



Crochet essentials

Over the next few pages, you'll find simple step-by-step guides to many useful stitches and techniques that you'll use every time you pick up a hook

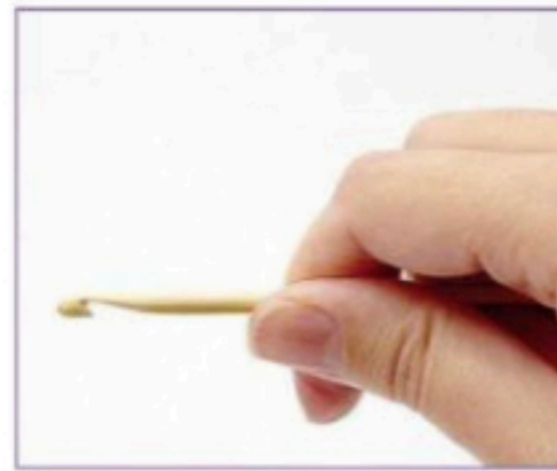
HOLDING THE HOOK

Try these methods and see which works best



PENCIL METHOD

Hold the hook like a pencil, in your right hand (if you're right-handed), about 3-5cm from the hooked end. If your hook has a flat area, you'll find it comfortable to hold it here.



KNIFE METHOD

Hold the hook between your thumb and forefinger, about 3-5cm from the hooked end, resting the end of the hook against your palm. This will give you lots of control.

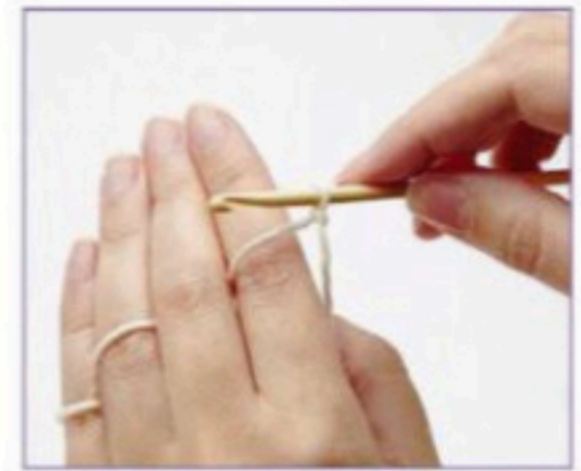
HOLDING THE YARN

Even tension results in even stitches



METHOD ONE

Pass the ball end of the yarn between the little finger and third fingers of your left hand (if you are right-handed), then behind the third and middle fingers, over your index finger.



METHOD TWO

Loop the ball end of the yarn loosely around the little finger of your left hand, then take it over the third finger, behind the middle finger and over your index finger.

MAKING A SLIPKNOT

The first loop on the hook



1 Hold the tail of the ball of yarn in your left hand and drape the yarn clockwise over the top of it to form a loose, circular loop.



2 Hold the loop between left thumb and forefinger, then insert the crochet hook through the centre of the loop from front to back.



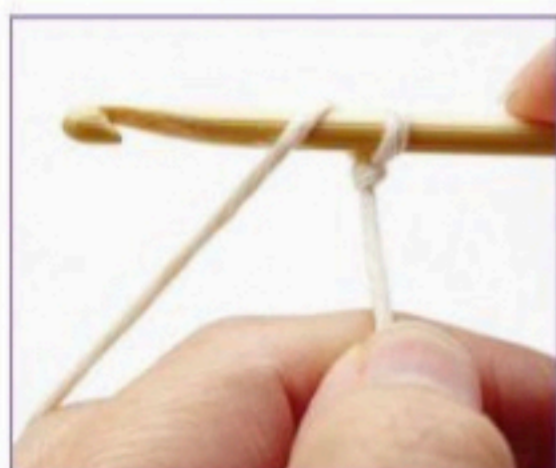
3 Catch the ball end of the yarn with the hook and pull it back through the centre of the loop, taking the yarn through with it.



4 Pull both ends of the yarn to tighten the knot, then pull just the ball end to tighten the loop so it's close to the hook, but not touching it.

CHAIN STITCH

Use this stitch to make your foundation chain



1 Hold the hook in your right hand, and both the yarn end and the working yarn in your left hand. Move the hook under and over the yarn to wrap it around anticlockwise.

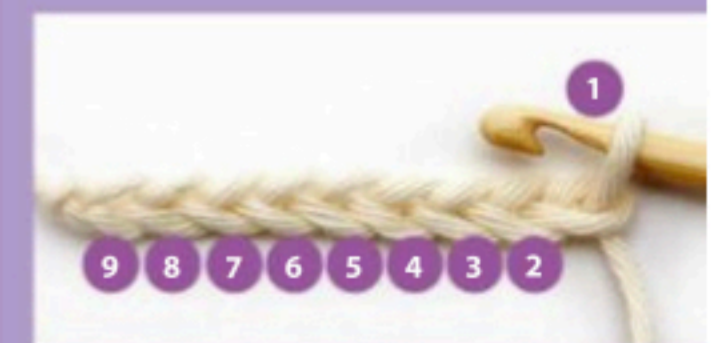


2 Pull the hook towards the slipknot, catching the yarn in the hook, and pulling it through the slipknot loop. This forms your first chain (ch) stitch. Repeat steps 1 and 2 to form a chain length.



3 This is what your row of chains will look like. Hold the chain with your left hand near the hook, to keep the tension. Keep going until you have the number of chains that's stated in your pattern.

How to count chains



Each chain or loop counts as one stitch. Never count your first slipknot or the loop on the hook (called the working loop). So that you can be accurate, make sure the chain is not twisted and that the front is facing you.