

FREE CROCHET BEGINNER'S QUICK-REFERENCE GUIDE

A friendly cheat sheet for basic stitches and the abbreviations you'll see in patterns.

Before you begin

Crochet patterns may use different terms or abbreviations. Read the designer's notes and abbreviation key first, and follow the instructions for that specific pattern.

1. BASIC CROCHET STITCHES

Abbreviation	Stitch name	Quick reminder
CH	Chain	Often used to begin a project or make spaces.
SL ST	Slip stitch	A short stitch used to join, close rounds, or move across work.
SC	Single crochet	A compact stitch; commonly used for dense fabric and amigurumi.
HDC	Half double crochet	A medium-height stitch between single and double crochet.
DC	Double crochet	A taller stitch that can create a flexible fabric with good height.
TR	Treble crochet	A taller stitch often used for open or decorative patterns.

2. COMMON PATTERN ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Meaning	What it tells you
YO	Yarn over	Wrap the yarn over your hook.
SK	Skip	Leave a stitch or space unworked.
SP	Space	A gap or space in the fabric, often made by chains.
ST / STS	Stitch / stitches	A single stitch or multiple stitches.
REP	Repeat	Work the indicated sequence again.
INC	Increase	Make more stitches in a designated place to add width or shape.
DEC	Decrease	Combine stitches or work them together to reduce the stitch count.
FO	Fasten off	Secure and cut the yarn when the instructions tell you to finish.

Remember: Abbreviations can vary by designer. If a term isn't listed here, check the pattern's own abbreviation key.



READING A CROCHET PATTERN

A quick guide to symbols, repeats, and a few details that can save you time.

3. PATTERN PUNCTUATION & SYMBOLS

You may see	How to read it
* ... *	An asterisk marks a sequence to repeat. Follow the pattern's wording for how many times to repeat it.
(...)	Parentheses may group stitches worked in one place, show stitch counts, or mark a repeated sequence. Check the pattern's notes.
[...]	Brackets may group instructions or repeats, often for clarity. Follow the specific pattern's explanation.
"Repeat from **"	Return to the asterisk or instruction named and work that sequence again as directed.
"Across"	Continue the instruction across the row or round, usually to the end unless the pattern says otherwise.
"At the end of the row"	Finish the stated instructions through the final stitch or space of that row.

4. US VS. UK CROCHET TERMINOLOGY

US and UK patterns sometimes use the same stitch name for different stitches. Always check which terminology the designer uses before you begin.

US term	UK equivalent	Important note
Single crochet (SC)	Double crochet (DC)	The US single crochet is called double crochet in UK terminology.
Half double crochet (HDC)	Half treble crochet (htr)	These refer to the same basic stitch in standard terminology.
Double crochet (DC)	Treble crochet (tr)	The US double crochet is called treble crochet in UK terminology.
Treble crochet (TR)	Double treble crochet (dtr)	The US treble crochet is called double treble crochet in UK terminology.

Quick tip: A US single crochet is a UK double crochet. This is one of the most important differences to remember when following patterns from different countries.

5. BEFORE YOU START

- Read the pattern notes and abbreviation key.
- Confirm whether the pattern uses US or UK terminology.
- Gather the yarn, hook, and other listed supplies.
- Check the finished measurements and gauge if they matter for your project.
- Count stitches as directed, and use stitch markers when helpful.

Happy crocheting!

Keep this guide with your supplies as you explore new stitches and patterns. For more inspiration, browse free crochet designs and visit the original designer's website for each pattern's full instructions.

