
One Skein Crochet Scarf with Debbie Stoller

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview of project and tools

[MUSIC PLAYING] People are always asking me, what's easier, knitting or crocheting. I guess the politically correct answer would be to say that they're both equally hard. But the fact is, I really think crochet is easier. With knitting, you're dealing with two needles and a ball of yarn. That's three things, and you only have two hands. And that makes it a little bit complicated. But with crochet, you just have a hook and a ball of yarn. Two things, two hands. It makes things go a little simpler. In fact, this scarf that I'm wearing, which is the one-skein scarf that was designed by Denise Cozzitorto and is in my book, *Stitch 'N Bitch Crochet, The Happy Hooker*, only uses three crochet stitches, one ball of yarn, and one hook. And you can really learn all the stitches at once and then make the scarf. It only will take you about a weekend to do it. So if you're ready, let's get started.

Chapter 2 - Getting Started

Chain stitch

For this project, you're only going to need two things, a size-K crochet hook and one ball of worsted weight yarn. Really, you need 230 yards, but most balls of yarn that are about this size have that much yarn in them. Now, like most crochet projects-- like every crochet project, actually-- this one starts with what's called a chain. You start that chain by making a slip knot. That's easier to do than to explain. It's really quite a bit just like tying your shoes. You bring the yarn around your fingers and then pull a loop from behind. And it's called a slip knot because guess what? It slips. Bring it up on the crochet hook. It doesn't have to be too tight. It should slide. We don't need to choke this guy to death. Now, the whole thing about crocheting-- and this is true for knitting, too-- it's a matter of holding the yarn and your hook in your hands in a comfortable way. If you've never crocheted before, I'm just going to quickly show you how I like to hold my yarn. I wrap it around my pinky. Then, I hold that yarn with my lower three fingers, over my pointer finger, and that's that. Then, with my thumb and my middle finger, I hold on to, in this case, the knot. And as we go along, I'll be holding on to more and more fabric that we're creating. So I always think of this as like a little banjo. You can strum that. See, there should be some tension, but it's not super tight. The next important thing, of course, is how you hold your crochet hook. I always recommend that people hold it like the way you would hold a key if you were opening the door, or like the way you hold a knife. I put my pointer finger on top of the throat here and the rest of it is held in my hand, but it's held under my hand. Sometimes people want to hold it like a pencil or they hold it in all kinds of weird, dainty ways. I really think that a good, rugged, holding it like a knife or a key really works best. All right. So now, we have our crochet hook. We got our banjo. To make a chain stitch, all you're going to do is you're going to swing your crochet hook under that banjo strand, grab that strand, and pull it through the loop on the hook. And for this project, you're going to have to make 208 of those, so go ahead. Do them. No, actually, I'll show you how to do some more. I know you're not quite ready yet to do them all on your own. So again, I just take the hook, bring it under the arm. I actually always turn the hook a little bit towards the loop that I'm going to pull through and pull it through like that. Now, I just want to tell you another thing that's really important here, which is you don't want to make your loops the exact same size as the crochet hook. Can you see that? Here, I've sort of tightened it up, and it's the exact same size as the crochet hook. If you make your chains that size, it makes it pretty

hard to pull the crochet hook back out. I always make mine a little bit bigger, like about 1/3 larger than the diameter of the crochet hook. And I control how big my hook is by how much I'm pulling this hook away from the strand that's the banjo strand. So I can make it really big. I can make it really small. So I usually make it about that big. And then, I pull through again. You can see I'm leaving it sort of larger here. Especially for this project, we want to make a really loose chain. If we don't make it loose enough, the whole scarf is going to curve around, and we want it to be pretty flat. So you can go really sloppy and loose with these chains. Another thing you want to think about when you're doing this first part is to not let your chain start twirling around all over the place. It can do that. You want to try to keep it flat. I hope you can see these V's here that I'm sort of creating with these stitches. I always bring my fingers back close to the throat of the hook, moving it up the work, because if I don't and I just keep letting that work get longer and longer and longer, it gets harder and harder for me to control the size of the loop that I'm making. So I just walk my fingers up to the edge of the work again every time, and then I go on. Now, I told you you have to make 208 of these, and one of the things that people always ask with a chain is, how do you count these guys? I'm going to tell you. First of all, we don't count the slip knot that we made. That doesn't count as a stitch. Each of these little V's that we're making counts as a stitch. So that's one, two, three, four, five. And we also don't count the stitch that's on the hook. In fact, if you are in a really quiet room with nobody disturbing you, you could just count them all out like this, one, two, three, four. Every time you pull a loop through-- five-- the chain counts as one stitch. So to start this project, you have to make 203 of those, a chain of 203 stitches.

Reading a crochet chart

This scarf that we'll be making is really, really, really long. So for today's demonstration, instead of showing you how to make that whole entire long crochet scarf, we're just going to be doing this little baby version of one. And when you make the real scarf, you're going to do the exact same thing, you're just going to do a lot more of it. So this scarf we're going to be doing according to a chart. And what we're looking at here is a crochet chart. You can see there's numbers one, two, three, and those are to show you where you start, and then how you go along with each row. So this chart is saying we start here. And these little circles that look like chains represent chain stitches. So for this little sampler, I have to start out for the first row by making 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19-- I need to make 19 chain stitches. After that, we're going to do some double crochets into the chain. I'll show you how to do that. And then we'll be ready to do row two, and then row three, and then we're going to go around and do the edging. So you can see how the little sample we'll be making matches that chart. Now, in this case, it actually happens to be the same size. But more importantly, you can see that it's the same shape. I'm going to start making my chain of 19 stitches, and then we're going to go on to the next part of this project.

Double crochet into the chain

And 19. So now I finished my chain of 19 stitches. And now we're going to have to get started with this first row of stitches of the scarf. Now these little T shapes, they actually represent a stitch called a double crochet, which I'm going to teach you how to do in a second. But what you can see here is that there is one double crochet that goes into each of our little chain stitches, all the way across except at the very first one. Here we went up to here, and we're going to do a double crochet into the fourth chain from the hook. I'll show you that part in a second, so don't worry about it. But I just want you to see how it's there in the chart, too. Now, one of the things about crochet that I actually do

think is kind of hard is when you have to crochet that first row of stitches into the chain. Every single row after that is much, much easier. But crocheting your first row of stitches into the chain can be kind of a toughie. And one of the reasons that is, is because it's hard to figure out where you're supposed to insert your hook. Now, I want you to look at the anatomy of this chain for a second. You'll see that on the front we see a number of V shapes. We talked about that before. Each of those represents a stitch. On the back of the chain, we have these little dashes. I call that the butt of the chain. I don't know if it really has a name. Some people, they just put their hook under just one leg of the V. I usually say it's better to put your hook under at least two strands. But for this project, it's going to work out really great if we put our hook under that butt strand. So we're going to be inserting our hook for each of these stitches right under-- and you can use your thumb and stuff to help it over-- right under that little butt strand on each of these chains. Now, there's two challenges with this very first stitch. One, we're going to be making a double crochet, which you may not know how to do yet. And two, we're going to be crocheting into the fourth chain from the hook. So when they say fourth chain from the hook, they mean don't count the chain that's on the hook. But one, two, three, four. We're going to be crocheting into this butt strand. Now, a double crochet stitch is really pretty easy. You're going to grab a strand just like you did for the chain. But instead of pulling it through, the next step is to insert the hook under that butt strand, grab a strand again, pull it through the butt. So now you've got three strands on your hook. And then you're going to work these off two at a time, which means you grab a strand again and you pull it through two. Now you've got two left. You grab a strand again and you pull it through two. And now you're back to having one. I'm going to show that to you again, because I know when you're first starting it can be pretty complicated. But honestly, once you get used to this, you can whip these out like nobody's business. When you're doing a double crochet, you start by wrapping a strand of yarn over your hook just like you do when you make a chain. You insert your hook into the next butt strand. You pull up a strand of yarn. Now you've got three on your hook. You go through two and grab a strand and go through two again, and you're done. Now we've made two double crochet stitches. And you see they're kind of sticks. They're a little bit stick-like just like in the chart. And in fact in the chart, this little line through it means that you're wrapping the yarn once, because there's some other stitches where you wrap the yarn twice or even three times. But for a double crochet, we just rap it once before we insert it. So you're just going to keep making double crochets, one into each chain stitch, all the way down the line until you get to the end. And that's how we're going to finish up the first row of this scarf project.

The turning chain and second row

OK, so I've just finished my first row of double crochet stitches for this scarf. As you can see in the pattern here I made my first double crochet into the fourth chain from the hook and then as the chart calls for 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 double crochets. That's exactly what I have here. That's the chain, so 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. Yay, we got it. All right, so now we're finished with row one. We're going to go back and do row two. So to begin a crochet row you usually have to do what's called a turning chain. And the turning chain is usually the same height as the stitch that you're going to be doing in the row. So for this pattern I need to do three chain stitches for my turning chain. That's easy, you know how to do that, right? It's just one, two, three. And it's called a turning chain because right after we do that we're going to turn the work to face the completely other direction. So we just finished it up like this, we do our turning chain, we flip it and now we're going to start working our way back. So the second row of this project you can see

is another bunch of double crochets. Now I told you that the second row of crocheting-- that every row after the first actually-- is a lot easier. It's much easier to insert your crochet hook. And I'm not going to renege on my promise. But there is something that's very important on every row after the first row, and that is where you make your very first stitch and where you make your very last stitch. In most patterns, this one included, when you make your first double crochet of a new row you don't crochet into the stitch at the base of the turning chain. I always think of it as little feet. If this turning chain is a little man, then this first little V here that we're looking at is his feet. And we're not going to make a stitch into that chain. We're going to leave it alone. And we're going to make our first double crochet into the next chain. You start by wrapping the yarn again and then you're going to insert your hook, not this one, but the next one, under those top two strands, under that V. Do you see you have two strands over your hook? And it's easiest to find that by looking down at the top of your work. If you're a knitter you're used to looking at your work like this, but when you crochet it's better to look at the top, from the top down. OK, so grab a strand, insert your hook, pull a strand up just like we did before, and then work these three strands off two at a time. Got rid of 2, and then we got rid of the next two. And now we're going to do the next double crochet. Again, grab a strand, you insert the hook under those two strands. It goes in so easily, just like butter. Pull up a strand and work them off two at a time, two and two. So to finish this row you're going to make double crochet stitches into each of these stitches all the way down the line until you get to the end. But like I said, the first and the last stitches are very important in double crochet. I'm going to finish that here and then I'll meet you at the end so I can show you how to do that last tricky stitch.

Top of the turning chain (tricky stitch) and row 3

Now I've gotten to the end of row two and I'm going to need to make my last stitch, which I told you is a little bit tricky. You can see at the end of this row I've got one little stick left, one little real double crochet stitch. I'm going to make a double crochet into the top of that stitch, just like I've been doing all along. And you might think you are done here, but you aren't-- you have to make one more double crochet. And the way this is usually written in patterns is it'll say make a double crochet into the top of the turning chain from the row below. You may not remember it because we made it quite a while ago, but this was the turning chain that we made at the end of that first row. And we have to make a double crochet into the last chain of that turning chain. It can be kind of tricky to find sometimes. I usually just look at the top of the last stitch that I worked into and just find the very next thing that I see that looks like a stitch, and that's the top of the turning chain. I'm going to make a double crochet in there. I'm not going to worry too much about where my hook is going, as long as you get it into there somehow. Pull up a loop and work them off two at a time, and now you're really done. And so now if we counted the stitches, we would have 16 little sticks which is what we need. So you can see that in the chart there's the last double crochet and it's in the top of this turning chain. Now we're ready to start row three. Row three starts, like all good crochet projects, with a turning chain again. So we're going to just do a turning chain of three chains-- one, two, three. And we're ready to turn our work and work back the exact same way. Row three is the exact same as row two. We're going to skip the stitch that's at the base of the turning chain, and make our first double crochet into the stitch that comes after that-- this one here. And we're going to make double crochets all the way down this row, including making that last tricky stitch, and then we'll be ready to start making the outside of the scarf.

Chapter 3 - Scalloped Outside Edging

Making the shell and slip stitch

- So now I've just finished doing my third row of double crochets, and I'm ready to start the border of the scarf, the edging, which is this really cute rounded edging of shells, as you can see in this sample. And really, it's my favorite part of this project, and it's also really easy. We start by not making a turning chain, but turning the work, and we're gonna skip the first two stitches, which never counts the chain that's on the hook, but we're sort of gonna skip that V, and that V, and we're gonna make a double crochet into that third stitch. So, one, two, three. Make a double crochet in there. And now, we're gonna make four more double crochets into the exact same spot. That's two. So there's gonna be five altogether. Four. And five. You see, it's looking like a shell already. So for the next step, We're gonna skip this first stitch, and in the stitch right after that, we're gonna make what's called a slip stitch. If you've never made one before, don't worry. It's actually the easiest stitch in the whole entire land of crochet stitches. You just insert your hook, grab the strand, and pull it both through the stitch and the one that you have the loop on the hook. And you're done. That's a slip stitch. So, then, we're gonna continue. We're gonna skip the next stitch, and in the stitch after that, we're gonna make five double crochets again. So we're skipping this one, we're going to go in that one. Two, three. And then we're gonna skip the next stitch, and in the one after that, we're gonna make a slip stitch again, which is just inserting the hook, pulling through a strand through the stitch, and also the loop on your hook. It's really a stitch that has no height. So you can see now we've already made two shells, and we're going to just keep making those, all the way to the end of this row.

Continue along each edge

- Now we've finished making double crochets all the way across the row, and the next thing I have to do is make the last slip stitch. In this chart you can see that this last slip stitch which is represented in this chart by a dot is made in the top of the turning chain from the row before. We have to crochet into that yucky turning chain again, but we're not scared because we know how to do it. Basically, that's here. I'm gonna insert the hook and pull it through okay. Now things get a little bit tricky but not too bad. We're gonna have to keep doing the shell all the way around the entire scarf so now we need to do it on the sides. The chart shows pretty clearly that I have to make this side shell into this middle double crochet of these three rows, but that's not hard to find. Look, here's our three rows of crochet. Here's the third row. Here's the second row, and down here is the first row. This chart just says make all five double crochets right into that space of the second row. We don't even have to worry about inserting our hook in the right place because we're just inserting it in that giant space right there and we make five double crochets. Now the next step is to make a slip stitch right into this chain from the first row that was our original chain. You can see it right there in the chart. Now we have to make shells along the bottom of the scarf, and because we made our original stitches into that little butt spot, it's really nice for when we go back because now even at the bottom of the scarf we have a perfect little row of these for us to work into, and we're gonna do our shell into those just like we did on the top, so we're gonna skip the first stitch, and we're gonna make five double crochets in the next one. That's five. Skip the next stitch, make a slip stitch in the one after that. Skip the next one and make a shell, and then just keep making double crochet shells like that all the way across to the end of this row.

Chapter 4 - Finishing the Scarf

Finishing and weaving in ends

- Now I've finished making shells all along the bottom of the scarf. I made one more shell in the last side of the scarf. And now I'm gonna show how to finish this thing off. So, we're gonna finish with one last slip stitch, pulling it through both and now it's time to really end things. I'm just gonna cut the yarn. And I just pull that yarn through this loop that's on the hook and pull it and it's done. Of course, nobody wants to wear a scarf with yucky strings hanging out of it like that, so we have to work them away and you do that with what's called a tapestry needle, basically it's a blunt needle with a really big eye, big enough for yarn to fit through. I'll thread this needle and then, I'm just gonna weave in sort of anywhere in the back of this scarf, a little bit up, a little bit down just a bit, maybe about an inch worth, pull that through and pull the tail through and that sort of works away that end and then I can cut it close. I'm gonna do the same thing here with this other strand which was left over from where we started the scarf. Just thread through the tapestry needle, weave that needle in here a little bit. Pull through and snip off the very end. And look, my little baby sampler scarf is finished. Looks just like his brother, original baby scarf. Now, of course, this is too small to wear. When you make this project you have to start with 203 chains and all the rest of it is the same and you'll end up with your own little, one skein scarf.