



# Crocheting

Crocheting can be fast and fun! With only a hook and a few balls of yarn you will be able to create beautiful articles for yourself and your home.

## I. Equipment

### a) Crochet Hooks

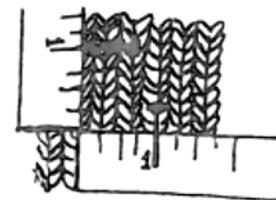
- Crochet hooks are made of steel, plastic, or polished aluminum.
- The size you use depends upon the size of yarns used and the size holes you want.
- A large crochet hook is generally used with thicker yarns; a small hook with fine threads.
- If you are making an article of clothing from a pattern, it is important to choose the size hook and yarn as specified in the directions.

### b) Yarns and Thread

- Crochet thread is usually rayon or cotton.
- Yarns can be wool or synthetics as well as cotton.
- When choosing the yarn for your project, buy all you need at one time. This makes sure you will get the same dye lot so every ball will be exactly the same color.
- To substitute another type of yarn for the kind that's specified in the pattern, choose yarn which is the same size or "ply". For example, if your pattern says to use "J & P Coates Red Heart" you can choose any other 4-ply yarn to substitute for it. Then check the gauge you get with your yarn to make sure the article will be the same finished size. By substituting yarns, you may get a different appearance, but that makes your crocheting distinctively yours.
- Give some thought to the end use of the article. Will it need to be laundered often? If "yes" is your answer, consider buying synthetic yarn rather than wool so it can be washed in the washing machine and dried in a dryer.

## 2. Gauge

- When crocheting something that has to be a certain size when finished (such as a vest or a hat) you have to crochet to the same size or "gauge" as the pattern.
- Gauge is the number of stitches crosswise in 2.5 cm and the number of rows lengthwise in 2.5 cm.
- To check your gauge: crochet a swatch about 4.5 cm square, using the yarn and hook you have chosen for the project. Block, according to section 7 in this fact sheet, then measure out a box 2.5 cm square in the middle. Count the number of stitches and rows. If there are more stitches and rows in one inch than specified, try a larger hook. If there are fewer rows and stitches in one square inch, use a smaller hook.



### 3. To Hold Hook and Yarn

- Begin by making a loop near the end of the thread with ball end over the short end. Hold loop between thumb and forefinger on left hand.
- Hold hook in right hand as you would a pencil, with your fingers about halfway down the hook.
- Put hook through loop. Catch the long end of thread coming from the ball and draw it through.
- Pull short end and ball thread in opposite directions to make the knot slide up the yarn and the loop tighten just underneath the hook.
- To control “tension” or tightness of thread, “thread” your left hand with the yarn coming from the ball in this way: up between ring and little finger, around little finger and back up on top of hand, over (or under) next two fingers, over the forefinger. Keep thumb and forefinger or second finger on left hand near the stitch you are working.
- Hold hook in right hand. (Reverse all this if you are left-handed.)



### 4. Basic Stitches

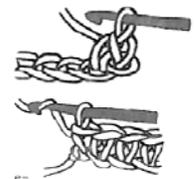
#### a) Chain Stitch (ch.)

- Insert hook in loop.
- Slip hook under thread coming over left forefinger and catch thread with hook.
- Draw thread through loop on hook. This makes one chain. Do not pull really tight.
- Repeat until you have as many chains as needed. The most recently made loop always remains on the hook.
- Try to make each chain the same size as the last.



#### b) Single Crochet Stitch (cc.)

- Make a string of chains about 20 stitches long as a foundation.
- Insert the hook from the front under the top two threads of the second chain from the hook.
- Catch thread with the hook (called "yarn over", "thread over", or "yo" in pattern) and draw it through the stitch. There are now two loops on hook.
- Yarn over hook, and draw thread through the two loops. One loop remains on the hook. This completes one single crochet.
- Repeat from step two as many times as required, making dc. in each St.



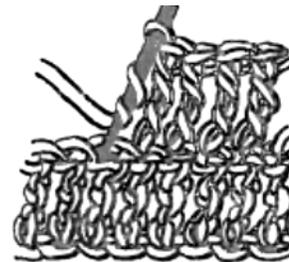
#### c) Double Crochet Stitch (dc.)

- Start on foundation chain.
- Yarn over hook (yo), insert hook from the front under the top two threads of the fourth chain from hook.
- Yarn over hook; draw hook through the chain (leaving three loops on hook).
- Yarn over hook; draw through two loops (leaving two loops on hook).
- Yarn over hook, draw through two remaining loops (leaving one loop on hook). This completes one Dc.
- Repeat from step 2 as many times as required, making dc. in each St.



#### d) Triple Crochet Stitch (tc.)

- Start on foundation chain.
- Yarn over hook TWICE, insert sixth chain from hook.
- Draw thread through chain (leaving four loops on hook).
- Yarn over hook; draw thread through two loops (leaving three loops on hook).
- Yarn over hook; draw thread through two loops (leaving two loops on hook).
- Yarn over hook; draw thread through two loops (leaving one loop on hook). This completes one tc.
- Repeat from step 2 as many times as required, making tc. in each St.



#### e) Slip Stitch (sl. St.)

- Insert hook through stitch.
- Yarn over hook.
- Draw hook through stitch and loop in one motion. This stitch is often used to join seams. It is sometimes called for in patterns when completing one round of a pattern.



## 5. Crocheting Abbreviations

ch - chain	sc - single crochet	dc - double crochet
tc - triple crochet	hdc - half double crochet	sl st - slip stitch
st(s) - stitch(es)	tog - together	dec - decrease
inc - increase	rnd - round	sp - space
yo - yarn over	pat - pattern	beg - beginning
pc - picot	rem - remaining	lp - loop
	cl - cluster	

## 6. How to Read Directions

#### a) Asterisk (\*)

- Instructions immediately following \* are to be repeated a certain number of times.
- eg: "repeat from \* four times more" means five times in all.

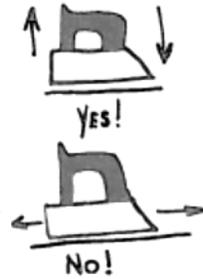
#### b) Parentheses ( )

- Do what is specified between parentheses the given number of times.
- eg: "(sc, sk 1 st, dc, sk 1 st) four times" would mean you do what is between ( ) four times in all.

## 7. Blocking and Finishing

- After each piece of the article is crocheted, before stitching seams together, each piece must be "blocked". This means that the piece is stretched or shrunk to the exact size stated in the pattern and then pressed.
- Synthetic yarns (nylon, acrylics, polyesters, etc) won't shrink or stretch with steam pressing, so lay piece on ironing board. Pin to board so corners are square. Steam press lightly. Avoid flattening yarns. Always move iron in up and down motion rather than sideways to prevent the article from pulling out of shape.

- To block wool garments, lay each piece separately on ironing board (or table padded with towels) wrong side up. Pin edges of article to board, stretching or pushing together to make the piece the right size. Cover with a wet cloth and pass the hot iron lightly over the cloth. Do not apply any pressure or you will flatten the yarns. Leave article pinned to the board until it's dry.
- To finish thread ends, cut off to about four inches long and thread remainder on a darning needle. Darn the thread end in the back of the loops as far as it will go, and clip off ends close to the last stitch.



## 8. Evaluation

Let's take an honest critical look at your completed article. The first and most important point is:

- Does it fulfill all the requirements of good design?
- Is the tension of thread or yarn even throughout? (big holes, bulges, and tight spots indicate tension wasn't even)
- Are thread ends darned in so they won't catch or pull out?
- Does the article look neat, clean, and well pressed?
- Did you choose a fiber and yarn thickness suitable to the end use of the article? (eg: if you make a crocheted bikini out of wool, you won't be able to go swimming because it will shrink!)
- Do the colors (if more than one are used) look attractive together?
- Do the seams lie flat without puckering or pulling?
- Is the type of stitch used suitable to the article? (A room divider is supposed to let light through - so the pattern should have large open spaces; a cushion cover with the same size holes would snag and pull in no time!)

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## **Project Resources:**



### **Pinterest – The Visual Discovery Tool**

Pinterest is a social media bulletin board for you to virtually pin pictures of things that interest you to your own personal boards – Pin-Explore-Discover! 4-H Manitoba has a Pinterest account. Each project series has a board full of fun and interesting ideas. There are also boards for 4-H Awesome, Community Service, Volunteers, Communications and Building Blocks. Check it out at [www.pinterest.com/4hmanitoba/](http://www.pinterest.com/4hmanitoba/).

The following links may be useful in completing your project:

[http://www.redheart.com/files/patterns/pdf/J27-0001\\_KnittingMadeEasy\\_2.pdf](http://www.redheart.com/files/patterns/pdf/J27-0001_KnittingMadeEasy_2.pdf) A free to download instruction book for knitting and crocheting including patterns

<http://www.yarnspirations.com/> Free patterns and ideas

[http://www.canadianliving.com/crafts/crochet/an\\_introduction\\_to\\_crocheting.php](http://www.canadianliving.com/crafts/crochet/an_introduction_to_crocheting.php)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=THBKnrzyjhU&index=1&list=PLyUW7HzKUEk5KqsUlWnWX6K5by0JLswCo)

[v=THBKnrzyjhU&index=1&list=PLyUW7HzKUEk5KqsUlWnWX6K5by0JLswCo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=THBKnrzyjhU&index=1&list=PLyUW7HzKUEk5KqsUlWnWX6K5by0JLswCo) Videos showing the basic motions of stitches for beginners.

Sections of the Crocheting Fact Sheets were adapted from  
*Creative Craft Techniques* with the permission of the  
Manitoba Department of Agriculture.

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