

# LEARN TO CROCHET

## Crochet Basics Resource Guide

This guide provides an overview of crochet concepts, equipment, stitches, and techniques. When you're ready to try a beginner project, follow one of the online tutorials at the end of this guide.



### Basic Concepts

- **Gauge:** Gauge is the measure of how big your stitches are and will let you know if you are using the right hook and yarn for a project. For crochet items that you want to wear or to be a certain size, gauge is very important. To measure gauge, make a sample swatch with stitches you will use in the pattern. Next, count the number of stitches per inch and rows per inch. If it matches the gauge given in the pattern, you are good. If not, you will need to either go up or down a hook size. The image at right is of three sample swatches of single crochet using three different hook sizes: F, G, and I. Each uses the same number of stitches and the same pattern and yarn, but the hook size is different.
- **Patterns** are shown row by row or round by round. For patterns that use rows, work the pattern in a row. At the end of the row, chain the number of stitches asked for in the pattern. This is called a turning chain. Now take out the hook and turn the work. For patterns worked in a round, a stitch marker should be used to mark the first stitch of the round. Crochet patterns can have a series of steps that are repeated several times across a row. An asterisk in parentheses (\*) is used to indicate the repeats.
- **Reading a pattern:** Crochet patterns are written in shorthand and may seem confusing if you don't speak "crochet" language. Some basic stitch abbreviations include:



<b>ch</b>	chain
<b>sl st</b>	slip stitch
<b>sc</b>	single crochet
<b>sk</b>	skip
<b>hdc</b>	half double crochet
<b>dc</b>	double crochet
<b>tr (or trc)</b>	triple (or treble) crochet
<b>FO</b>	fasten off

## Basic Equipment

- **Crochet hook:** sizes vary based on the material, brand, and country that the hook was produced in. The size of a crochet hook is determined by the diameter of the shaft, or the part of the hook between the point and the handle. The shaft determines how large your stitches will be. Steel, aluminum, plastic, and bamboo are all common materials for hooks.
- **Yarn** is often sold as a skein. It comes in different textures and materials, including acrylic and wool, and is often described by its weight. Super fine is suitable for doilies, while super bulky is good for blankets and finger crocheting. Worsted weight (size 4) is the most commonly available weight of yarn.
- **Stitch markers** are often used in crochet. If you are working in a round, you will want to mark your beginning stitch with a stitch marker. The same marker can also be used to mark the right side (RS) of the project. Stitch markers can be as simple as a safety pin, a paperclip, or a contrasting color of yarn. You can also buy special stitch markers at your favorite craft stores.
- **Yarn needles** can be used to weave in yarn ends.

## Basic Stitches and Techniques

- **Basic stitches** include slip knot and chain stitches (ch), single crochet (sc), double crochet (dc), triple or treble crochet (trc), and slip stitch (sl st).
- **Basic techniques** include keeping an even tension, working in rows, making turning chains, working in the round, making clusters, finishing off, and frogging.

## Beginner Tutorials for Simple Projects

- **Creative Bug with Carla Scott:** In this multipart course, learn the basics of crochet with expert Carla Scott. She covers the fundamentals of crochet outlined in this resource guide and then walks through more advanced techniques. This is a great course for beginners as well as experienced crocheters looking for a refresher. [Available with your library card](#). Search for "Carla Scott" once you've logged in.
- **Creative Bug with Edie Eckman:** Learn to read a crochet pattern line by line in under 20 minutes. In Creative Bug (link above), search for "crochet pattern."
- **Easy Moss Stitch Potholder with Lynnanne Pearson:** Create a simple potholder [using this pattern](#) developed by the library's patron engagement manager.