



Crochet Along*

by Stylecraft

The Fruit Garden CAL

Getting Ready by Jane Crowfoot

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I am really excited to be able to present you with another Crochet Along collaboration with Stylecraft. You can find out about my inspiration for this project, which includes information about my design process, by reading through my Introduction document. I have put this 'Getting Ready' document together to help you with some of the basic information I think you need to be aware of before you embark on the project. Please take some time to read through my notes, even if you are a crochet pro as there may be something in here that may help you.

The Fruit Garden CAL is the culmination of months of work for myself and the Stylecraft team and so we hope you will enjoy it. I think it is possibly the most challenging CAL yet, but the project starts easy and gets progressively harder with step by step images throughout, so I hope it will be a really good learning tool and that you will cherish your crochet stitches and be proud of the outcome of your hard work.

The CAL will be released in 8 parts between April and August 2020 via the Stylecraft website – https://www.stylecraft-yarns.co.uk/Crochet+Along+with+Stylecraft/0_CAFA122.htm – on the following dates:
28th April, 12th May, 26th May, 9th June, 23rd June, 7th July, 21st July, 4th August

The patterns will be published in UK & US terms and Dutch Language.

I will be doing videos to accompany each motif to help you along the way.

These will be published via my website <https://www.janiecrow.com/>



YARN USAGE – COLOUR RECIPE 1

Life DK:

100g – 298m (326yds),
75% Premium Acrylic,
25% Wool.

Batik:

50g – 138m (151yds),
80% Premium Acrylic,
20% Wool.

Parchment (2445)	4	Coral (1903)	1
Caramel (2446)	3	Graphite (1915)	1
Blue Haze (2346)	1	Heather (1906)	1
Cranberry (2319)	1	Mint (1918)	1
Denim (2322)	1	Rose (1916)	1
Fern (2311)	1		
Rose (2301)	1		

Total = 17 balls

Weight of blanket 1450g

Equipment

3.5mm (US E/4), 4mm (US G/6) and 4.5mm (US 7) crochet hooks
Stitch Markers
Yarn Needle



YARN USAGE – COLOUR RECIPE 2

Naturals

Bamboo + Cotton:

100g - 250m (273yds),
60% Bamboo, 40% Cotton.

Night (7160)	4	Celery (7155)	1
Dusk (7159)	3	Peach (7131)	1
Canyon (7157)	1	Pumice (7154)	1
		Raisin (7158)	1
		Rose (7165)	1
		Seafoam (7143)	1
		Thyme (7156)	1
		Umber (7161)	1

Total = 16 balls

Weight of blanket 1100g

Equipment

3mm (US D), 3.5mm (US E/4), 4mm (US G/6) crochet hooks
Yarn Needle
Stitch Markers

APPROXIMATE BLOCKED BLANKET MEASUREMENT:

Life & Batik DK 128cm (50½in) square.

Naturals – Bamboo + Cotton 112cm (44in) square.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMINOLOGY:

This project is not aimed at complete beginners or those relatively new to crochet and there is an assumption that you know your basic stitches and terminology.

UK		US	
Right Side	RS	Right Side	RS
Wrong Side	WS	Wrong Side	WS
chain	ch	chain	ch
slip stitch	ss	slip stitch	ss
stitch space	st-sp	stitch space	st-sp
stitch(es)	st(s)	stitch(es)	st(s)
double crochet	dc	single crochet	sc
half treble crochet	htr	half double crochet	hdc
treble crochet	tr	double crochet	dc
double treble crochet	dtr	treble crochet	tr
double crochet 2 together	dc2tog	single crochet 2 together	sc2tog
double crochet 3 together	dc3tog	single crochet 3 together	sc3tog
treble crochet 2 together	tr2tog	double crochet 2 together	dc2tog
treble crochet 3 together	tr3tog	double crochet 3 together	dc3tog
double treble crochet 3 together	dtr3tog	treble crochet 3 together	tr3tog
Make Bobble	MB	Make Bobble	MB
Spike double crochet	SPdc	Spike single crochet	SPsc
Make Popcorn	MP	Make Popcorn	MP

TENSION

Crochet is by nature an organic and creative process – it is wonderful to pick up some yarn and a hook and create motifs and decorative pieces that eventually make up a larger project. Many crocheters are used to doing just this without thinking too much about how big their pieces come up and whether things are being worked to the correct tension.

I have added images and notes on tension throughout the patterns. Please check that your tension matches mine as you work through the project.

Why is tension so important for this project?

Before you start work on your project I urge you to check that you are working to the correct tension.

This project requires you to work in the round on some of the motifs and in rows on other pieces. If you achieve a tension tighter or looser than the suggested tension you will find that your project will differ in size to mine, that you will use a different amount of yarn and possibly that your pieces will fit together properly in the making up stages. The look of the crochet stitches can also differ – a looser tension is not as neat as the standard tension, whilst a tight tension can make your work stiff or cardboard like.

I tend to use small locking stitch markers – these look like little

nappy pins and are really safe as the stitches cannot escape. Locking markers are especially good for holding crochet pieces together while you sew up seams. I tend to use a stitch marker to mark every corner stitch on the motifs. If you mark every motif you will need a lot of markers, so you could mark your stitches with spare pieces of yarn or small pins.

How to achieve the correct tension:

Many crocheters simply assume that they will achieve the correct tension. This is a totally logical conclusion to make; after all, the information on the ball band or within the pattern is based on what the ‘standard’ tension is. In practice, however, many crocheters do not naturally attain the correct tension and therefore do not achieve a tension that sits within the ‘standard’.

Pre-blocked and Blocked Tension:

When designing the project I worked to a square motif template that measured 14/15cm (6in) across the widest point. In reality not all of the square motifs have exactly the same measurement once they are complete, but because the crochet pieces will stretch a little when you put everything together this will not be noticeable at any point.

The measurements given in the pattern are for pre-blocked sizes throughout. Measuring to a pre-blocked size rather than a blocked size is more accurate as crocheters could over stretch their work to achieve the blocked tension.

Factors that can affect your tension:

Many things can make a difference to the tension you achieve; I have listed 4 of the most common below:

- 1. Your level of expertise:** If you are a newcomer to the craft of crochet you may well find that your crochet tension will change as your ability improves. When launching into a project like this it is worth making sure you have put in enough ground work to ensure that you are working in the right way and that you have the ability to work consistently. Whilst the project is aimed at those looking to improve their skills, it is not aimed at beginners.
- 2. Your mood or situation:** If you are a bit stressed or have had a bit of a tough day you may find your crochet tension is affected. Equally, having a few glasses of wine or watching a funny or enthralling movie whilst crocheting can also cause your tension to differ. As a general rule try to crochet in the same kind of situation whenever possible to ensure that everything stays as it should.
- 3. Hook Sizes:** Make sure you are using the correct size hook. For the most part of the project you will be asked to use a 4mm (US G/6) hook. Please check that you have not mistakenly used a UK 4 (imperial size) or a US 4 or 4/E.
- 4. Number of stitches:** It is quite common to achieve the correct tension on a swatch only to find that it is not correct over a larger piece. This is because tension can change as we relax into the rhythm of a repetitive crochet action. Measure your tension at all the places I ask you to within

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the pattern just to be sure you are continuing to work at the correct tension.

What to do when you have achieved a different tension to the tension in the pattern:

If you find that your crochet motifs are coming up smaller than mine this means you are working too tight. Rather than trying to change your crochet method (by consciously crocheting looser) simply change up to a size larger hook. If you are still too tight then try another size larger. Make a note of how many sizes you have had to change by so that you are sure to make the swap for each of the three sizes.

If you find that your crochet pieces are coming up larger than mine this means you are working too loose. Rather than trying to change your crochet method (by consciously crocheting tighter) simply change down to a size smaller hook. If you are still too loose then try another size smaller. As above, make a note of how many sizes you have had to change by so that you are sure to make the swap for each of the three sizes.

Having trouble with your tension over treble crochet (US double crochet)?

Look at the way you work the stitch

Because of the nature of a treble crochet (US double crochet) it is common to find variances in stitch length and width even if the correct hook has been used in relation to the one used to achieve the correct tension over double crochet (US single crochet)

When we make a treble crochet (US double crochet) we wrap our yarn around the hook first and then work 3 movements drawing yarn loops through others to create the stitch. The tension achieved over each of these movements and the angle at which we hold our hook can have an impact on the tension of each step of the stitch.

Why you need to change hook size when you are told to?

The reason you will need to change hook size is to do with the tension achieved over different stitches. When you make a fabric using a dense stitch like double crochet (US single) you have very little room between the posts of your stitches, whereas when you work with stitches that have a longer post, such as treble crochet (US double) the space between the posts of the stitches gets bigger.

I recommend the use of a 4mm (US G/6) hook for Recipe 1 (3.5mm (US E/4) hook for Recipe 2) for the majority of the crochet within this project, but there are places where you will need to swap down to a 3.5mm (US E/4) or up to a 4.5mm (US 7). As a general rule, look out for hook changes when working treble crochet (US double crochet) and slip stitches. Hook sizes are marked in bold within the written patterns.

Changing hook sizes can be a bit of a pain, but it is made easier if you have colour coded hooks – even a dab of

different shades of nail polish on your crochet hook handles can make the process of identifying hooks easier.

YARN USAGE:

It is my advice that you keep hold of all your yarn until the end of the project – by this I mean all the pieces you might undo and any pieces that look a bit frayed. Don't be tempted to use any of the yarn for any other project until you have completed this one and make sure you keep everything in a safe place.

In both Colour Recipes some shades have 10g of leftover yarn once the project is complete. It was a conscious decision not to add an extra ball of these colours into the recommended quantities, so that you do not have excess yarn that you do not require. It is still possible, that some crocheters (with loose tension or who leave long ends to sew in) may need an extra ball of a colour.

The shades in question are:

Colour Recipe 1: Life DK - Blue Haze and Batik – Graphite

Colour Recipe 2: Naturals – Bamboo + Cotton – Night

Look out for the first pattern on **Tuesday 28th April**.



Photography with thanks to National Trust, Standen House, Sussex <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/standen-house-and-garden>

The colour reproduction in this pattern is matched as closely as possible to the yarn but due to photography and printing restrictions some slight variations may occur.

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