



4-H Crocheting

Leader's Guide

\$1.00

Helping 4-H'ers learn skills in crocheting can be a challenging—but satisfying—experience. Some members will master skills easily; others will learn slowly and with difficulty. Like most teachers, you're likely to find that you'll learn as much or more than the young people with whom you work.

The 4-H Crocheting project offers opportunities for boys and girls to exercise creativity, develop decision-making abilities, and learn skills that can give pleasure throughout a lifetime. Your role as a leader is to set the stage for these opportunities and help members to:

- Select, use, and care for crocheting tools
- Learn to read and follow crocheting instructions
- Enjoy creating articles for themselves and others to supplement wardrobes and enhance home environments
- Learn about using and caring for crocheted articles
- Have meaningful experiences working and sharing with others
- Keep simple records of projects and activities

The six phases in the Crocheting project, with skills to be learned and suggestions for articles to make and display, are outlined on page 4. None of the phases in the project require a specific article to be made. Members may crochet for themselves or others, deciding individually what will be most meaningful to them. All members are encouraged to progress through each phase in sequence. If done consecutively, phases may be repeated once to improve a particular skill. Repeating later phases (4–6) is encouraged as each contains several options.

A sequence of possible activities for a series of 10 meetings in Phase 1 is outlined on page 3. This is only one example of how meetings might be planned. You may want to have more meetings. Since all members won't work at the same speed and some will need extra help, you may want to have some members come to your home—one or two at a time—between meetings.

Members enrolled in all phases will need work sessions in which techniques are demonstrated and practiced. As skills develop, many members will be able to work on their own with just a bit of help from leaders in reading patterns. Opportunities abound for older members to share their knowledge and skills with others through presentations, displays, and leader-teacher roles.

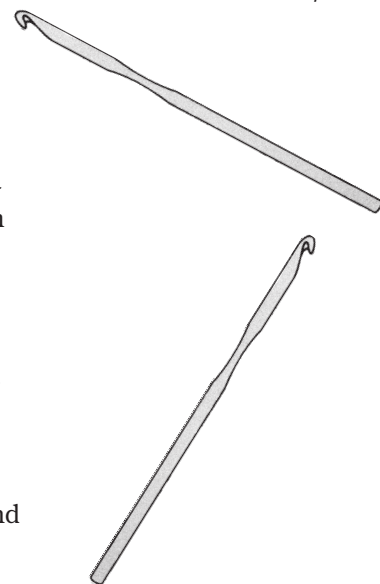
If possible, invite parents to attend the first meeting so they will understand the goals of the project. Remember, there is no one "4-H way." Young people should learn many ways and learn to choose the most appropriate one to use in a particular situation. The 4-H way is one that results in an attractive product, is practical, does the job, and satisfies the individual.

Resource Materials

Additional resources for leaders are contained in the *Resources for Knitting and Crocheting Leaders* notebook, which may be available from your local Extension office. You also can find stitch instructions and patterns online at www.crochet.about.com/library/blbeginners.htm, or search the Web using the key word "crochet."

Teaching Techniques

As a 4-H leader you are a teacher. Using a variety of teaching techniques can help you stimulate and maintain interest in the project. Some of these techniques are described here.



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Demonstrations

A demonstration is showing by doing. It's a technique particularly appropriate in crocheting, where the most effective way to teach nearly all the subject matter is with a demonstration followed by supervised practice sessions.

Not only will leaders be expected to demonstrate techniques to members, but members might be expected to share what they've learned by demonstrating techniques to others. Plan to give every club member an opportunity to speak in front of the group by having each one give an informal "mini" demonstration showing a skill they've learned. More formal, planned presentations may be appropriate later for fairs, workshops, training sessions, or other information-sharing opportunities.

Field trips

Visits to yarn shops and pattern and notions counters are possible in almost every community. Personnel in such establishments usually welcome visits from 4-H groups, if notified in advance. In some areas, museums feature special displays relating to the historical aspects of crocheting. Special community craft fairs or exhibitions may offer opportunities to view a variety of crocheting skills.

Samples and swatches

Members might be encouraged to make a scrapbook or organized collection of samples or swatches showing various crocheting techniques learned in each phase. Making swatches can provide good practice before using a particular technique on a finished article, and each swatch would be a good reference later when planning other articles. Making only a small sample also allows each member to try many different techniques without having to make an entire article. Collections of swatches, incorporated into an educational display or presentation, offer a way of sharing with others what members have learned.

Exhibits and displays

Exhibits and displays are optional and may occur at project meetings, fairs, or other community display or "showcase" opportunities. Generally, young people as well as adults like to show others what they've learned. Exhibits and displays also may offer opportunities for both formal and informal evaluation from others.

Games

Various types of games can be a fun way to learn. Examples might be crossword puzzles using crocheting terms, a matching quiz to pair crochet terms and their abbreviations, or team games where members try to identify different crochet tools. You probably can think of others appropriate for your particular group at various stages of their development.

Others

Other learning opportunities are available by participating in county events such as fun days, training sessions, fairs and exhibitions, fashion revues, and other county and community events. Check with your local Extension office to find out what events might be scheduled in your county.

Evaluation

Young people measure progress in growing in terms of goals or plans. They gain satisfaction when they can see improvement or progress in their work.

Evaluation may occur in a variety of ways. Fair exhibits, for example, offer an opportunity to be evaluated by a qualified judge. Evaluation and feedback from peers and others may occur when finished articles are worn, displayed, or presented as gifts.

Perhaps even more important is the opportunity for self-evaluation. You might encourage members to evaluate their progress periodically by asking them to ask themselves the following questions:

- What am I learning?
- How well do I think I'm doing?
- How do I feel about what I'm doing?
- What do I want to do next?

Example of Meeting Outline (Phase 1)

Meeting	Meeting activities	Do at home
1st	Review projects and requirements. Display crocheted articles. Show equipment needed. Discuss a field trip for a later date (before members purchase yarns, tools).	Obtain yarn and hooks to begin practicing. (Particularly suitable for beginners are a size H aluminum hook and a 4-oz skein of 4-ply yarn.)
2nd	Show members how to hold hook and yarn properly. Teach chain stitch, turns, and single crochet. Discuss gauge and tension.	Practice chain stitch by making a sample swatch to find correct gauge.
3rd	Teach double crochet. Have appropriate patterns available. Each member decides on an article to make.	Practice new stitches by making a sample swatch to find correct gauge. Purchase yarn for first article.
4th	Show how to fasten off. Discuss pattern instructions and abbreviations. Start first articles.	Crochet on first article.
5th	Discuss correcting mistakes. Teach slip stitch to decrease stitches. Show different kinds of yarns and threads.	Continue crocheting first article. Practice slip stitch.
6th	How to block and launder crocheted articles. Member selects second article to make.	Finish first article; practice slip stitch; purchase yarn for second article if first one is finished.
7th	Review crocheting terms and abbreviations. Begin second article.	Crochet on second article.
8th	Discuss demonstrations. Plan activities to share with others what members have learned (for example, plan to invite parents or friends to a meeting where members give demonstrations or presentations and display completed articles).	Continue crocheting; think about ideas for presentations.
9th	Choose topics for presentations. Show how to evaluate crocheted items. Review tools, terms, and reading instructions.	Finish articles; prepare presentations.
10th	Each member gives a presentation. Show completed articles.	

Phase	Skills to learn	Other things to learn	Suggested articles	Exhibits (optional)
1	Winding and joining yarn Reading and understanding a pattern Chain stitch, single crochet, double crochet, slip stitch Increasing, decreasing (if pattern calls for it)	Crocheting tools Crocheting terms Different yarns, threads Gauge and tension Blocking, laundering, and caring for crocheted articles	Two or more articles using skills learned scarf, bag, purse, belt, place mats, pot holder, pillow top, simple stocking cap	One article showing one or more skills learned
2	Combining skills to form various patterns, stitches Understanding more advanced pattern instructions Attaching yarn of another color Treble crochet, double treble, v stitch Crocheting in rounds; increasing, decreasing (if pattern calls for it)	New crochet terms More about yarns, threads More about tension, gauge Achieving textures by varying stitches	Two small or one large article(s) using skills learned scarf, slippers, cape, vest, poncho, skirt, top, simple afghan, toys	One article showing the following skills: (a) one of the new stitches learned in Phase 2, or (b) a combination of stitches learned in Phases 1 and 2. Use of two or more colors is optional.
3	Increasing, decreasing Open or filet mesh, block or solid mesh, long single stitch, shell stitch and variations	More about types and sizes of yarns, textures Using an interchangeable yarn chart New crochet terms Fit of apparel items	Two small or one large article(s) using skills learned (See suggestions listed for Phase 2.)	One article showing the following: (a) one or more stitches learned in Phase 3, or (b) variations or a combination of stitches learned in Phases 2 and 3
4*	Learn at least two of the following: waffle (or rib) stitch, picot (Irish crochet), cluster stitch, popcorn stitch, star stitch, puff stitch	Review of Phases 1–3 to help develop additional skills Experiment with at least four different types of yarn and thread (from rug yarn to bedspread cotton)	Two small or one large article(s) using skills learned sweater with sleeves, cape with arm slits, patterned afghan, rug, small tablecloth or runner, simple doilies	One article showing the following: (a) one or more stitches learned in Phase 4, or (b) variations or a combination of stitches learned in Phases 3 and 4
5*	Learn at least one of the following: afghan stitch, hairpin lace, broomstick crochet	Adapting for any size yarn Using type of yarn or thread suitable for pattern choice	Two small or one large article(s) using skills learned	One article showing one or more of the following skills: (a) afghan stitch, (b) hairpin lace, (c) broomstick lace
6*	Create your own original design using skills learned in previous phases. Inspiration may come from a book, magazine, leader, and/or another individual or source.	Using existing references, resources, and skills in combination Choosing appropriate yarn or thread for article Charting	Two small or one large article(s) of own choosing	One article based on an original design. Include an explanation of why and how it was created and how it will be used.

*It's recommended that Phase 4 be repeated once with different stitches learned the second time. Phases 5 and 6 also are suited particularly for repeating.