

Hats for the Homeless Crochet Pattern and Notes

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A friend organized a project to crochet hats for the homeless (or other cold people) this winter. She gave us a simple hat pattern to learn and these notes are my attempt to make sense of it and explain to other beginning crocheters, including a schematic diagram.

Pattern

Here is how to make the basic hat, presented as a typically terse crochet pattern. It is explained in the notes below.

Key

For an overview of reading crochet patterns see “[How to Read a Crochet Pattern](#)”.

Hdc

Half-double crochet stitch [3: Half-double crochet instructions w/photos: <https://web.archive.org/web/20120415065415/http://renee-blixt.suite101.com/the-half-double-crochet-stitch-a40770>]. This is the stitch which is used throughout the entire pattern.

Join

Join rows with a slip stitch [4: <http://crochet.about.com/od/learnbasics/qt/slst.htm>]

() repeat

repeat the instructions in the parenthesis the number of times specified.

(#)

Number in parenthesis at end of row denotes the total number of stitches you should have on the circumference of the hat after completing that row.

Row 0

Chain 1. This first loop will be the center of the hat.

Row 1

Chain 2 (so you now have 3 chains), make 8 hdc in third chain from hook. Join. (9)

Row 2

Chain 2, hdc in same stitch, 2 hdc in each remaining stitch.
(18)

Row 3

Chain 2, hdc in same stitch, 1 hdc in next stitch, (2 hdc in next stitch, 1 hdc in next stitch) repeat to end of round. Join. (27)

Row 4

Chain 2, hdc in same stitch, 1 hdc in next two stitches, (2 hdc in next stitch, 1 hdc in next two stitches) repeat to end of round. Join. (36)

Rows 5-8

Continue increasing as in Row 4. Each row will have an additional hdc between every increase: chain 2, hdc in same stitch, 1 hdc in next Row#-2 stitches (that's the row number minus two), (2 hdc in next stitch, 1 hdc in next Row#-2 stitches) repeat to end of round. Join. (72)

Row 9

Chain 2, hdc in the 'next' and every stitch around. Join. (72)

Rows 10-end

Repeat Row 9 until hat has desired length. (72)

Notes on Pattern

Row 0: Chain 1

The first step is to attach the yarn to the hook with a slip-knot.

Then make one chain stitch, which will be the center of the top of the hat. You'll make the first 8 stitches through that loop which, when joined, will form a circle. The next rows then work around that circle increasing its diameter.

See [“How to Crochet the Chain Stitch”](#) for illustrations of making a slip-knot and chaining. And [“How to Crochet a Turning Chain”](#) for a good illustration of the relationship between turning chain length and the different crochet stitches (note that a length of 2 chains corresponds to 1 hdc).

Alternatives

The first few rows are the most difficult because it is hard to see what is happening and where the next stitch is. The first row is especially difficult since you can lose track of the center loop before finishing the 8 stitches. Here are two alternative methods of beginning which give a bigger first loop to make all 8 initial stitches into so it is easier to work with.

Chain Loop

First chain five or six. Then slip stitch into the first chain you made to join into a ring. Then continue the pattern from Row 1. The difference is that you will make all 8 stitches in Row 1 into the center of the ring of chains you made instead of trying to do them all through a single chain stitch. Illustrated step-by-step example: [“Crocheting in Circles”](#).

Base Adjustable Ring

Another way to begin with a bigger base ring for making the first 8 stitches in is to make a loop of yarn, make all 8 stitches

into it, and then pull to close the loop. The advantage is that it is easier to stitch the 8 first stitches into a large ring, and you can then pull the ring closed so that hat won't have a big hole at the top. This method is explained and illustrated on this web page: <http://www.stitchdiva.com/custom.aspx?id=54>

Row 1: Chain 2, make 8 hdc in third chain from hook. Join. (9)

You are going to make 8 hdc stitches into the first chain you made (the one furthest from the hook), which you will then join together into a circle.

The chain 2 you make at the beginning of every row counts as an hdc stitch. Two chains equals the height of one half-double crochet stitch, and you will always chain 2 at the beginning of every row. So when you complete Row 1 you'll have 9 stitches on the circumference: 8 hdc + the chain. You should be able to count 9 V-shaped stitches which you will work into on the next row.

Half-Double Crochet (HDC)

1. Wrap the yarn over the hook towards your body. This is called yarn over (often abbreviated to yo in patterns). You should now have 2 loops on the hook.
2. Insert hook through the next stitch to be worked. For Row 1 this means to insert the hook through the center loop for all 8 hdc. For other rows, insert beneath both strands that form the V shape of the stitch. (You can instead insert through the two strands if you feel so inclined.)

3. Yarn over hook.
4. Use the tip of the hook to pull the yarn up through stitch. You should now have 3 loops on the hook.
5. Yarn over hook. You should now have 4 loops on the hook.
6. Pull the loop closest to the tip of the hook through all 3 other loops on hook. That completes the half-double stitch (you should be left with one loop on the hook, and you can start again into the next stitch to be worked).

Joining rows

At the end of each row, join to the beginning of the row by making a slip stitch into the top loop of the turning chain you started the row with:

1. Insert the hook through the stitch (top loop of the turning chain).
2. Yarn over.
3. Pull the yarn up through both the stitch and the loop already on the crochet hook. You should be left with a single loop on the crochet hook ready to chain.

When inserting the hook into the chain stitch, don't just insert it in the space beneath the chain. That will result in a more-visible seam on the hat. Instead insert it beneath the V of the top loop of the chain like you do every other stitch.

Row 2: Chain 2, hdc in same stitch, 2 hdc in each remaining stitch. (18)

In this row we make two hdc stitches in each of the 9 stitches from Row 1, which doubles the size of the circle.

Remember, the chain 2 you do at the start of each row counts as an hdc stitch, so only make one actual hdc stitch into the same stitch you chained from (that's why the pattern reads: chain 2, hdc in 'same' stitch)

Rows 3-8: Chain 2, hdc in same stitch, 1 hdc in next Row#-2 stitches, (2 hdc in next stitch, 1 hdc in next Row#-2 stitches) repeat to end of round. Join.

These rows uniformly increase the size of the circle. Working two hdc into the same stitch is called an 'increase' and effectively adds one stitch to the circumference of the hat. On each of Rows 3-8 you'll increase 9 times.

Each of Rows 3-8 begins with a chain 2, which counts as an hdc, followed by an hdc in that same stitch. So every row begins with an increase. The remaining 8 increases are spread evenly around the row. On Row 3 you make a single hdc in the next stitch after each increase. On Row 4, you make a single hdc in the next 'two' stitches after each increase. And so on. So the number of hdc you make in each stitch around the hat follows

this pattern (remember the first 2 consists of the chain + the first hdc):

Row 3

2, 1, 2, 1... 2, 1

Row 4

2, 1, 1, 2, 1, 1... 2, 1, 1

Row 5

2, 1, 1, 1, 2, 1, 1, 1... 2, 1, 1, 1

Row 6

2, 1, 1, 1, 1, 2, 1, 1, 1, 1... 2, 1, 1, 1, 1

Row 7

... and so on

Notice every row ends in a single hdc. That is a good way to test if you counted correctly for that row.

How do you know where to make the next increase if you lose count? Every increase is made exactly above the stitch formed by the increase made in the previous row. It is possible to examine the previous rows to find where to make the next increase. You can also count the stitches you've already made.

What if you don't make the increase in the correct spot? It doesn't really matter. You may end up with a slightly less round circle, or without exactly 72 stitches on the circumference, but it will probably not be noticeable.

If, however, you consistently make too many or too few

increases, you'll end up with a hat that is too big or too small.

For a smaller hat, stop increasing after row 7 and go on to Row 9. This gives a circumference of 63 stitches instead of 72.

Rows 9: Chain 2, hdc in the next and every stitch around. Join. (72)

Now you're done increasing, and you make only one hdc in each stitch all the way around. Remember that the chain 2 which starts the row counts as an hdc, so make your first real hdc in the 'next' stitch from now on.

Rows 10-end: Repeat Row 9 until hat has desired length. (72)

Keep crocheting a single hdc in each stitch all the way around each row until the hat has the length that you want. Try it on every now and then to see how it fits.

Pattern Schematic Diagram

Key

T

Half-double crochet (hdc)

O

Chain

●

Slip stitch

Resources for reading crochet diagrams:

- “How to Follow a Stitch Diagram in Crochet”: <http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/how-to-follow-a-stitch-diagram-in-crochet.html>
- “Crochet chart symbols”: http://www.craftyarnCouncil.com/chart_crochet.html
- “Symbol Crochet”: http://www.grannys-garret.com/symbol_crochet/symbol_crochet.html
- 'Blueprint Crochet' by Robyn Chachula is a book of patterns presented in both text and symbols

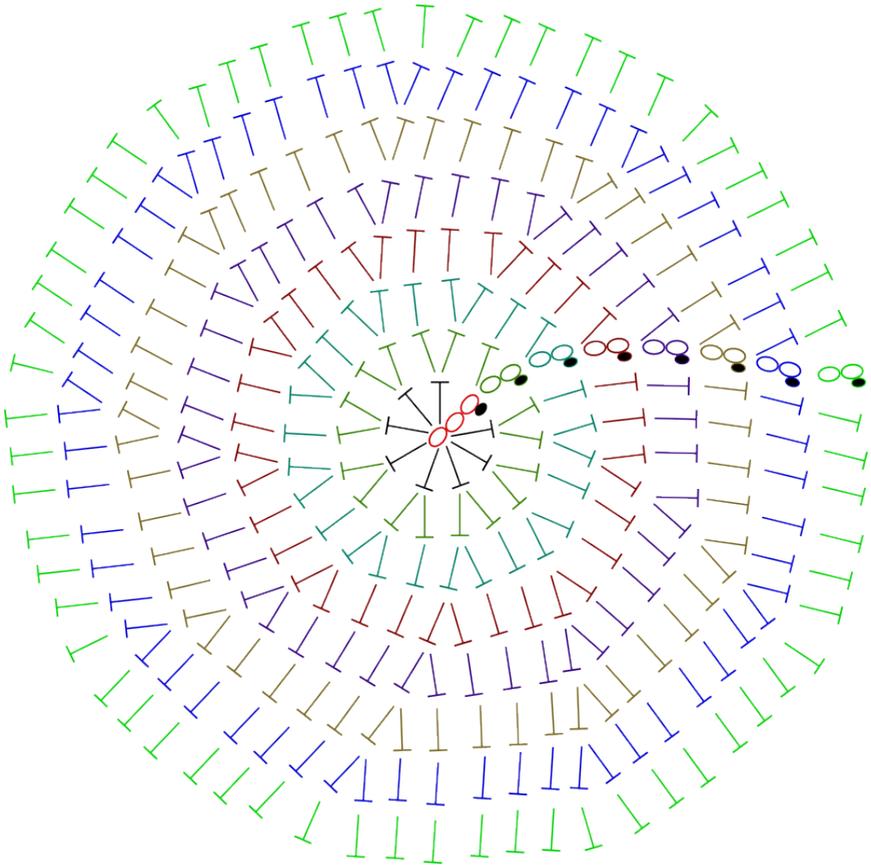


Figure 1. Schematic of Hat Pattern

[\(SVGversion\)](#)

The above image shows a graphic representation of the hat pattern. Each row is a different color to make it easier to follow. Read it like this:

1. The base chain 3 is the red chain in the center. Start there and then read from right to left (left-handed crocheters will read right-to-left, but actual work right-to-left).
2. Work around Row 1 (black), making 8 hdc through the first

loop of the base chain.

3. When you get back around, make a slip stitch (the solid circle symbol) into the top loop of the base chain.
4. Move up to the next row (green): chain 2. Continue around to the left of that chain making 17 hdc (two into each of the hdc of the previous row), then joining to the starting chain with a slip stitch.
5. ... and so on until you get to the last row shown in the schematic (bright green). In this row notice you only make one hdc in each stitch of the previous row. Repeat this row until the hat is the desired length.

The diagram only increases to 63 stitches for a smaller hat. Add one more row of increasing for a larger hat.

By looking at the schematic you can see:

- How the turning chain 2 of each row acts like an hdc in the pattern
- Where each increase is made
 - Each increase is made on the first stitch of the increase directly below it
- The seam formed by the turning chain of each row

Seamless hat

Instead of joining each row with a slip stitch and then chaining 2, it is possible to continue making hdc all the way around in a spiral pattern with no seam. However, working in the round like that makes it difficult to remember where each row begins, and

therefore when to make increases. A compromise solution is to join all of the increase rows (Rows 1-8) normally, but then begin working in a spiral for the rest of the hat. That will leave only a seam in the first few rows, which won't be noticeable.

So a seamless pattern would be (the first 7 rows are the same):

Row 0

Chain 1. This first loop will be the center of the hat.

Row 1

Chain 2 (so you now have 3 chains), make 8 hdc in third chain from hook. Join. (9)

Row 2

Chain 2, hdc in same stitch, 2 hdc in each remaining stitch. (18)

Row 3

Chain 2, hdc in same stitch, 1 hdc in next stitch, (2 hdc in next stitch, 1 hdc in next stitch) repeat to end of round. Join. (27)

Row 4

Chain 2, hdc in same stitch, 1 hdc in next two stitches, (2 hdc in next stitch, 1 hdc in next two stitches) repeat to end of round. Join. (36)

Rows 5-7

Continue increasing as in Row 4. Each row will have an additional hdc between every increase: chain 2, hdc in same stitch, 1 hdc in next Row#-2 stitches (that's the row number minus two), (2 hdc in next stitch, 1 hdc in next Row#-2 stitches) repeat to end of round. Join. (63)

Row 8

Chain 2, hdc in same stitch, 1 hdc in next six stitches, (2 hdc in next stitch, 1 hdc in next six stitches) repeat to end of round. Do not join! (72)

Rows 9-end

Hdc in next stitch (instead of slip), continue around making one hdc in each stitch until hat is of desired length.

Seamless Diagram

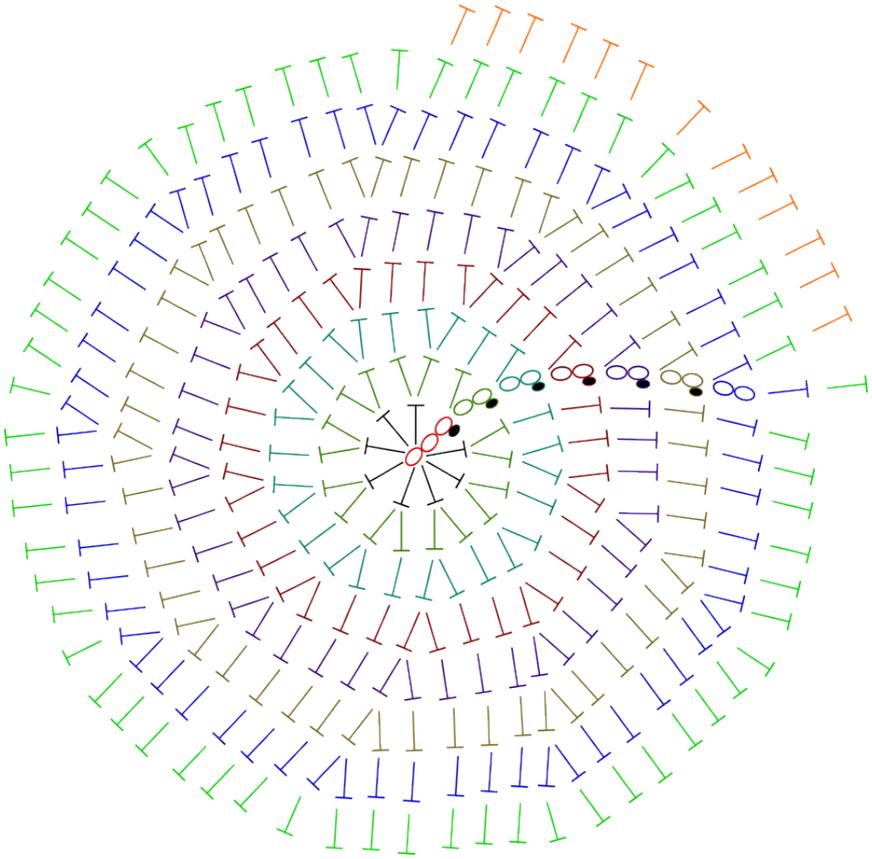


Figure 2. Spiral Schematic

(SVGversion)

All of the increasing rows are the same as before, but notice there is no join on the last increasing row (blue) and the spiral pattern beginning to emerge in the last rows shown (green and orange). Continue the spiral until the hat is as long as you want it to be. Since there are no turning chains, there is no seam!

Next

Try reading and making other patterns! Here is a link to a hat pattern which is also based on rows of hdc joined with a slip stitch, but which adds non-increasing rows between increasing rows to give the hat more shape:
<http://www.crochetandknitting.com/articles/art127.htm>

Warm Up America is a charity which coordinates volunteers who knit and crochet squares to make afghans which are distributed to individuals and families in need:
<http://www.craftyarnCouncil.com/?q=node/66>