE YARN



FOREFINGER METHOD

Wrap the ball end of the yarn around the little finger of your opposite hand, under the next two fingers and over the forefinger. Hold the work steady with your middle finger and thumb, then raise your forefinger when working to create tension.



MIDDLE-FINGER METHOD

Wrap the ball end of the yarn around the little finger of your opposite hand and over the other fingers. Hold the work steady with your forefinger and thumb, then raise your middle finger while you are crocheting to create tension.

Working left-handed

To crochet left-handed, simply do the opposite to the right-handed holds. Hold a mirror up to any picture in this guide to see how to work.

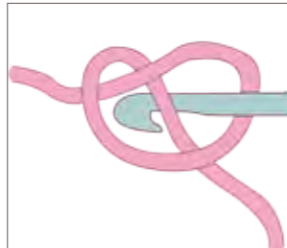
TOPTiP

It doesn't matter if your stitches tend towards being slightly tight or even a little loose; you are aiming for an even tension throughout to achieve a professional finish.

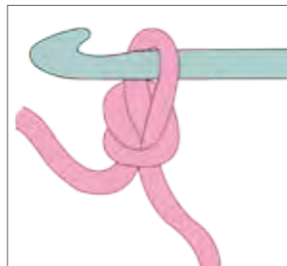
GETTING STARTED

SLIPKNOT

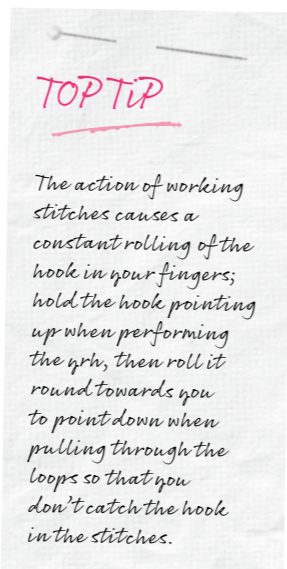
A slipknot creates the first loop on the hook.



1 Make a loop in the yarn around 10–20cm/4–8in from the end. Insert hook through loop, catch the back strand of yarn and pull it through to the front.



2 Pull the ends of the yarn to secure the knot around the hook, but not too tightly or it will be hard to pull the first loop of chain through.

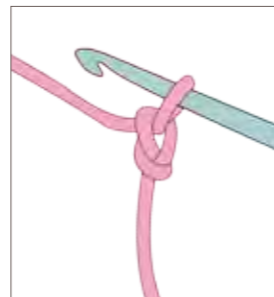


CHAIN

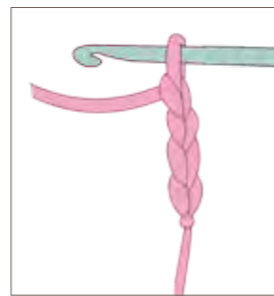
Most crochet projects begin with a length of chain. This is the perfect stitch to practise your hold and tension with.



1 Holding just the hook with point up in your dominant hand, and the yarn in the other, grip the slipknot with the yarn holding hand. Work a yarn round hook (yrh or yoh) by passing the hook in front of the yarn, under and around it.



2 Roll the hook round in your fingers towards you to catch the yarn and pull through loop on hook. One chain made.



3 Ensuring the stitches are even – not too loose or tight – repeat to make a length of chain.

THE MAIN STITCHES

SLIP STITCH (sl st)

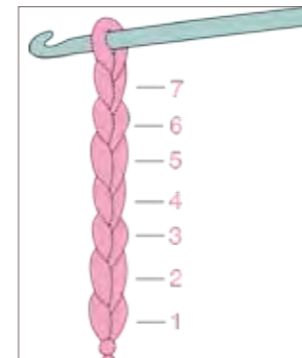
A slip stitch is usually used to join one stitch to another, or to join a stitch to another point. It is generally made by picking up two strands of a stitch but when used all over, you usually only pick up the back loop.



1 Insert hook into st or chain required. Yarn over hook, as when you make a chain. Pull a loop through all stitches/loops/work on hook to finish slip stitch.

COUNTING A CHAIN

The right side of your chain is the one that looks like a little plait of “v” shapes. Each “v” is a stitch and must be counted. When you are working the chain, you do not count the slipknot, but begin to count your chain when you pull through the first loop. To count the chain afterwards you count the slipknot as the first stitch, but not the loop on the hook, or “working” loop.

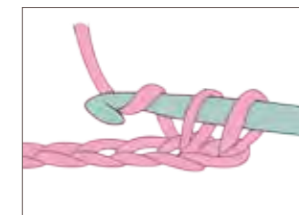


Double crochet stitches are perfect for making amigurumi, while treble crochets are used to create the classic granny square design



DOUBLE CROCHET (dc)

The smallest stitch, creating a dense fabric perfect for amigurumi.



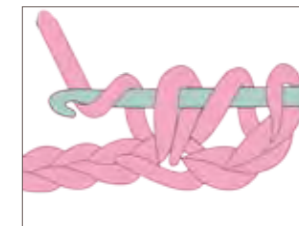
1 Insert hook into chain or stitch, front to back. Yarn over hook and draw through stitch to front, leaving you with two loops on the hook. Yarn round hook.



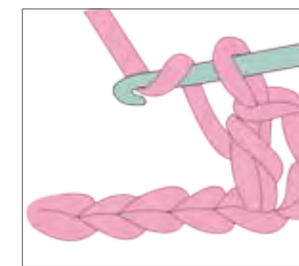
2 Draw through both loops to finish the stitch. Double crochet completed.

HALF TREBLE CROCHET (htr)

Slightly taller than a double crochet stitch, with a softer drape to the resulting fabric.

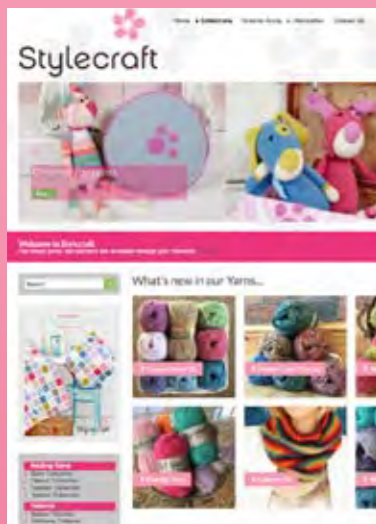


1 Yarn over hook, insert hook into st from front to back and draw loop through stitch only. This gives you three loops on the hook. Yarn round hook.



2 Draw yarn through three remaining loops on the hook together to complete half treble.

For PDF versions of Stylecraft's shade cards, visit www.stylecraft-yarns.co.uk



➔ One of the most well-known and respected names in the hand knitting business, Stylecraft offers yarns which reflect the latest fashion trends together with those essential classics and irresistible baby yarns that are ideal for knitting and crochet. We pride ourselves on offering excellent quality yarn at great prices and our designs embrace garments for all the family as well as toys and accessories.

Visit our website at www.stylecraft-yarns.co.uk for information on all our new and existing product ranges, plus some fantastic free patterns for you to enjoy too!

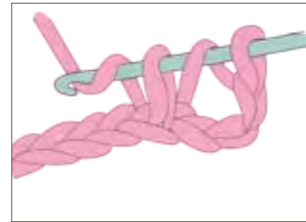


Finding a stockist near you

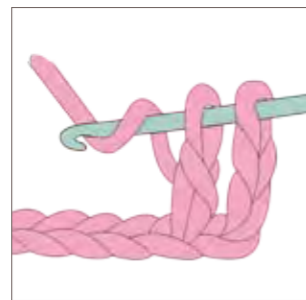
➔ To find your nearest local, independent yarn store that stocks Stylecraft yarns, please visit www.stylecraft-yarns.co.uk/stockists.php and enter your postcode into the online form.

TREBLE CROCHET (tr)

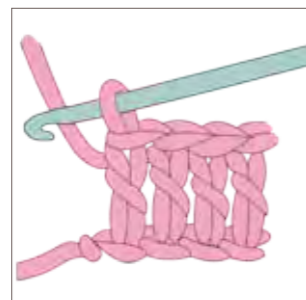
The tallest of the basic stitches, great for using within more complex patterns.



1 Yarn round hook, insert hook into stitch from front to back and draw loop through stitch only. This gives you three loops on the hook. Yarn round hook.



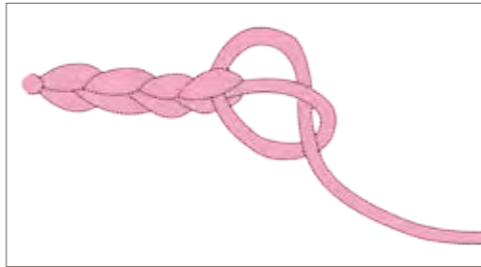
2 Pull loop through two loops. Two loops on hook. Yarn round hook.



3 Pull loop through the remaining two loops to complete treble, repeat to end of row.

FASTEN OFF

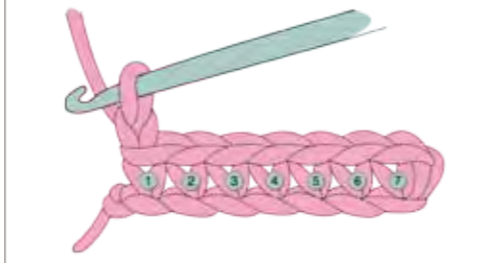
Pull up final loop of last stitch to make it bigger and cut the yarn, leaving enough of an end to weave in. Pull end through loop, and pull up tightly to secure.



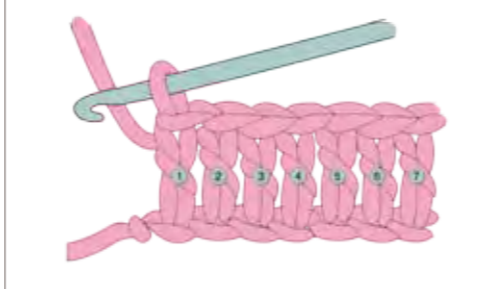
COUNTING STITCHES

Count the post or "stem" of each stitch from the side of your work. Each post counts as one stitch.

Double crochet



Treble crochet



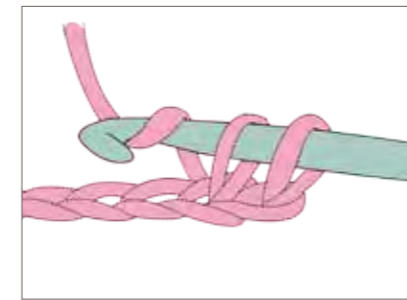
TOPTIP

Try to count your stitches at regular intervals, usually at the end of every, or every other, row and especially after an increase or decrease row. It is best to try to catch any mistakes as quickly as possible, as this will make them much easier to rectify!

USING THE STITCHES

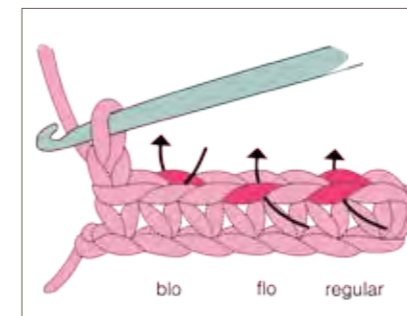
WORKING INTO A CHAIN

When working into a chain, you need to miss out the appropriate number of chain stitches called for with your particular stitch (see the information on turning chains, to the right). Now insert the hook from front to back into the next chain, under the top loop of the chain. Yarn over and draw a loop through to the front of the chain.



WORKING INTO WHICH LOOP?

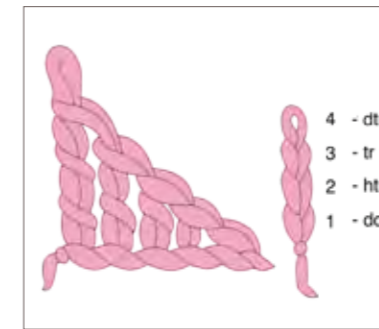
Crochet stitches are always worked through both loops of the next stitch (this looks like a "v" on top of the stitch), unless the pattern tells you otherwise.



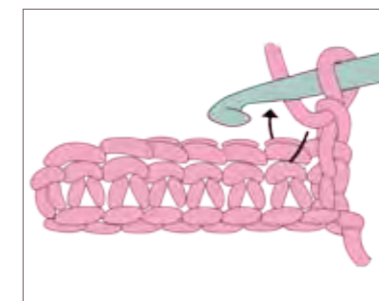
Sometimes a pattern will ask you to work only through one loop of the stitch. To work through the front loop only (flo), insert your hook under the front loop of the next stitch, then bring it out at the centre of the stitch, then complete. To work through the back loop only (blo), insert your hook through the centre of the stitch, then under the back loop to the back, then complete the stitch. Sometimes you are even asked to work in between the stitches. In this case, ignore the top loops of the stitch and insert your hook between the posts of adjoining stitches.

WORKING STRAIGHT

When working straight, you need to turn your work at the end of a row and then work a turning chain (t-ch) to the height of your intended stitch so that you can continue working along the next row. This chain often counts as the first stitch of the row and each type of stitch uses a different number of chain stitches for the turning chain.



With htr and taller stitches, you now miss out the first stitch of the row, then work into every following stitch. This is because the turning chain is tall enough to count as the first stitch itself, so is counted as the first stitch of the row. This also means that you must remember to work the last stitch of a row into the top of the previous row's turning chain.



WORKING INTO A SPACE

Sometimes you are asked to work into a space or a chain space. To do this simply insert your hook into the hole underneath the chain, then complete your stitch normally.

This is similar to working into a ring, as shown on page 94.



Sometimes you are asked to work into a space or chain space. To do this, simply insert your hook into the hole underneath the chain and complete the stitch normally

KEEPING STRAIGHT EDGES

Knowing which stitch to work into when working straight can be a problem for beginners, because the turning chain has such a role to play. If you don't know which stitch to work into after making your turning chain, simply unravel back to the last stitch from previous row and insert a thread or stitch marker into that stitch. Make your desired turning chain then miss out the stitch with the thread in (except with dc stitches), as your turning chain now counts as the first stitch of the row. Once you have worked across all stitches in the row, you must remember to put a stitch into the top of the previous row's turning chain, as this also counts as a stitch.

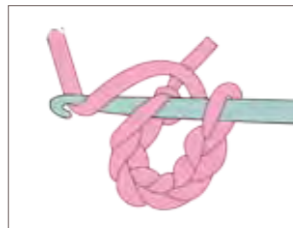
CROCHET PATTERNS
from
Stylecraft

WORKING IN THE ROUND

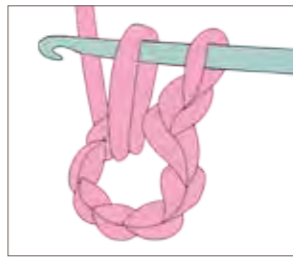
When working in the round, instead of working backwards and forwards along the work, turning at the end of each round, you simply work with the right side facing you at all times and you do not turn. When working in the round, you generally begin one of three ways:

WORKING AROUND A RING

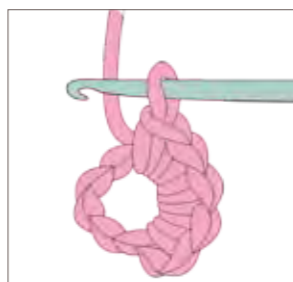
This method of working in the round creates a large hole at the centre of your work. Its size is dependent on the length of chain used.



Make a length of chain as required, then insert your hook into the first chain stitch you made. Yarn round hook.



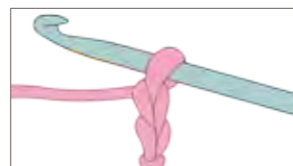
Work a slip stitch to join, creating a ring, and then work your turning chain dependent on which stitch you will be working into the ring. Insert hook into the centre of the ring and work the first stitch into this ring.



Work required number of stitches into the centre of the ring and join round with a slip stitch. Do not turn, but continue the next row around the last.

WORKING INTO A SHORT CHAIN

You can create a smaller hole in the centre of your work by working into a chain as short as 2ch long.



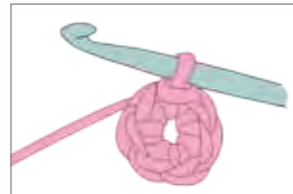
For double crochets, as in this example, work 2ch. For htr you would work 3ch and for trebles, 4ch.



Insert hook into the top loop of the first chain as shown. Yarn round hook.



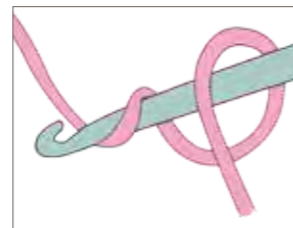
Complete the first stitch in the chain as shown (illustrations show dc, but can be any stitch).



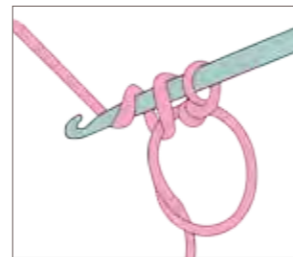
Now work the required amount of stitches into the same chain. The sheer amount of stitches worked into one place will cause them to fan out into a round. Now join this round with a slip stitch and continue with the pattern.

ADJUSTABLE RING

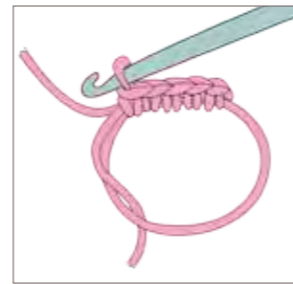
This method is also referred to as the magic loop or ring, as it creates a round with no hole at the centre. Here it is demonstrated with double crochet.



Make a loop in your yarn, at least 15cm/6in from the tail end. Insert hook through the loop from front to back.



Pull yarn through to front of loop and complete the stitch around the loop and the tail end of yarn held double.

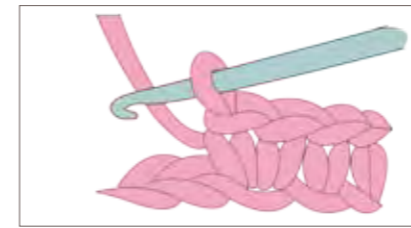


Work all the following stitches into the ring in the same way, over the two strands of yarn in the loop. Once all stitches have been worked, pull the loose tail end of the yarn to close the ring and join the round with a slip stitch.

SHAPING, COLOURWORK & TENSION

Once you've learned simple shaping stitches, you can create almost any garment – and add in different colours as you go with our simple technique. Make sure to check your tension first though, or your finished piece could be completely the wrong size!

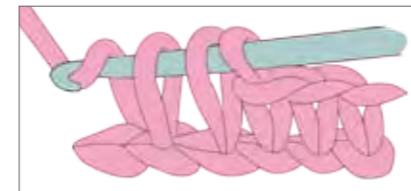
INCREASING



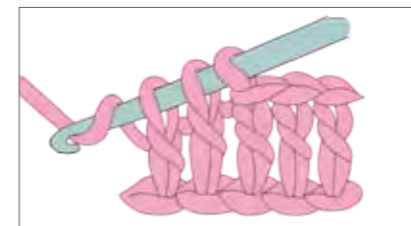
To work an extra stitch, you simply need to work into the same stitch more than once. Work one stitch as normal. Insert hook into same stitch you've just worked and complete another stitch. One stitch increased.

DECREASING

To decrease a stitch, you need to work into two stitches without finishing them, then work them together.



For a double crochet (above), insert hook into next st, yarn over hook and draw a loop through the stitch, but do not finish the double crochet stitch as usual. Insert hook into following st, yarn over hook and draw a loop through the next st, so there are three loops on the hook in total. Yarn over hook and draw the loop through all loops on hook, drawing two stitches together. One stitch decreased.



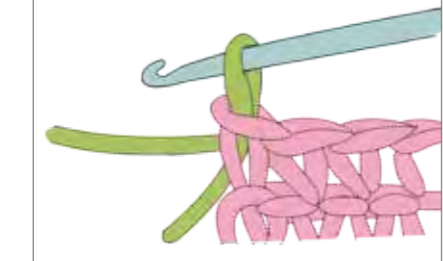
For a treble crochet, work a treble into the next stitch until the last step of the stitch, two loops on hook. Do the same into the following stitch, three loops on hook. Draw through all three loops on hook to draw the two trebles together. One stitch decreased.

JOINING IN A NEW COLOUR

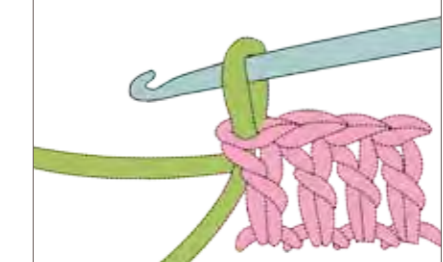
To join in a new colour (or a new ball of the same colour), you can simply fasten off the old yarn and then attach the new colour with a slip stitch into the top of the last stitch made. However, for a neater join, you can also work the colour change as follows:

Work the last stitch in the colour you are using first, up to the final step, so that the stitch is unfinished. Pull the new colour through the loops on your hook, completing the stitch and joining the new colour at the same time.

Working a new colour over double crochet

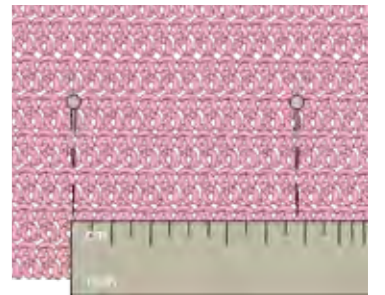


Working a new colour over treble crochet



Once you have joined in the new yarn, you can weave in the ends of both yarns as you go, by holding them on top of your stitches and working round them as you work into the following stitches. Do this for at least 5cm/2in then cut the remaining ends.

TENSION/GAUGE



A tension swatch is used to ensure that you are working at the tension called for in the pattern. It is essential to check this, otherwise your finished garment is likely to be the wrong size! Crochet a small square of just over 10 x 10cm/4 x 4in in the main yarn and stitch used in the pattern, then count and calculate the average amount of stitches per cm.

Chain a few more stitches and work more rows than the tension in the pattern suggests you'll need for this size. Once you have completed the swatch, use a measuring tape or ruler, place some pins at 0 and 10 and take some average measurements – count how many stitches and rows to 10cm at different points over the swatch.

If you find you have more stitches per cm than indicated in the pattern, then your tension is too tight and you need to work more loosely. The best way to do this is to increase the size of hook you're using by a quarter or half millimetre until the tension is as close as you can get it. If there are fewer stitches than required, then you are crocheting too loosely, and you need to decrease the size of hook used in the same way.

BLANKET IN A BAG PATTERN 9286

Perfect for picnics or lounging at the beach, and crocheted in seven shades of Malabar DK.



THROW AND CUSHION COVER PATTERN 9287

These pretty motif designs are worked in Sundae DK, a variegated cotton/acrylic blend ideal for summer!



GRANNY SQUARE WRAP PATTERN 9288

Use Classique Cotton to create a colourful and stylish wrap for warmer days.

CLUSTERS

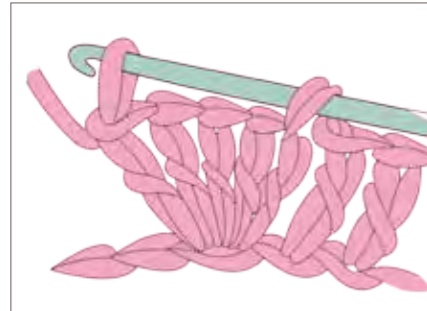
Clusters are groups of stitches worked into the same stitch, but rather than an increase, they still only equate to one stitch overall. Clusters can be confusing to work, so here are the details of some of the main cluster stitches.

BOBBLE

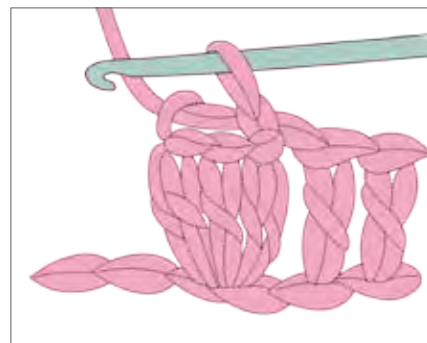
A bobble is a number of stitches (generally trebles), half finished and all worked into the same stitch. Work each stitch until the last step, omitting this final step. Once the desired number of half finished trebles have been completed, you will have one more loop on your hook than you have half finished trebles. Yarn round hook, then pull through all loops on hook to complete the bobble.

POPCORNS

Popcorns are a number of complete stitches worked into one stitch.



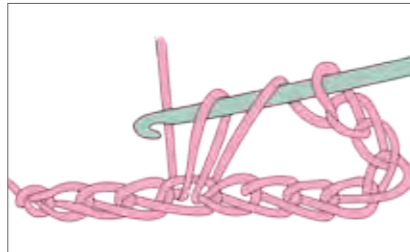
1 Once the sts are completed, remove your hook and insert back into the first stitch worked, then through the final loop.



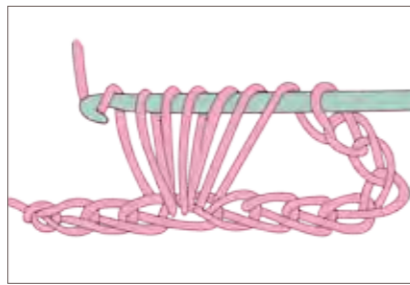
2 Yarn round hook and pull through everything on the hook. Popcorn complete.

PUFFS

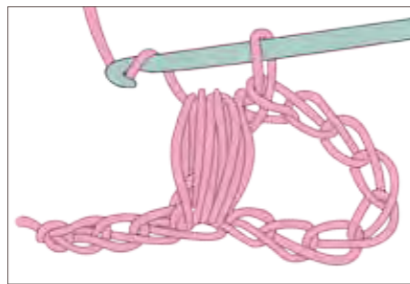
A puff is a number of elongated half trebles worked into the same stitch and then finished together, as follows:



1 Yarn round hook, insert into next stitch, pull a loop through the stitch and then pull it up to the height of all other stitches in the row.



2 Yarn round hook, insert into same stitch, pull a loop through stitch and pull it up to the height of all other stitches in the row. Repeat this step the desired number of times.



3 Yarn round hook and pull through all loops on hook. Puff made.

Choose light-coloured yarn for your first few projects to make sure that you can see all of your stitches easily – this helps prevent mistakes occurring

TIPS AND TRICKS

Working from a pattern

Once you have “cracked the code” and understand the stitches’ abbreviations, a pattern becomes much easier to read. Don’t read a pattern fully before starting it as it may make it seem more complex, but do take a brief look through to check if there are any abbreviations you are unfamiliar with. Consult the abbreviations tables opposite before beginning.

Purchase yarn with the same dye lot number on the balls to avoid unwanted colour changes and choose light coloured yarn for your first projects to make sure that you can see your stitches easily – this helps prevent mistakes occurring.

If you are attempting a project with multiple size options, circle or highlight the instructions for the size you are making throughout the pattern to avoid confusion. The smallest size is listed first, then all following ones inside brackets, increasing in size and separated by commas.

Where a pattern has an accompanying chart, use this for reference, as it shows the formation of the stitches as they will be worked and can help with tricky instructions.

Finally, and most importantly, for projects that need to have a good fit, always check your tension by swatching before you begin.

ABBREVIATIONS

Note: *Inside Crochet* uses UK terms throughout

alt · alternate	etr · extended treble	prev · previous
bef · before	est · established	rem · remain(s); remaining
beg · begin(s); beginning	fdc · foundation double crochet	rep(s) · repeat(s)
bet · between	flo · front loop only	rev dc · reverse double crochet
blo · back loop only	fo · follows; following	rnd(s) · round(s)
ch(s) · chain(s)	fr · foundation treble crochet	RS · right side
ch-sp(s) · chain space(s)	g · gram(s)	rtrf · raised treble front
cl(s) · cluster(s)	gp(s) · group(s)	rtrb · raised treble back
cm · centimetre(s)	hk · hook	sl · slip
cont · continue(s); continuing	htr · half treble crochet	sl st · slip stitch
dc · double crochet	htr2tog · work two htr together	sp(s) · space(es)
dc2tog · work two dc together	inc(s) · increase(s); increasing; increased	st(s) · stitch(es)
dec(s) · decrease(s); decreasing; decreased	in · inch(es)	t-ch(s) · turning chain(s)
dtr · double treble crochet	lp(s) · loop(s)	tog · together
dtr2tog · work two dtr together	m · stitch marker	tr · treble crochet
ea · each	mm · millimetre(s)	trtr · triple treble
ech · extended chain	nc · not closed	tr2tog · work two trebles together
edc · extended double crochet	patt · pattern	WS · wrong side
	pm · place marker	yd(s) · yard(s)
		yoh · yarn over hook
		yrh · yarn round hook

BREAKING THE LANGUAGE BARRIER

UK and US terms have differing meanings which can create difficulty for the crocheter. Here’s a handy reference guide to overcome any misunderstandings.

UK TERMS

Chain
Miss
Slip stitch
Double crochet
Half treble crochet
Treble crochet
Double treble crochet
Triple treble crochet
Raised treble back/front

US TERMS

Chain
Skip
Slip stitch
Single crochet
Half double crochet
Double crochet
Treble crochet
Double treble crochet
Back/front post dc

CHARTS KEY

○ adjustable ring	~ fl only	⋈ tr	⋈ rtrf	⋈ tr2tog	⋈ 3-tr cl
• sl st	× dc	⋈ dtr	⋈ rtrb	⋈ tr3tog	⋈ popcorn
o ch	⊗ fdc	⋈ trtr	×× dc2tog	⋈ puff	⋈ linked tr
~ bl only	⋈ htr				

Note on... Hook sizes

Hook sizes and their designations vary from country to country. When following the recommendations in a pattern or on a ball band, make sure to check which size convention is being used.

CROCHET HOOK SIZES

Metric (mm)	UK	US
0.60		14
0.75		12
1		11
1.25		7
1.50		6
1.75		5
2	14	
2.25		B/1
2.5	12	
2.75		C/2
3	10	
3.25		D/3
3.5	9	E/4
3.75		F/5
4	8	G/6
4.5	7	7
5	6	H/8
5.5	5	I/9
6	4	J/10
6.5	3	K-/10 1/2
7	2	
8	0	L/11
9	00	M/13
10	000	N/15
11.5		O
12		P
15		Q
20		S