

Basic Crochet Terms Defined

Increase/increases/increasing (inc)

When a pattern tells you to increase, it will usually explain how and when it wants you to. In simplified terms, increasing just means to *increase* or *add to* your total number of stitches in a row or a round. You do that by doing multiple stitches in the same stitch. Some patterns say increase every 4th stitch. That means you would work 2 stitches into the same stitch every fourth stitch. Or a pattern may call for you to increase at the beginning and end of each row. That means you would work 2 stitches in the first stitch and 2 stitches in the last. Patterns are usually very clear on their increases.

Decrease/decreases/decreasing (dec)

Once again, when a pattern tells you to decrease, it will usually explain how and when it wants it done. Decreasing mean to *decrease* or *reduce* your total number of stitches in a row or round. You do that by crocheting stitches together. That means that the stitch before the decrease is left unfinished. (You do not do the final yarn over and pull through of the stitch.) You move onto the next stitch, leaving the extra loops from the previous stitch on the hook. When you get to the end of that stitch, you yarn over and pull through all the loops on the hook. That finishes both stitches and reduces your stitch count by one stitch.

Right Side (RS)

In crochet terms, the right side of your work is the finished or public side. This is the side of the work that will be shown...the top side. Most patterns that this is important for will tell you which is the right side. This becomes important when you are working popcorns, bobbles, or other stitches that look one way one on one side and completely different on the other.

Wrong Side (WS)

This is the side that will *not* be shown when the piece is done. It is the back or bottom side. Most patterns will tell you which side is which.

Back Loop (bl)

In crochet terms, the back loop is the part of the top “V” that is *farthest* away from you when the right side of your work is facing you. It is in the back.

Front Loop (fl)

The front loop is the part of the “V” that is *closest* to you when the right side of your work is facing you. It is in the front.

Chain Space (ch-sp or ch sp)

The space left in your work when you make a chain. It leaves a larger opening than a normal stitch. If a pattern calls for you to crochet *into* the chain space, it wants you to enclose the chain within your stitches. Use the chain space as the “hole” you put your hook into. Insert your hook into the *space* left by the chain when making your stitch.

Raised Stitches

Raised stitches are standard crochet stitches worked in a certain way that gives the stitch a raised ridge effect. Instead of inserting your hook into the top of a stitch in the row you are working on, you wrap it around the stem of that stitch.

Turning Chain (tch or t-ch)

The turning chain is the chain that you make to compensate for the height of the stitches on the next row. It usually counts as your first stitch in that row. Sometimes it can count for the first stitch and the first set of chain stitches. Such as in a double crochet, chain 1 pattern.

Yarn Over (yo)/Yarn Over Hook/(yoh)/Yarn Round Hook (yrh)

A yarn over is the term used when they want you to wrap your yarn around your hook. Always wrap the yarn in the same direction. It keeps your stitches uniform. As you get better, you will find you don't even think about yarn overs. Your hook will "automatically" pick up the yarn when you need to.

Place Marker (pm)/Stitch Marker

A place marker or stitch marker does just that. It marks your stitch, or place. They are used to help you when counting rounds or rows, or in placement of pieces. There are many different kinds of markers out there. Some look like colorful pins, others paper clips. The easiest and cheapest way to mark your place/stitch is to just use a scrap piece of yarn. Tie it loosely around the stitch to mark your place. When you are done with it, you can throw it away. If you use a scrap yarn as a marker, it is easier to see if the yarn is a different color than your project. Although it doesn't have to be.

Tapestry Needle

This is basic needle. It is quite a bit larger than a regular sewing needle in diameter, length and eye size. It usually has a blunt end. A yarn needle will also work. Yarn needles have a much larger eye, enabling them to accommodate the larger thicknesses of yarns.