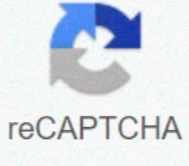




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## Special half double crochet stitch

Crocheted Towels Evidently, sight isn't sufficient for the full appreciation of crochet. Otherwise, why does the hand reach, almost reflexively, to touch its pretty looped designs? Crochet lace, for centuries a household embellishment in most homes, and long deemed a needlecraft worthy of study by young women in both Europe and the New World, continues to capture the attention of anyone who sees it. Even for those whose tastes tend away from romantic touches, there is an almost instant attraction to its unassuming loveliness and charm. In part, this is because crochet edgings, while pretty, are rarely showy or overdone. And, whether we know how to crochet or not, we all know someone who did. Crochet edgings bespeak our grandmothers, aunts, and mothers, suggesting a quiet attention to detail and a loving extra touch. If associations such as these reflect your own relationship to crochet, why not invite a few lacy touches into your own home? Ready-made edgings and borders, available by the yard at fabric stores or adapted from flea-market finds, make it easy to transform even the simplest home textiles into vintage-style home accessories. You can machine- or hand-stitch the filigree embellishments to almost any fabric surface -- dish towels, bath towels, bedding, or attire -- in an afternoon. So, the time it takes is minimal even though the effect it has is delightfully timeless. In most patterns you will start a row with a turning chain, which you see here under the hook. It usually counts as a stitch, and for double crochet consists of a chain 3; the three chain stitches are about the same height as a double crochet stitch. Your pattern will tell you whether or not to count it. With one loop on the hook, take the yarn over your crochet hook. Mollie Johanson Insert your crochet hook into the stitch or space desired. If you're starting with a foundation chain, skip the three chains closest to the hook and insert the hook in the fourth chain. For sample like this, insert the hook in the second stitch, not the one at the base of the turning chain. With your hook in the stitch, take the yarn over the crochet hook again. As you wrap the yarn over, it's like wrapping the yarn over before you inserted the hook. The difference is that there's more yarn on your hook at this point so it's a little more difficult to maneuver. You'll soon get the hang of the motion. Mollie Johanson Pull or "draw" the last yarn over through the point where you inserted the hook--3 loops on the hook. Mollie Johanson Yarn over your hook again, draw it through the two loops closest to the end of the hook--2 loops on the hook. Mollie Johanson Yarn over the hook again, draw it through the remaining loops on the hook--1 loop on the hook, 1 double crochet stitch made. Here you can see the turning chain to the right of the double crochet stitch you made. Mollie Johanson Mollie Johanson The best way to practice the double crochet stitch is by working rows and rows of double crochet stitches. Repeat the steps above for each stitch of the row: Yarn over and insert; yarn over and draw through the fabric; yarn over and draw through two loops; yarn over and draw through the last two loops. As you make stitches, you should start to notice a rhythm to the stitch. In fact, the steps almost blend together so that hooking the yarn over and pulling it through the loops become a single motion. At the end of the row, work into the top of the turning chain of the previous row, turn the work, and chain 3 to begin another row. The more you practice this stitch, the easier it gets. Your stitches will begin to look more even, and will work up faster. Mollie Johanson Basic crochet stitches include single crochet, double crochet, and treble crochet. They're among the first stitches beginners learn, and they're found in most crochet patterns. The US double treble crochet stitch (also called double triple and abbreviated as DTR) is another basic stitch that's the next step up in height from the treble crochet stitch. Tall stitches have unique features, but they're created in the same way as the other basic stitches. So if you know how to crochet a double or treble crochet stitch, the double treble stitch simply requires a few extra steps. Crochet star stitch forms rows of starburst-like stitches, each worked with multiple loops. This stitch is also sometimes called the "Marquerie stitch" or the "daisy stitch," or even a "spiked cluster." That's helpful to know because it gives a visual of how you'll form each "star" with a cluster of "spikes," which you work between. To make the pattern, you also work rows of half double crochet stitch between the rows of stars. You can make star stitches with a varying number of spikes, so you will find different instructions for different variations on this stitch. These directions are for making a common five-spoke star stitch, but they'll help you understand how to make any variation of the stitch. Crochet star stitch has a beautiful thick texture and is great for dense projects, such as washcloths and winter blankets, but you can use it to make just about anything. Let's learn how to make this stitch! Mollie Johanson With the basic half double crochet stitch, you can crochet any HDC pattern that's worked in consistent rows. But for patterns with shaping, you may need to know how to increase and decrease in half double crochet. Don't worry; it's easy. How to Increase HDC To increase, all you do is make an extra half double crochet stitch where you've already made one. Crochet patterns tell you how or where to do this. For example, to increase at the end of the row, crochet two HDC stitches in the final stitch instead of just the one you would usually work. How to Decrease HDC Decreasing is a little different, but still easy. Yarn over and insert hook into stitch. (as normal) Yarn over and pull through. (as normal) Yarn over and insert hook into the next stitch. Yarn over and pull through. (five loops on the hook as shown above) Yarn over and pull through all five loops. The decrease stitch works over two subsequent stitches to bring the two stitches together at the top into one stitch. You might see it abbreviated as hdc2tog (half double crochet two together) or dec hdc (decrease half double crochet). Continue to 9 of 9 below. The Spruce / Kathryn Vercillo You need to have something to work your double crochet stitches into (unless you choose a chainless foundation double crochet, which will be discussed later in this article). Therefore, you need to begin by crocheting a foundation chain. Start with a slip knot. Next, crochet your chain. If you are working with a crochet pattern, then the pattern will tell you how long your foundation chain should be. If you are not working with a pattern, you will crochet a chain that is as long as you want for your project, plus add another two stitches. So for example, let's say that you want to crochet a skinny scarf that is 10 double crochet stitches across. Make a foundation chain that is 10 + 2 (or 12). The reason that you add the extra chains is that those will count as the first double crochet, which you will see in a moment.

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