QUICK-START GUIDE

ch3 ch B F T ff3 Bn Fn Tn pB pF pT pBn pFn pTn B(k) dc, ch3

L→

BASIC STITCHES:

mst: <u>Mesh stitch</u>: A vertical grid line, usually a dc

msp: <u>Mesh space</u>: A gap/space made by a ch1

xB: [dc or **st x**] on <u>back of work</u> [ch 1, sk 1]

xF: [dc or **st x**] on <u>front of work</u> [ch 1, sk 1]

xT: [dc or **st x**] <u>through both meshes</u> [ch 1, sk 1]

ff#: <u>Fill sts</u>: Work **#** dcs on <u>front</u> [unless noted] in msts and ch1s, <u>without</u> chaining between. [ch 1, sk 1]

X(k): <u>Knot</u> stitch: Optional, a 2ch picot [ch 1, sk 1] In next row, work in <u>blo</u> or <u>around post</u>.

DIAGONALS:

trF: triple crochet [yo 2] on front, a diagonal

prev: base of/same place as the <u>just-made</u> mst

next: where the mst <u>after</u> the current st will go

Xn: (**st X**, trF in <u>next</u>)tog [ch 1, sk 1]

pX: (trF in <u>prev</u>, **st X**)tog [ch 1, sk 1]

pXn: (trF in <u>prev</u>, **st X**, trF in <u>next</u>)tog [ch 1, sk 1]

LONG DIAGONALS: *(see diagram at lower right)*

dtrF: double triple [yo 3] on front, a long diagonal

Xnn→: (**st X**, dtrF <u>2</u> msts <u>ahead</u>)tog [ch 1, sk 1]

Xnn↓: (**st X**, dtrF in <u>next</u> + 1 row <u>down</u>)tog [ch 1, sk 1]

pp←X: (dtrF <u>2</u> msts <u>back</u>, **st X**)tog [ch 1, sk 1]

pp↓X: (dtrF in <u>prev</u> + 1 row <u>down</u>, **st X**)tog [ch 1, sk 1]

YARN/HOOK:

- Use any yarn/thread and the hook recommended on label, or as small as 75% that size for tighter gauge.

RULES:

- <u>ch 1, sk 1</u> after every B, F, T, p**X**, p**X**n, **X**n, **X**(k) and last ff#.
- <u>ch 3 at row end</u>. Secure loop and pick up other colour.
- ch1s and ch3s are normally <u>omitted</u> from notation.
- Turning ch replaces 1st mst [dc +/- ch1] in row diagrams.
- If row begins [ch<u>2</u>], undo 1 turning ch.
- Work in <u>front and back</u> loops of all msts and turning chs *****
- Turn work <u>clockwise</u> [L] or <u>counter-clockwise</u> [R].
- Carry **Colour B** turning ch on <u>front of work</u> unless noted.
- <u>Back</u> of work faces you on <u>even</u> rows. Diagrams only show <u>front</u>. Complete sts in order given in <u>notation</u>.
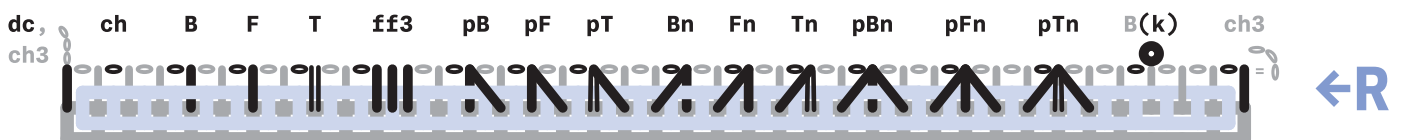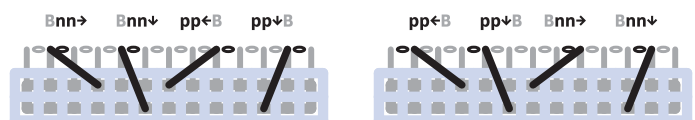
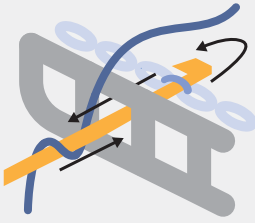## OPTIONAL/ADVANCED:

- ***** Work into visible outlines (normally **Colour A**) <u>blo</u> (*back of <u>work</u>*) or <u>around-the-post</u> (*extend dc and dtr post sts by 1 loop in base*) for smoother results.
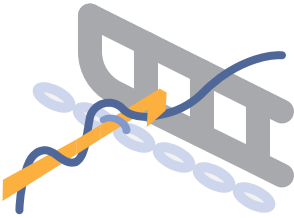- Yarn <u>under</u> when drawing up 1st loop of dc/tr/dtr sts.

LEFT HAND →

Bnn→ Bnn↓ pp←B pp↓B

← RIGHT HAND

pp←B pp↓B Bnn→ Bnn↓

dc, ch3 ch B F T ff3 pB pF pT Bn Fn Tn pBn pFn pTn B(k) ch3
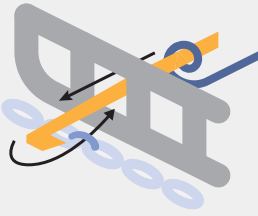
←R

F/ff#

[yo. If required, draw current st to <u>front</u>, through corresponding msp]
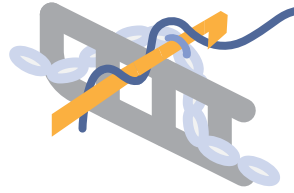
dc on <u>front</u> of work.

B

[yo. If required, draw current st to <u>back</u>, through corresponding msp]

dc on <u>back</u> of work.

T

yo. Insert hook in current st <u>and</u> corresponding msp, in either order. dc (visible on front <u>and</u> back).

L→

Foundation A/Row 1A

R   (dc, ch 1, sk 1) …   L

L↑   ↑R

Foundation B/Row 1B

R   L

F   ff3   B   T

R   L

L↑   ↑R

F/ff#

[yo. If required, draw current st to <u>front</u>, through corresponding msp]

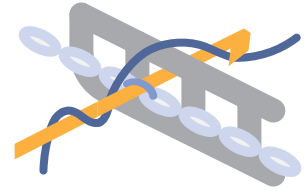dc on <u>front</u> of work.

B

[yo. If required, draw current st to <u>back</u>, through corresponding msp]
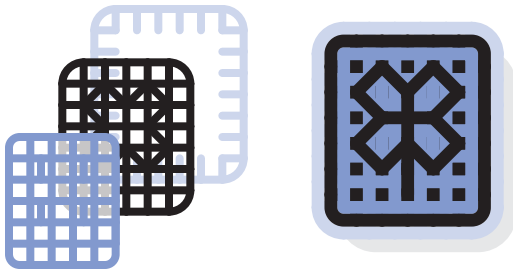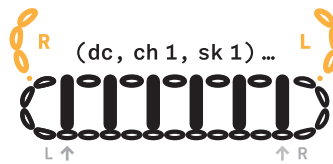
dc on <u>back</u> of work.

T

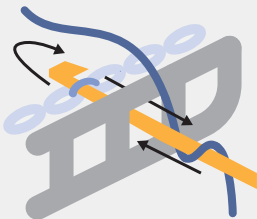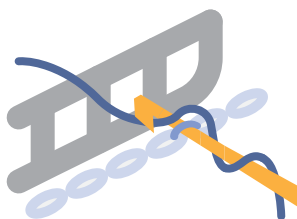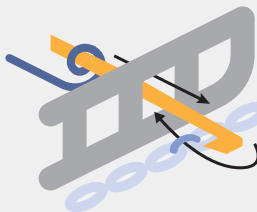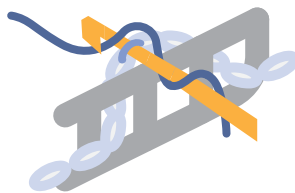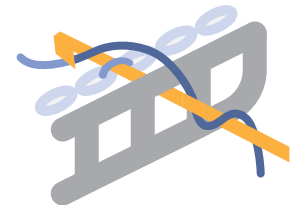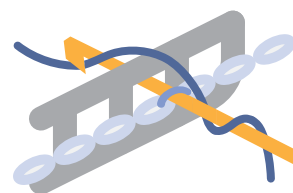yo. Insert hook in current st <u>and</u> corresponding msp, in either order. dc (visible on front <u>and</u> back).

←R
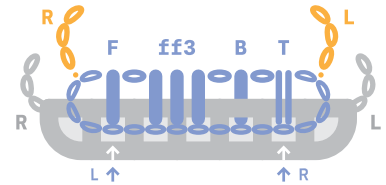
INTER- LOCKING CROCHET

Interlocking (filet) crochet is a colourwork technique—a way to crochet images, patterns or text using multiple colours of yarn or thread. Each motif consists of two separate but interwoven pieces of mesh fabric, one in each colour. These are made in alternating rows using a basic pattern of double crochet and chain stitches called **filet crochet**. It's crochet, lacemaking, weaving and embroidery rolled into one; it takes some getting used to, but it's easier than it sounds!

Colourwork in crochet can be frustrating: stitches don't interact cleanly, and carried thread is a pain to deal with. Interlocking crochet sidesteps both of these issues.

Unlike **tapestry crochet** or **intarsia**, interlocking crochet doesn't require you to change colours mid-row (not these patterns, anyway), so there are no bobbins to wrangle and no unused colours to carry. In contrast with **mosaic crochet**, you only work into stitches of the same colour, and you work flat without having to cut your thread or switch hands every row. Oh, and there are normally only *four* ends to weave in per motif.

Interlocking crochet has a unique, durable double construction, ideal for making sturdy patches to pin on backpacks and hard-wearing functional pieces like dish towels and tote bags. Worked in looser gauges and breathable yarns, Interlocking Patches can be extended or combined to make blankets and clothing.

The drawbacks? Interlocking crochet has some some unique design constraints; it's time-consuming, and it can be tricky to figure out just where stitches need to go and how to get them there. Once it "clicks," though, the technique is suprisingly straightforward, and these patterns highlight that!

COMMON ABBREVIATIONS (US TERMS)

blo	back loop only (usually back of <u>work</u>)
ch	chain (stitch)
dc	double crochet (yo 1 to start)
dtr	double-triple crochet (yo 3 to start)
hdc	half-double crochet (yo 1 to start)
sc	single crochet
sk	skip
sl	slip stitch
sp	space
st	stitch
(X,Y,Z)tog	work sts X, Y and Z together (in that order)
tr	triple crochet (yo 2 to start)
yo	yarn over

REQUIRED SKILLS

Interlocking crochet is *tricky*—you'll have to move your hook in unfamiliar ways—but if you have a good grasp of the basic stitches and their parts, you'll get there. If you're new to crochet, an afternoon's worth of video tutorials should be enough to get you started. Better yet, meet up with a friend or relative who crochets. You might even introduce them to something new—interlocking crochet is pretty *niche*, even among crocheters!

Motifs use ch, sl, dc, (dc,tr)tog, (tr,dc,tr)tog, and some also use dtr, so know these before getting started. There are also "knot stitches" (a small picot), around-the-post sts, extended sts, and yarn-unders, but these are all optional. Borders require you to work in and join rounds; some use hdc, blo and post sts.

Patterns consist of diagrams for each row and a simplified form of written notation, which is illustrated and defined in the **Quick-start Guide**. Standard notation is used in documentation, in border instructions and occasionally in patterns.

Interlocking crochet is easier to *do* than it is to *explain*—If you get confused at any point, just look at the diagram for the row you're on, and try to make it like the picture!

YARN/THREAD & HOOK

Use any yarn or thread that you can crochet with comfortably. I prefer natural fibres that "bloom" or "fuzz out" slightly after washing, like cotton or wool.

Use the manufacturer's recommended hook size for a flexible, slightly open fabric suitable for blankets and clothing. For a tighter gauge, use a hook 2/3 to 4/5 (67-80%) of this size. This produces a stiffer fabric that holds its shape better, suitable for decorative and hard-wearing items like badges and washcloths.

Go up in hook size if stitches are difficult to work, if the piece buckles, or (in most cases) for finer, clearer outlines. Size down for straighter edges, denser fill stitches and bolder outlines.

Use yarn/thread colours of equal weight, or use the next thinner/lighter weight for **Colour A** (outlines). This can improve the legibility of complex motifs. See chart below for recommended pairings.

COLOUR

The more different your yarn colours are in value (light vs. dark) and hue ("warm" vs. "cool," for example), the clearer the image will be. Most patterns are designed to look best with dark outlines and a light background, but illustrations accompanying most patterns also show motifs with these colours reversed. Variegated yarn or thread can be great for backgrounds (**Colour B**) as long as the colour transitions are subtle (e.g. pastel shades).

WASHING & CARE

Interlocking Patches look their best—better than right off the hook—after washing and hand blocking. To hand block, gently stretch the motif into shape while wet and lay flat on a rack or towel to fully air dry.

If your yarn cen felt, your patch can too! (Look for 100% wool not labelled "superwash.") For best res

ults wet felt, then needle felt to touch

YARN/THREAD (COLOUR B)	LOOSE	TIGHT	MY GAUGE	GOOD FOR...
#20 Cotton thread **Colour A:** #30 Cotton thread, heavy sewing thread or 1-3 strands embroidery floss	1.25mm	0.80–1.00mm	0.90mm ~3.$\bar{3}$ mm/msp	Jewellery Badges Hat emblems Ornaments
#10 Cotton thread **Colour A:** #20 Cotton thread	1.50mm	1.00–1.25mm	1.30mm ~5 mm/msp	Patches Luggage tags Wallets/ Small bags Coasters Wall hangings Washcloths
#3 Cotton thread / Lightweight (3) cotton yarn **Colour A:** #10 Cotton thread	3.50mm	2.25–2.75mm	2.50mm ~6.$\bar{6}$ mm/msp	
Medium (4) cotton yarn **Colour A:** Worsted or double knitting weight wool, lightweight cotton yarn	5.00mm	3.50–4.00mm	3.75mm ~12 mm/msp	Potholders/hot pads Towels/Bathmats Tote bags
Worsted wool yarn **Colour A:** Double knitting, fine or fingering weight wool yarn	5.00mm	3.25–4.25mm	4.00mm ~9 mm/msp	Sweater patches Blanket motifs Potholders/Hot pads Felted projects

TROUBLESHOOTING:

### My bottom row is too loose!

It's normal to make foundation chains loosely for ease of working, but this can cause a noticeable gauge difference in the bottom row, so don't. It may help to go down a hook size for **FA**/**FB** and rows **1A**/**1B** only.

....

B stitches in the first row are hard!

I know! Review the illustrations in the **Quick-start Guide**, and take it step by step:

1. Yarn over
2. Insert hook, from <u>back to front</u> *(towards you, from behind),* through the corresponding **1A** msp. *(You can let go of **Colour A** at any point after this)*
3. Insert hook through the next **FB** back bump normally *(from <u>front to back</u>, away from you)*
4. Let hook "fall," or gently draw it behind **Row 1A**. <u>Only</u> the **Colour B** yo and back bump will be on hook.
5. Draw up a loop and complete dc on back of work.

If the <u>first</u> stitch in row **1B** is a B, it may help to indicate the 5th back bump with a piece of **scrap yarn** or very small stitch marker before you start.
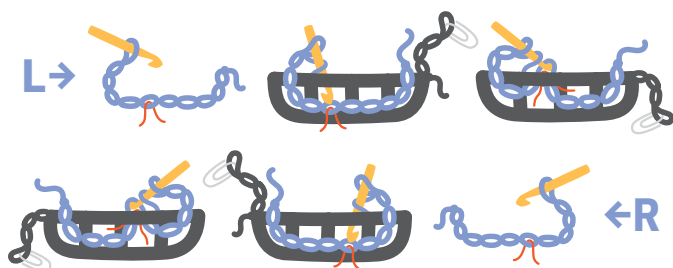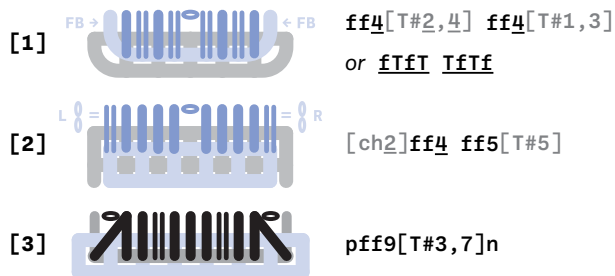

My diagonals are a mess!

Make sure the loop already on the hook is snug when you yo to begin. Keep loops and yos "close to the hook," without gaps between them, and hold them in place with your thumb as you work. The **yarn under technique** can also help keep gauge consistent.

If diagonals are too *loose* or bulky, you can replace triple crochets (p and n sts) with <u>extended dcs</u>. If long diagonals are too *tight,* <u>extend</u> by 1 loop in the base.

Freaky ff#s!

When fill stitches appear in odd places—in **Row 1B** [1], at the beginning or end of a row [2], or combined with other sts [3]—"simplified" notation can get weird:

[1] `ff`<u>`4`</u>`[T#`<u>`2`</u>`,`<u>`4`</u>`] ff`<u>`4`</u>`[T#1,3]`
or `f`<u>`TfT`</u> <u>`TfT`</u>`f`

[2] `[ch`<u>`2`</u>`]ff`<u>`4`</u>` ff5[T#5]`

[3] `pff9[T#3,7]n`

Just break it down letter by letter! Use the row diagram to help you decode the notation and vice versa.

....

My fill stitches are too thin!

You can work individual ff#s as cluster sts if your yarn is very fine, or to create "puffier" fill areas. To cluster, (dc2tog) in the same st or ch sp (counts as 1 dc).

....

I forgot to carry Colour B on front / back!

It happens to all of us! If the mistake was within the last row, you can cut **Colour B** and draw the turning chain and working thread to the correct side.

....

My outlines are unclear!

- Increase <u>contrast</u> between **Colour A** and **Colour B**.
- For sharper outlines, use a <u>thinner yarn</u> for **Colour A**, or use a slightly <u>larger hook</u> (for both colours).
- Consider **filling in mesh backgrounds**.
- Add **border rounds** in both colours if the motif doesn't have them. You'll be amazed.
- <u>Wash</u> and <u>air dry</u> the motif (this makes the biggest difference for natural fibres, but it never hurts!)

....

My outlines are jagged!

- If the problem stitches are Ts, try Fs instead. Both create vertical lines on front, but Fs are smoother.
- See **Optional/Advanced techniques** on next page.

Work in <u>back loop only</u> (blo) or "<u>around-the-post</u>" for smoother outlines and less prominent "joints"

Work in <u>front and back loops</u> of <u>all stitches</u> until you are comfortable with the technique, except in the few places where other loops are indicated (in Rows **1A**, **1B** and some border rounds). Both loops is the most secure option; it produces the most consistent gauge, and it's one less thing to worry about. However:

If your outlines (**Colour A**) look "jagged," or there are distracting "joints" where they intersect on front, working in <u>blo</u> or <u>around-the-post</u> can help. This is <u>purely</u> optional.
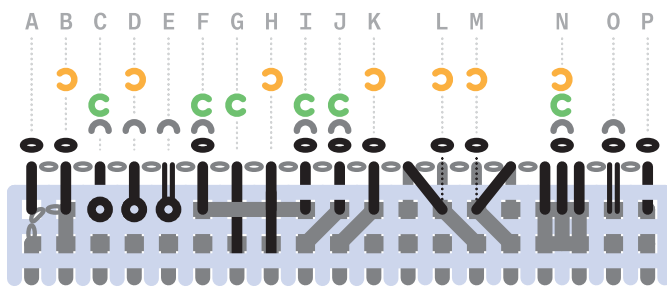
⬯ Both loops	⊂ Back-post (back of work)
⌒ Back loop (back of work)	⊃ Front-post (front of work)

This chart shows all your options in various situations. Personally, I use **front-post** sts to <u>extend verticals</u> and <u>diagonals</u> **[B, L]** . I use **blo** or **back-post** stitches to work into <u>horizontal lines</u> **[F,I]** and <u>knot sts</u> **[C,D,E]**.

The illustration above shows the difference between **front-** and **back-post** stitches. (In these patterns, "front" and "back" always refer to the front or back of <u>work</u>.)

To maintain gauge, <u>extend</u> <u>dc</u> and <u>dtr</u> post sts by one loop in the base. This is not usually necessary for <u>tr</u> sts (i.e. regular diagonals).

blo and post stitches <u>most</u> benefit very small motifs with simple outlines, motifs that incorporate long diagonals, and when using finer yarn for **Colour A**.

Yarn <u>under</u> when drawing up the first loop* of long (dc, tr, dtr) stitches for more consistent gauge.

* *Yarn <u>over</u> normally to begin st and at all other times.*

This crosses the two strands at the base, improving the appearance of T sts by keeping those strands from separating. Yarning under also lets tension from the working thread pass more easily to loops on the hook, helping maintain gauge in complex (tog) stitches.

....
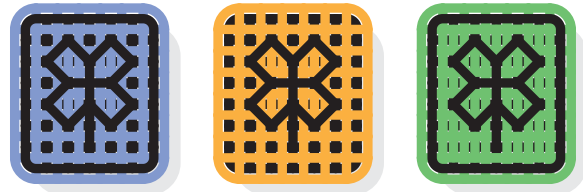
Fill in mesh backgrounds to make small motifs "pop"

Most **Interlocking Patches** feature an open mesh background, but the dot pattern it creates can overwhelm small and complex motifs, making the image **unclear**.

"Borderless" borders help, or you can **fill in** some or all of the mesh with ff#s. Patterns that may benefit from a filled background sometimes include an alternate, filled overview diagram to help you place stitches.

ff#s in ch1 spaces (usually <u>even</u>) are always worked on <u>front</u>. mst ff#s (usually <u>odd</u>) can be worked as F <u>or</u> T sts (Fs look nicer, but Ts add structure). Use Ts in the <u>first</u> and <u>last</u> **Colour B** rows and at <u>row end</u> to secure edges.

....

Extend motifs to make larger items, add captions or attach motifs of different sizes.

To add interlocking mesh <u>rows</u>, begin in any corner and ch 3 to start. Work in <u>rounds</u> to extend the piece equally on all sides *(dcX, ch3, dcX, ch1 in corners)*.

Graph paper charts can help you plan extensions to your motif and see how different motifs might fit together. Print/copy, cut out and paste, or simply trace the diagrams onto .25" graph paper. *(To use with 5mm metric graph paper, print/copy at 79% scale.)*

Grey grid lines represent the **Colour A** mesh. The thick dashed line is the pinstripe, which can be covered. Light blue lines are the **Colour B** mesh, and thick blue lines mark the edges of a **Blanket Border**.

BORDER INSTRUCTIONS

Border rounds are optional but *strongly* recommended. Borders straighten uneven edges, align the image and give it space to "breathe." The difference is remarkable!

That said, border rounds take time, and the options are limited only by your imagination and patience. These are just a few examples—feel free to improvise, adapt, or borrow techniques from other patterns.
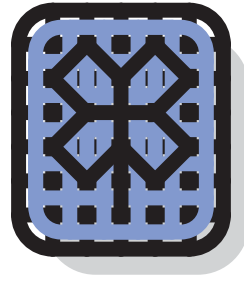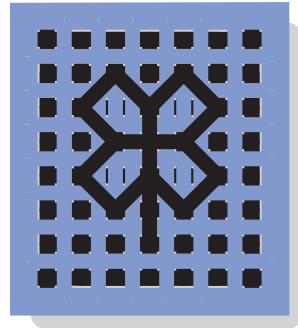

NO BORDERS
You're done!
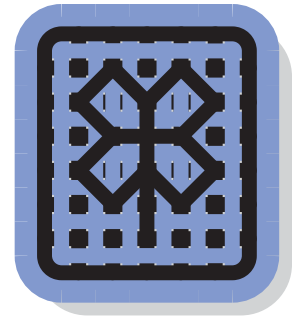
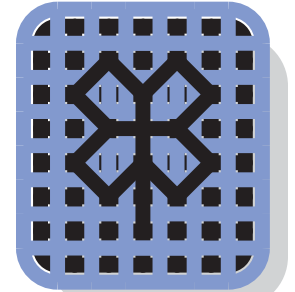**CLASSIC PINSTRIPE**
Best for badges

PINSTRIPE BLANKET
Best all-around

"BORDERLESS" BLANKET
Room to breathe

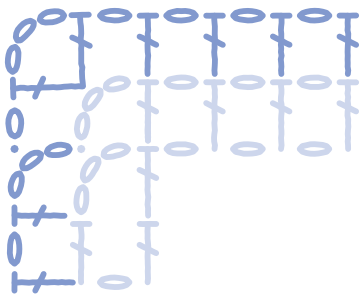**EASY FLOATING**
Most forgiving
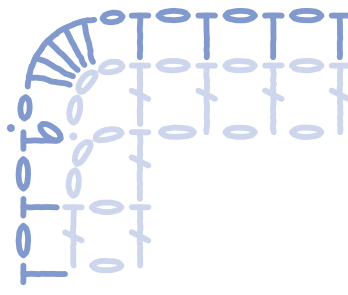
QUICK "BORDERLESS"
Best for tiny motifs

dcX mesh
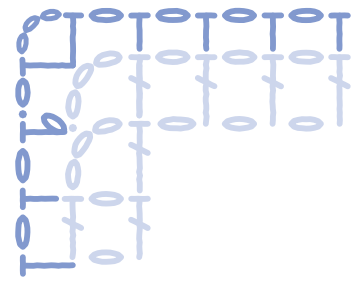*(Blanket R1B and R1A)*

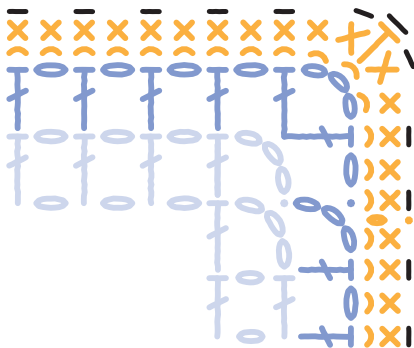**hdcX mesh, filled corners**
(Classic Pinstripe R1B)

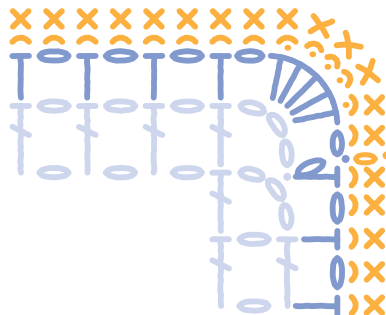**hdcX mesh, open corners**
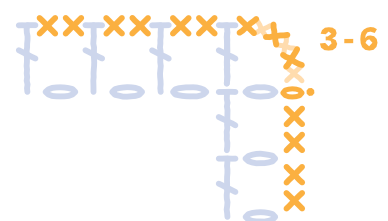*("Borderless" R1B)*

scF / scT in blo
(Blanket R2B)

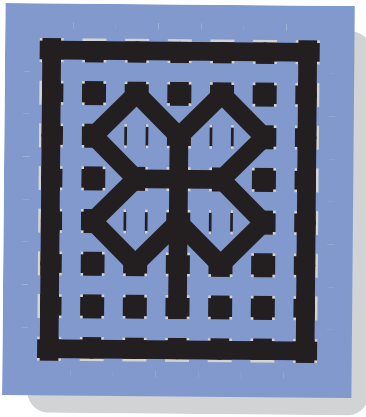**sc in blo / sc in back 2 loops**
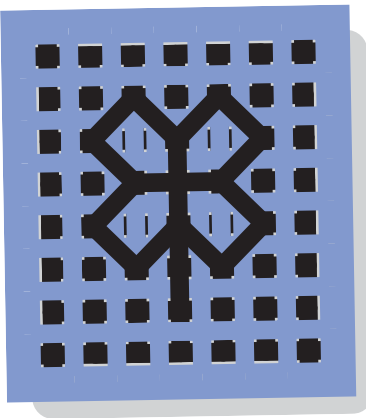*(Classic Pinstripe R2B)*

sc in msps
(Floating A/B rounds)

3-6

Pinstripe

"Borderless"

Body Instructions:

[1] ch <u>3</u> to start border round.
(ch3 <u>counts</u> as a dcX + ch1)

[2] Carry **Colour B** on <u>back</u> for Pinstripe, on <u>front</u> for Borderless.

[3] ch <u>3</u> to start border round.
(ch3 counts as a dcX + ch1)

BLANKET BORDER

This border takes a long time, but it rarely disappoints. Double crochet mesh rounds in both colours draw everything perfectly into place, creating either a pinstripe with crisp, square corners or a band of "borderless" mesh that doesn't crowd the image. Single crochets worked through both meshes then neatly seal edges while keeping the thickness of the fabric consistent. As the name suggests, this is the border to use if you plan to seam together multiple motifs to create blankets, clothing, or other large pieces.

The <u>3</u> rounds of a Blanket Border add <u>2</u> msps/4 sts to the height and width of the motif. This is indicated by the thick blue lines in **graph paper charts**.

Border Rounds:

R1B: *Front faces you. Start in next mst or corner st <u>or</u> sp.*

Sides: <u>Pinstripe:</u>   (dc<u>B</u> in mst, ch 1)... to next corner.
                  <u>Borderless:</u> (dc<u>T</u> in mst, ch 1)... to next corner.

Corners: <u>Pinstripe:</u>   dc<u>B</u>, ch 3, dcB in corner stitch <u>or</u> space. ch 1.
                  <u>Borderless:</u> dc<u>T</u>, ch 3, dcT in corner stitch <u>or</u> space. ch 1.

Join: sl in 2nd starting ch3 st. ch <u>1</u> to start **R2B** and secure loop.

R1A: *Front faces you. Start in next mst or corner st.*

Sides: (dcB in mst, ch 1)... to next corner.
            (For smoother pinstripe, work in <u>blo</u> or use <u>back post dcs</u>)

Corners: dcB, ch3, dcB in corner space <u>or</u> stitch. ch 1.

Join: sl in 2nd starting ch3 st. Break yarn and tie off.

R2B: *Front faces you. Start in next st (a ch1).* **R2B** *covers* **R1A**.

Sides: sc<u>T</u> in <u>blo</u> of all msts. sc<u>F</u> in <u>blo</u> of all ch1s <u>except</u> corner st:

Corners: <u>Square:</u>   scT hdcT scT in corner <u>stitch</u> *(For seaming.)*
                <u>Rounded:</u>   scT in corner <u>stitch</u> *(Final border, not for seaming.)*

Join: [scT in <u>blo</u> of **R1B** joining sl.] Needle finish or sl in 1st **R2B** sc.
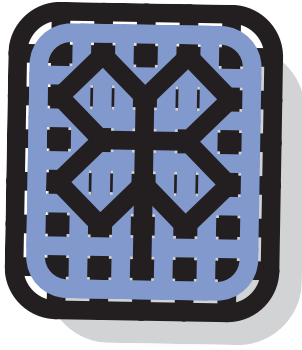
NO BORDERS

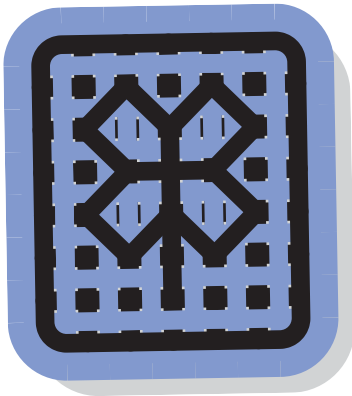Sometimes you're just *done*. Forgoing borders can save time when you need to make a lot of patches quickly, and if your edges are nice to start with, there's no need to hide them. *(You can always add them later!)*

Border Rounds:

None! Break both colours and tie off. Weave in your ends and enjoy your day.

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CLASSIC PINSTRIPE BORDER

This border gives a vintage "merit badge" look, and it really shines in cotton thread. Half-doubles worked on back push the exposed **Colour A** edge forward to form a curved, slightly embossed pinstripe, while back loop single crochets and a round of slip stitches create a straight, flat edge.

Border Rounds:

R1B: *Front faces you. Start in base of starting ch1.*

Sides: (hdcB in mst, ch 1)... to next corner.

Corners: hdcB 5 in corner ch3 space <u>or</u> stitch. ch 1.

Join: sl in <u>both loops</u> of 1st hdcB. ch 1.

R2B: *Front faces you. Start in in <u>blo</u> of <u>next</u> **R1B** st (a ch1).*

Sides: sc in <u>blo</u> of all sts, including ch1s.

Corners: sc 1 in <u>back</u> and <u>third loops</u> of each corner hdc5 st.

Join: [sc in blo of **R1B** joining sl.] sl in <u>both loops</u> of first **R2B** sc.

R3B: *Front faces you.*

All sts: sl in <u>both loops</u> or preferred loop(s).

**Join:** Needle finish or join with a sl.

Finishing: *Optional*. Use loose ends or new thread to tack down the back bumps of all **Colour A** corner ch3 sts (the corners of the pinstripe border). Recommended primarily if the piece will be used heavily or washed often. This is best done loosely and <u>after</u> first washing and blocking the motif.

Body Instructions:

[1] ch <u>1</u> to start border round.
  (ch1 does <u>not</u> count as a st)

[2] Carry **Colour B** on <u>back</u>.

[3] Break yarn and tie off.
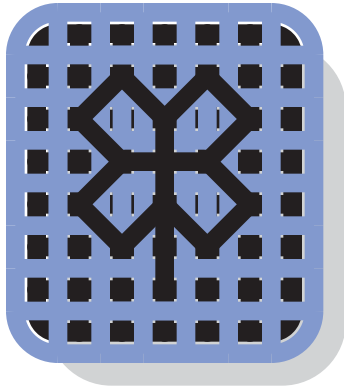
QUICK "BORDERLESS" BORDER

Stylish and quick, a single round of half-double crochets worked through both meshes seals the edge while helping small motifs "pop." This border can look a *little* rough, bit it's a great choice for hard-wearing pieces like cotton dishcloths. A round of slip stitches (ideally in front and back loops) will straighten out and reinforce edges, but this is optional.

** Carry **Colour B** on <u>back</u> even though **R1B** will be visible on <u>front</u>. hdc through both meshes in the base of starting ch1. This will conceal the starting ch1.*

Body Instructions:

[1] ch 1 to start border round.
(ch1 does <u>not</u> count as a st)

[2] Carry **Colour B** on <u>back</u>.*

[3] Break yarn and tie off.

Border Rounds:

R1B:	*<u>Front</u> faces you. Start in base of ch1.*
Sides:	(hdcT in mst, ch 1)... to next corner.
Corners:	hdcT, ch 3, hdcT in corner ch <u>stitch</u>. ch 1.
Join:	Needle finish or sl in 1st hdcT.
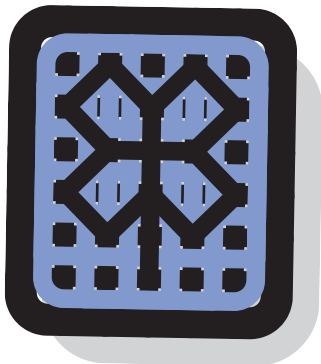
EASY FLOATING BORDER(S)

If your patch needs *something* but mesh rounds are too fussy (or they didn't turn out), try working single or half-double crochets directly into mesh <u>spaces</u>. It's as easy as it gets, and nothing does a better job of hiding messy edges. Add Floating Borders after one or more mesh rounds or add slip stitch rounds to create a range of effects.

Body Instructions:

[1] sl in next msp, ch 1 to start border round, or break yarn and tie off.
(ch1 does <u>not</u> count as a st)

[2] Carry **Colour B** on <u>front</u>.

[3] sl in next msp, ch 1 to start border round, or break yarn and tie off.
(ch1 does <u>not</u> count as a st)

Border Rounds:

R1B / R1A:	*<u>Front</u> faces you. Start in next mesh <u>space</u>.*
Sides:	sc 2 directly in <u>msps</u> (skip msts).
Corners:	sc 3-6* in corner <u>space</u>.
Join:	Needle finish or sl in 1st sc.

Variations:	• Add a Floating Border in **Colour A** only (pictured)—working into **Colour B** row-end T sts can be tricky, but it's possible!
	• Replace scs with hdcs or extended scs for thicker borders.
	• Add Floating Border(s) after dcX or hdcX mesh rounds.
	• Add sl round(s), working in preferred loops.
	* Whatever works best with your yarn. I normally sc 5.