How to Read a Crochet Pattern

Guide + practice coaster · mardingezituru.com

A crochet pattern is a short code. Once you know what each part means, a line like R4: sc, inc, (2 sc, inc) x5, sc [24] reads as plainly as a sentence. This guide goes through the parts in the order you meet them in a pattern, then ends with a small coaster that uses every one.



The practice coaster uses every notation in this guide.

1. The header

- **Terms:** US or UK. They use the same words for different stitches: a US single crochet is a UK double crochet. Every pattern on this site uses US terms.
- **Yarn weight and hook:** the yarn category (DK, worsted) and hook size the designer used. Changing either changes the size.
- **Gauge:** how many stitches and rows fit in a set width, for example 6 sc x 6.5 rounds = 1 in. For toys it only matters if you want the exact size.

2. Abbreviations

- **ch** chain · **sl st** slip stitch · **sc** single crochet · **hdc** half double crochet · **dc** double crochet
- **inc** two stitches in one · **dec** two stitches worked together into one
- **MR** magic ring · **FO** fasten off · **blo / flo** back loop only / front loop only

3. Rounds and rows

R or **Rnd** means a round, worked in a circle. **Row** means you turn at the end and work back. "R7-13: sc around" means rounds 7 to 13 are all the same: one sc in every stitch.

4. Repeats

Parentheses or brackets hold a group you repeat. (sc, inc) x6 means: one sc, one increase, and do that six times. Anything outside the parentheses is worked once, before or after the repeats.

5. Stitch counts

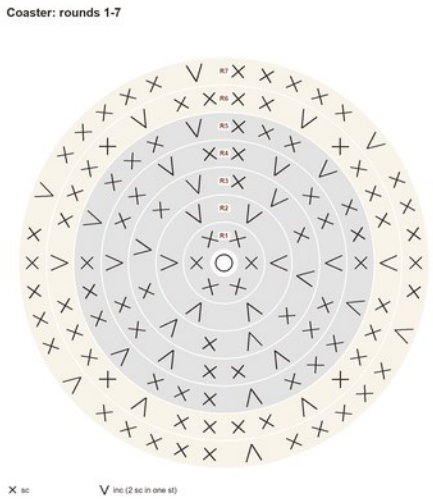
The number in brackets at the end, like [24], is how many stitches you should have when the round is done. Count before you move on. If you're off, the mistake is almost always in that round.

6. Color changes and loops

"R6 (color B)" means change to color B for round 6: pull the new color through on the last yarn-over of the round before. "blo" before a round or stitch means work into the back loop only, which leaves a ridge on the front.

7. Charts

Many patterns add a symbol chart: an x or + for sc, a V for an increase and an upside-down V for a decrease, read from the center out. Our patterns also include a round-by-round bar diagram so you can see the shape grow.



The coaster as a symbol chart, read from the center outward.

Practice: the pattern-reading coaster

A flat coaster, about 2.2 in / 5.7 cm across, with a magic ring, repeats, a staggered round, a color change and a back-loop round. Read each line, say it out loud the first time, and count at the end of every round.

- **Yarn:** DK cotton, about 9 yd / 8 m in sage (A) and cream (B), and a 2.5 mm (US B/1–C/2) hook

Coaster

Color: start with A (sage green).

- ☐ **Rnd 1:** 6 sc in a magic ring. (6)
- ☐ **Rnd 2:** Inc ×6. (12)
- ☐ **Rnd 3:** (sc, inc) ×6. (18)
- ☐ **Rnd 4:** Sc, inc, (2 sc, inc) ×5, sc. (24)
- ☐ **Rnd 5:** (3 sc, inc) ×6. (30)
- ☐ **Rnd 6:** Switch to B (cream). 2 sc, inc, (4 sc, inc) ×5, 2 sc. (36)
- ☐ **Rnd 7:** BLO (5 sc, inc) ×6. (42)

Finish: Sl st in the next st, FO and weave in; block flat.

FAQ

How do I know if a pattern is US or UK?

Look at the abbreviations. A UK pattern has no "single crochet"; its smallest common stitch is "double crochet (dc)". If the first round of a toy is "6 dc in a magic ring", it is almost certainly UK.

What does an asterisk mean?

Some patterns mark a repeat with asterisks instead of parentheses: "*sc, inc; rep from * 5 more times" is the same as (sc, inc) x6.

Put it into practice: the magic ring guide, then the perfectly round ball.