
Crochet Techniques for Knitters with Cal Patch

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview

(lively instrumental music) - Hi, I'm Cal Patch. I'm a clothing designer, and I love to sew and crochet. I'd like to show you a little bit of crochet technique that will help you in your knitting, and allow you to take on any pattern. I'll show you how to use single and double crochet to clean up edges, add a button band, add length, or even add random-sized pieces. I'll show you several ways to join, and a little bit of embellishment, like edgings and appliques. Once you know how to wield a hook and a needle, you'll be invincible. (instrumental music fades)

Chapter 2 - Materials

Materials

- We'll be covering a variety of techniques, so to practice and learn just gather a few swatches of knitting that you can work on. If you have some old gauge swatches laying around those are perfect, or you can also cut up some old sweaters or get one at a thrift store and cut it up. You'll also need some scrap yarn to play with, probably a variety of weights so that they are compatible with the swatches. I have some worsted here and some fingering. You'll need a few different sizes of crochet hooks. I've got an H, a D, and some smaller steel hooks, and my tapestry needle.

Chapter 3 - Crochet for Knitters

Adding single crochet edgings and button bands

- You should be somewhat familiar with the single crochet stitch. If you need a refresher, you can take a look at my beginner crochet class. I have here a swatch of colorwork knitting. So it has kind of uneven edges and a lot of tails sticking out. I want to show you how the single crochet can clean up these edges and hide some of the messiness that just happens when you're knitting colorwork. We'll begin by making a slip knot. You probably know how to do this, because you do it in knitting too. And then I'll put my hook through the slip knot. I'm using worsted weight yarn, which is what my swatch is knit with, and a size H or five millimeter hook. I'm inserting my hook into one of the side edge stitches of my knit swatch and joining on with a slip stitch, which just means I pulled that loop through and now I'll pull it through the loop that was originally on the hook. I like to give the back of my loop a little tug there to tighten up that slip stitch so it's not forming a big loop. Then I'll make one chain stitch. So I'm grabbing the yarn, pulling it through that loop. Now I'm ready to start my single crochet. And I'm going to take this new tail that I've just joined on and work that in, as well as some of these knit tails. So I am holding it alongside the swatch. I'm inserting my hook into the next stitch down, grabbing the yarn, pulling it through, now you see I have two loops on my hook, grabbing the yarn again, pulling through those two loops, and that's my first single crochet stitch. So I'll move down to the next knit stitch down, next row of my swatch, insert the hook, grab the yarn and pull through, two loops on my hook, grab and go through those two. And I'll continue to work one stitch in each row of knitting. And as I said, I'm working right over this new tail so that I don't have another tail to weave in later. When you're working with crochet stitches into knit stitches, sometimes you may have to take a look and determine whether your crochet gauge is working compatibly with your knit gauge. So in this case, I'm working one single crochet stitch into each of these knit stitches, and because I'm working sideways down the side edge of this swatch,

each stitch is working into one row of knitting. However, if I was using a slightly different sized yarn, or I was trying to tighten up this edge, I might need to work one stitch in every two rows or space it out a little bit differently. The point is, take a look at what you're doing and make sure that it is laying flat and achieving the effect you want. You may need to try a few different hook sizes or yarns until you get the effect you actually are looking for. I'm almost to the tails that are sticking out from working the colorwork. I want you to see how we can hide them all within the crochet. Another nice advantage of crochet is that it's creating kind of a tunnel there, because the front and back are two separate layers, which means something can go in between them. In this case, that something will be all of these tails. So I'm just making sure the tails are laying along the side as I put the hook in. And my stitch wraps right over and swallows them up. You might need to just pull on them and make sure that they're snug, your knit stitches aren't unraveling. But once you've crocheted over them, they should maintain their tension. There's probably a limit to how many of these tails you can really swallow up with your crochet. I'd say maybe three is about the most. But it's making it a lot easier than having to weave them all in. You can see that looks a lot cleaner and tidier, and all of those ends are taken care of, which would be a nice edge on a blanket or a scarf. Another way to use this technique is on a garment, like a sweater. Here I have a sweater that I've already knit. It's done, but I wasn't happy with the edge of the neckline, down the front and across the back. The pattern actually calls for putting a row of single crochet around the neckline edge, just along the back. But I felt like this front neckline edge seemed a little bit not substantial. So I added this single crochet on this side so you can see the difference, of how it's giving it a little bit of a cleaner line and making these pointelle holes stand out a bit better. The place where it's going to be a bit more structural and not just decorative is across the back neck. Here, I'm going to actually firm up and give a little more stability across that neckline. I've already started, so I have a little bit of single crochet here along the edge. And this is basically the same technique we did on the colorwork swatch, only in this case, I'm working in the same direction as the knit stitches, so that might seem a little more clear. I'm just going to put my hook in and pick up one loop, grab and pull through, there's my single crochet stitch, and I'm working one stitch in each knit stitch. Now because I'm trying to actually tighten up this neckline, you can see it's quite stretchy and flimsy, and it was causing the sweater to slip down my shoulders, I want to really firm this up a little bit. So I'm going to give a little more tension on the yarn. Or you might want to use a smaller hook, if you're not able to control the tension. So as I make my stitches, I just make sure I'm keeping the yarn snug and making a little bit of a tighter stitch than I might if this was just a decorative edge. If I really wanted to make this neck a little smaller, I could actually skip a stitch and work one single crochet for every two knit stitches, and that will kind of give the effect of almost gathering up the neckline. Let's do one more, and then we'll see how that looks. So you have a lot of flexibility in how much you're going to tighten this up. So that still lays pretty flat, those last three stitches, but they're actually taking six knit stitches and shrinking them to the size of three. So if my neck was even more stretched out, that might be a good way to work it. I think in general the one to one is working out pretty well, but in your situation, you may need to tailor it to suit whatever effect you're going for. You would continue working around the neckline and finish off just as you would if you were knitting. Another way I like to use crochet on knits is to create a button band. This is a really easy and quick way to do kind of an afterthought button band when you've already finished something. Or you can even use on an old thrift store sweater that you might cut down the front and add a button band on. I have a sample here that I've added on a little buttonhole band in crochet onto a felted knit wool sweater swatch. And now I'll show you how to do that on this little garter stitch

swatch I have here. I have a slip knot on my hook, and I'll go into the side of my swatch, just like I did before, join on with the slip stitch, snug down the loop, make one chain stitch. And just like before, I want to work over that tail so I don't have to go back and weave it in. Now I can make my first single crochet into that stitch and just keep working down the side of the swatch. So the first row of creating the button band will actually be just a plain row of single crochet, just like we've been doing, trying to keep even tension. So again, I'll probably just have one stitch for each row of knitting. I'm almost to the end of the swatch which, if this was a real sweater, would be the bottom of the button band, or the top. It doesn't really matter which way you start. So let's make this our last stitch. And we can turn around and work back up, and we'll put in some holes. So I'll chain one, turn it over, work a single crochet into the first stitch. Now you'll need to think about planning your placement of your buttonholes and how big you want them. So if you already have buttons that you know you plan to use, you might measure those and check what size buttonhole you'll need. Or you can just make your holes and then find buttons to fit them. But let's say I want my first hole to be here, about at the bottom of the sweater. And since I like to fly by the seat of my pants, I'm just going to say my buttonholes will be three stitches long. So I will chain three stitches, one, two, and three. Then I skip three, one, two, three single crochets, and I'll work into the fourth single with another single crochet. That closes up the hole. So I have a little slice of buttonhole that's three stitches long, which is a good, you know, a lot of nice vintage buttons will fit into there. Like I said, you can plan it out from the beginning, or just find a button that fits. You'll probably want a few inches between your buttonholes, but the spacing and size is really up to you. You might want to have 25 buttons down the front of your cardigan. I'll leave you to do the designing. I'm just showing you the technique. I'll add one more buttonhole, just so that you get the idea. Let's do three more chains. And remember, how many chains is totally up to you. You're just gonna skip the same number of chain stitches in your single crochet. So I'm skipping one, two, three singles and working into the fourth, and continuing on in single crochet. I'll turn and single crochet back across the next row, and then I'll show you what to do when you get to the buttonhole again. I just want you to see that there are two different ways you could work into the hole. They're not gonna be a huge difference, but they will have a slightly different look. So one way is I can just work right into the big hole with my three single crochet stitches. So I'll do this one that way. And then I'll put the fourth one into the stitch after the hole. So that looks fine. They are a little bit less stable, because they can actually slip around within the hole, but they won't really do that. They'll kind of settle into place. But if that doesn't look quite as tidy as you'd like it to look, I'll show you the other way you can work into the buttonhole. The other way would be to work individually into each of these chain stitches, which is a little more fiddly, but it's going to give you a little bit neater effect. So there's one, there's the next one. I'm just working between the loops of the chain stitch. So I'm under those top two and over the one on the bottom. I'm working my single crochet in there. Let's just do the last one to close it off, and then we'll see how beautiful that looks. And then just finish off that row. Here's the first buttonhole, where we stitched right into the hole. And then here's the second one, where I individually put my singles into each of those chain stitches. Single crochet is probably the most useful tool you could have in your knitting box of tricks. So if there's one thing you take away from this class, that would be it.

Adding double crochet edgings

- Another common stitch is the double crochet. It's a little bit taller than single, so it can be useful when you're trying to fill in a little bit more space. On this sample here, I've taken a smaller square of

knitting and made it a little bit bigger by putting a double crochet border all around it. This can be really useful in the very common scenario of lots of people knitting or crocheting squares to make a blanket, especially for a gift or something. Often you'll have all different gauges and sizes, and in order to join them all together, they need to be a little bit more uniform. So you can do this to increase the size of some of those squares. I've got a slipknot on my hook. This is a swatch that's just cut from a thrifted sweater. So it might look a little bit different than if you have a hand-knit swatch. But we'll just pretend the edges are finished. So I'm joining with my slip stitch, just like I did before. Give it a little tug to tighten. And for double crochet, instead of just one chain, we need to make three chains. There's one, two, and three. Double crochet means we yarn over, we go into our stitch, pull up a loop, I've got three loops on my hook now. I grab and pull through two of those, and then I grab and pull through the last two. So you can see already this is a taller stitch and it will give you a little more bang for your buck. Even though I'm using a different stitch, it's really the same process. Yarn over, go into the stitch. Grab the yarn, bring up the loop. Grab and go through two loops, grab and go through two loops. So with just one row of this stitch I'm adding about a half-inch on each side of this square. I'm at the corner of my square, so I'll make one double into the corner stitch. And then I need to create a corner to work around to the next side. There are a few ways you could do this, but I'm going to show you one of them. I put one more double into that very same stitch, and then I'll do one chain stitch which kind of turns me around the corner, and I'll do two more doubles into that very same stitch that I've already worked two doubles into. So that gives me a nice little corner. And now I can just proceed along the next side. You can use this technique any time you need to add length to a cuff, fill in a neckline, or any place where you want to fill in space by creating more fabric.

Seaming with crochet

- Another really useful way to use crochet in your knitting is to join. There are several stitches you can use to join two pieces of knitting, or joining knit and crochet pieces. So, I've got two very similar knitted squares, both knit in garter stitch. I'll start by lining up the top edges and I'm going to show you how to join them with slip stitch. I'll join in with my slip stitch, just like I've been doing. How many loops you're going to work under is up to you. You might want to try a few different ways, depending what kind of swatches you're working into. I'm gonna just see what happens when I work under one loop of each, but if that doesn't seem secure enough, I might switch to two loops. Okay, so. There's my front swatch loop and my back swatch loop. So slip stitch is what we've been doing as the join, but now we're actually going to use it for the seam. So I'm just pulling the loop through my loop. Let's do it again. I'm inserted into the two swatches, I'm grabbing the yarn, bringing it through those two knit stitches, and then through my crochet loop. This is the most minimal joining stitch you can use. Makes a nice flat seam. In terms of which loop you're working into, I'd say the most important thing is really just to be consistent. So I'm trying to make sure I always work into these same two loops for every stitch. As you can see, this is a pretty quick method of joining so it's a handy one to use on those big blankets. I want you to see how I can tell that my seam is nice and secure. I've opened up the two pieces and laid it flat, and my slip stitch seam is actually looking really nice. It's flat but secure and when I pull it apart, I'm not seeing any loops pulling up and opening and looking like holes or a weak join. If I did pull apart and see that and it didn't seem sturdy, then I might work under two loops of each of the swatches. But I think this looks really nice, let's flip it over. From this side it also looks good. If this was matching yarn, it would really blend in. For the next side of my square I'm going to use single crochet to join. This time I'm working into the

sides of the knit stitches, so they're not quite as clear, especially in garter stitch, as the tops were. But this is essentially the same process we did when adding single crochet to an edge. The difference now is I have two pieces that are being joined together. But, it still feels very much the same. So, this is very simple and pretty quick. It's adding a little bit more of a ridge, which I'll show you in a second. So it's not quite as flat as the slip stitch, but it's a nice simple way to join two pieces together. And if you had single, or double, or any crochet stitched around your knit pieces to make the sizes uniform, then joining the two with a crochet stitch is going to be even easier. But this is still pretty easy. Okay, let's take a look at it. From the right side, it's creating a little bit of a ridge there, but you can use that as a decorative element, especially since, in that blanket situation, all of your squares are probably really different. So adding this ridge of a uniform color throughout is going to unify the blanket. From the back side it looks pretty similar to the back of the slip stitches. It's kind of just a whipstitch effect. And again, if it was the same color, it would blend in. But in a contrast it still looks nice. If you want something that has a little more design impact, I'm going to show you a decorative chain stitch join which has an open space between it. I'll start with a slip stitch just to anchor myself on the new side. And then I'm going to do three chains, and for this one it's going to be easier to work with my two edges facing each other. I'm going to zig-zag across, so I'll move up, let's say, three stitches, on this side and do a slip stitch, and then one, two, three chains again and move up one, two, three, and work into the third stitch over there. Let's do that one or two more times and then we'll look at it. One, two, three chain stitches. One, two, work into third stitch on the other side. Slip stitch. Okay. So this is giving an open join with kind of a ric rac in between it, which could be cute on the side of a summer tank top sweater, or a blanket, or wherever you feel like you might like a little fresh, zig-zaggy join stitch. Our last join is the double crochet join. This one's good when you want to add a little bit more space between your two sides, but not have it quite as open as the last one. So I'm going to create a double crochet. I'm joined into the top of my two swatches with a slip stitch, and then I will create a double crochet into the bottom swatch. And then I need to go into my top swatch with another slip stitch to anchor it. Double crochet into the bottom. Slip stitch into the next stitch of the top. Double. Slip. Let's take a look at this. So you can see that it's joining the two pieces, but we've got about 1/2 inch to 3/4 inch between them, so if you were putting this on a sweater, it could create a contrast stripe down the side and also give you a little bit more room if you realized you had knit your sweater a little bit too snugly. Having a few different methods of joining will help you in situations when you need to combine two different pieces of knitting or knit and crochet.

Decorative crochet edges and applique

- In my opinion one of the best uses of crochet on knitting is edgings. I have a few examples here that I've done on some knit samples. Here's a picot crochet edge. A scallop, and this is another scallop at a smaller scale. I'm going to show you the scallop and picot edges, because they are really useful ones that you can use on a variety of projects. I'll join in with a slip stitch. Just like I always do. Move it around to the top. Okay, so I'm going to first work a single crochet. So there's my chain stitch, and we can pop over and single crochet. This knit swatch I'm working into is a smaller gauge that's a little bit felted, so I'm just going to space out my stitches as will be appropriate for the size of the crochet stitches, rather than actually counting the knit stitches. So I'm putting these about a quarter inch apart. You may need to play around to figure out your spacing exactly. Okay, I'm ready to do my first picot. So to do that, I chain three. One. Two. Three. And I'm going to take the hook, insert it down into the top, between your top two loops, and out the left loop of your two loops that

form a V at the base of the stitch. So there's the little V, and I'm coming out the one on the left side. Then I pull through everything. And I'll go ahead and make another single, so then you'll be able to see the picot better. There's your first picot. It's just a little bump that pokes up. And I've got a single crochet next to it, I'm going to put one more single. You usually space out your picots with a few stitches in between. I probably wouldn't put them closer than every other stitch, unless you want a really frilly little edge. So I've done two more, and now this stitch, the picot is going to sit right on top of. One. Two. Three chains, inserting the hook down into the top of the single crochet, and out through the side of my V, the left side. Grab the yarn and bring it through all three of those loops. So there's the second picot. Continue working across inserting the picots as often as you like. Let's go back and look at the earlier swatch I made. You can see here the difference between picots in worsted yarn and picots in fingering yarn, they're a little more delicate. Another example of a great edging stitch is the scallop. Scallops are made up of double crochets, so I yarn over, and I'm going to skip one space. I've been working at a quarter inch per stitch, so I'm going to skip a quarter and go about a half inch over since I have to kind of make my own holes here. And then work that double crochet. Which is kind of laying down sideways, as it should be. And I'll work a second double crochet into the very same spot. This one will be a little bit more upright, and then I'll work another two to four doubles for a total of anywhere from four to six probably, depending how wide of a scallop you want. Let's do one more. My goal is for this to have enough stitches that it can now lay down on the other side. It's kind of like a shell or a half wheel. Now I can anchor into the fabric again. So I skipped over about a half inch to begin, and now I'll do the same distance to end it with a single crochet. So there's one scallop or shell stitch. Let's do it again so you can get the hang of it. Yarn over for the first double crochet, skip about a half inch, go in and work that double. I think I did five doubles for my first one, so I'd want to keep that consistent. But you can use a range of stitches to make fatter or skinnier scallops. These are often also called shell stitches. It's a very classic little edging, you'll see it often on baby blankets, or the edge of a sweater, all kinds of things. I've got five there. One, two, three, four, five, so I can skip ahead again about a half inch and do a single crochet to anchor it down. The last way you can use crochet to embellish your knitting is by making motifs that you can add as appliques. I'll show you how to do a little flower. I also have a flower workshop where you can see more ways to make flowers, but I'll show you a good simple one. There are so many kinds of shapes you can make with crochet, and it's a little bit easier than making little motifs with knitting I think. Start with a slipknot, chain two. And work a single crochet into the second chain over from the hook. And then another single into that same chain. And keep making singles into that same chain stitch until you have at least five, up to six or seven. We're making a little ring that's becoming the center of the flower. Okay, I've got one, two, three, four, five, six, that is plenty. So I'll now go into the first single crochet with my hook and join with a slip stitch. So pulling through all the loops. That little ring is going to be the center of the flower. Now I can build a petal out from each of those stitches, so I'll have six petals. So I will chain, let's say, six. You can really play around and do any number of chains, depending what kind of petal you want, but there's six chains. I'm going to make a double crochet into the fourth chain down from the hook. So one, two, three, four. Working into the side of the stitch. There's the double. Basically I'm working back down the chain until I'm back to the center. So the next stitch I'm going to do a half double, so that the petal decreases gets narrower as it approaches the center. So there's the half double. It's a little bit shorter than the double I did first, and for the last one I'll do a single. Then I'll go into the base of the stitch and anchor it down with a slip stitch. Repeat for the next petal. Chain six. Four, five, six. Yarn over and double crochet into the fourth chain. Just the one side loop of it. Make your double. Make a

half double into the next chain. Just pulling through all three loops at once. And then single in the remaining chain. Anchor down into your next stitch with a slip stitch, and keep working in this manner, one petal into each of the stitches of your center. You could attach this flower with a few stitches with a tapestry needle, and it would look great on a baby sweater or a hat, anything where you want a fun little pop of color. On the other flower, I had gone around a second time and created a double row of petals. Don't be afraid to incorporate a little crochet into your knitting projects. Now that you understand how it works, you can see how well they play together.