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Quick Tips

Crochet



Portable

- Essential Techniques
- Troubleshooting
- Time-Saving Tips

Crochet VISUAL Quick Tips[®]

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Crochet



**by Cecily Keim and Kim
P. Werker**



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Crochet VISUAL™ Quick Tips

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I just had to let you and your company know how great I think your books are. I just purchased my third Visual book (my first two are dog-eared now!) and, once again, your product has surpassed my expectations. The expertise, thought, and effort that go into each book are obvious, and I sincerely appreciate your efforts. Keep up the wonderful work!

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Cecily Keim documents her adventures in life, crocheting, and other creative endeavors at SuchSweetHands.com. Throughout her life, regardless of the type of study or type of job, making things has always fascinated Cecily. Her great-grandmother, Mama Mac, taught her to crochet at age 9. Since then crochet has become a favorite technique in her crafty arsenal. Cecily is mesmerized by the endless possibilities of crochet and loves passing on her enthusiasm as a writer, designer, and teacher. She teaches crochet classes and contributes her designs to magazines and books. She has also demonstrated her designs on the DIY channel's *Knitty Gritty* and *Uncommon Threads*.

Cecily lives in Los Angeles, watches too much television, and loves candy, her cats, and her boyfriend.



Kim P. Werker is the editor of *Interweave Crochet* magazine. She is also the founder and Creative Director of CrochetMe.com, the online crochet community for innovative patterns, tips, and tutorials, and a playground for meeting crocheters from all over the world. After a couple of earlier flings, Kim got back into crochet in 2004. She is a professional member of the Crochet Guild of America and The National NeedleArts Association, and travels throughout North America to teach about crochet and to meet enthusiastic crocheters. She has appeared on the television show *Uncommon Threads* and will appear on the PBS shows *Shay Pendray's Needle Arts Studio* and *Knit & Crochet Today*. She was thrilled to work again with Cecily on this follow-up to their first book, *Teach Yourself VISUALLY Crocheting*. Kim's other books include *Crochet Me: Designs to Fuel the Crochet Revolution* (Interweave Press, 2007), *Get Hooked*, and *Get Hooked Again* (Watson-Guptil 2006 and 2007, respectively).

Originally from New York State, Kim lives in Vancouver, British Columbia, with her husband and their dog. When she's not crocheting, writing, editing, or traveling, she enjoys reading, hiking, knitting, and playing in the garden.



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Finally, to the crocheting community: We thank you for your enthusiasm for the craft and for your unending desire to learn more about it.

Instructional Videos Online

We've filmed videos of a few of the techniques described in this book—just look for the  symbol. To view the videos, go to www.wiley.com/go/crochetvqt.

Chapter 1: Hooks and Yarn

Before you start crocheting, take some time to familiarize yourself with the tools that will help you along the way. Starting a project with the right tools on hand saves time. In this chapter you'll find information to help you choose an appropriate hook for a project as well as suggestions for choosing, caring for, and winding yarn.

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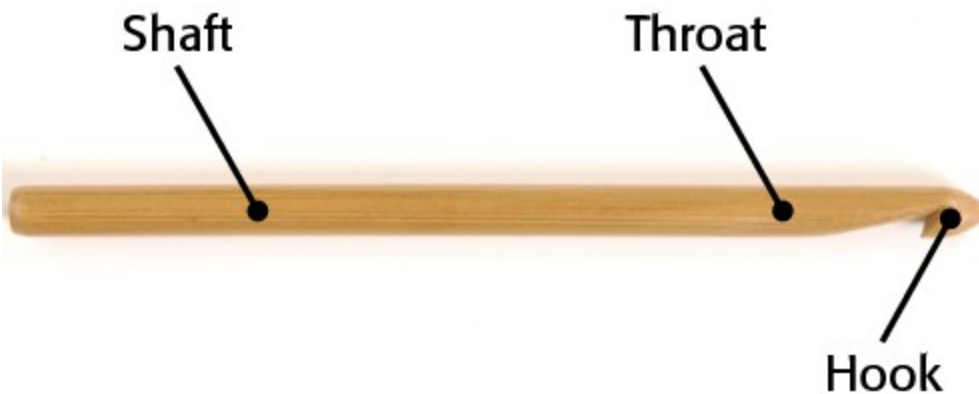
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Hooks

Shape

Crochet hooks are generally 5 to 7 inches long. There is a hook at one end, which you use to grab yarn or thread and pull it through the stitches of your work. You hold the hook along its shaft.

Manufacturers shape their hooks differently. The sharpness or bluntness of the hook's point varies, as does the hook's depth. Try out a few brands until you find the shape you think works best.



Hook Composition

Plastic hooks are usually hollow and lightweight. Most very large hooks are made of plastic. Metal hooks can be very smooth, enabling the yarn to slide with little resistance. Wood or bamboo hooks provide a bit of

friction, which comes in handy when you're crocheting with slippery yarns.



When using a wood or bamboo hook, rub the hook with a piece of wax paper to make the yarn slide more smoothly.

Some hooks are designed with a thick rubber handle to be easier to grip. Some hooks feature embellishments on the handle, but these are purely decorative.



Other Kinds of Hooks

Tunisian crochet hooks are longer than standard crochet hooks. This extra length allows the hook to hold many stitches, much like a knitting needle does. (See page 92 for more on Tunisian crochet.)

There are also double-ended crochet hooks made for a technique called *double-ended crochet* or *crochet on the double*.



Hook Sizes

Hook size is determined by the diameter of the hook's shaft. Hook size is marked differently in the United States, the United Kingdom, and the rest of the world.



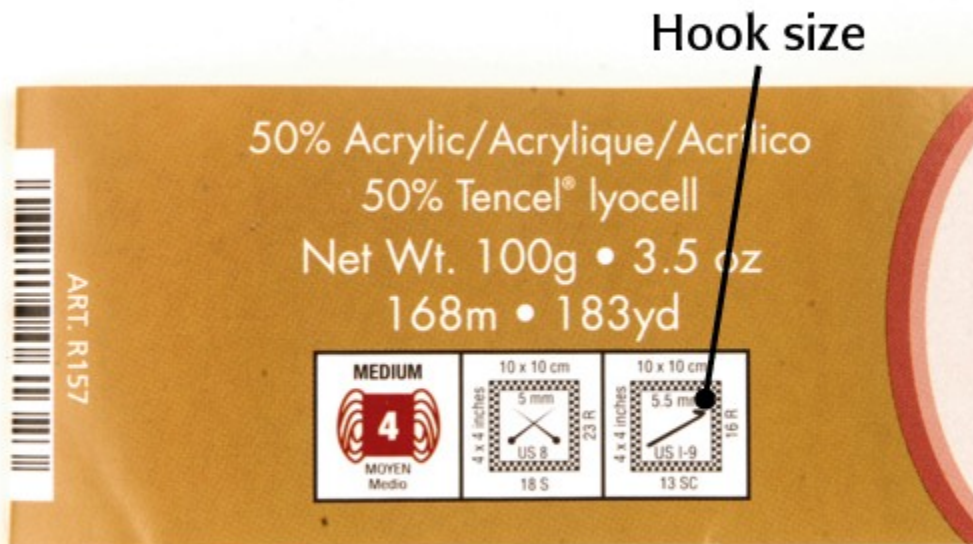
Hook sizes in the United States and United Kingdom are marked by an arbitrary letter or number, respectively. Manufacturers often use slightly different labels for the same size hook, however. Hooks are most consistently labeled by the metric measurement of their diameter, which is an objective label. There is a growing effort to standardize sizes by using metric measurements only.

TIP

Small hooks make small stitches; large hooks make large stitches. Switching hooks will change the look and feel of the fabric you crochet.

Deciding Which Hook Size to Use

Most yarn labels suggest a hook size to use; most patterns also list a recommended hook size. You may need to change hook size in order to match the gauge listed in a pattern or to achieve a pleasing drape and feel. Matching the gauge of a pattern is more important than using the exact hook size listed. In some instances, a yarn label provides only a recommendation for a knitting needle size. In this case, use a hook that matches or is slightly larger than the metric size.



Determining a Hook's Size

If you're unsure of a hook's size because it is old or the label has worn off, you can use a hook gauge to measure it. The size indicated beside the smallest hole that the shaft of the hook fits into is the size of your hook.



Compare Hook-Size Labels

Hook Sizes

This chart lists equivalent crochet-hook sizes.

Hook Sizes		
<i>Metric Size (in mm)</i>	<i>U.S. Size</i>	<i>U.S. Knitting-Needle Size</i>
2	A	0
2.25	B	1
2.75	C	2
3.25	D	3
3.5	E	4
3.75	F	5
4	G	6
4.5		7
5	H	8
5.5	I	9
6	J	10
6.5	K	10½
8	L	11
9	M/N	13
10	N/P	15
15	P/Q	19
19	S	35

Steel-Hook Sizes

Steel hooks have a narrow shaft and tiny hooks intended for use with thin crochet threads to make finer lace and doilies. This chart lists equivalent sizes of steel hooks.

Hook Sizes		
<i>Metric Size (in mm)</i>	<i>U.S. Size</i>	<i>U.S. Knitting-Needle Size</i>
2	A	0
2.25	B	1
2.75	C	2
3.25	D	3
3.5	E	4
3.75	F	5
4	G	6
4.5		7
5	H	8
5.5	I	9
6	J	10
6.5	K	10½
8	L	11
9	M/N	13
10	N/P	15
15	P/Q	19
19	S	35

Other Tools and Notions

Besides these tools, a sharp pair of scissors or a yarn cutter is useful. Keep these notions in a small case or kit so you always have them handy.

Measuring Tape

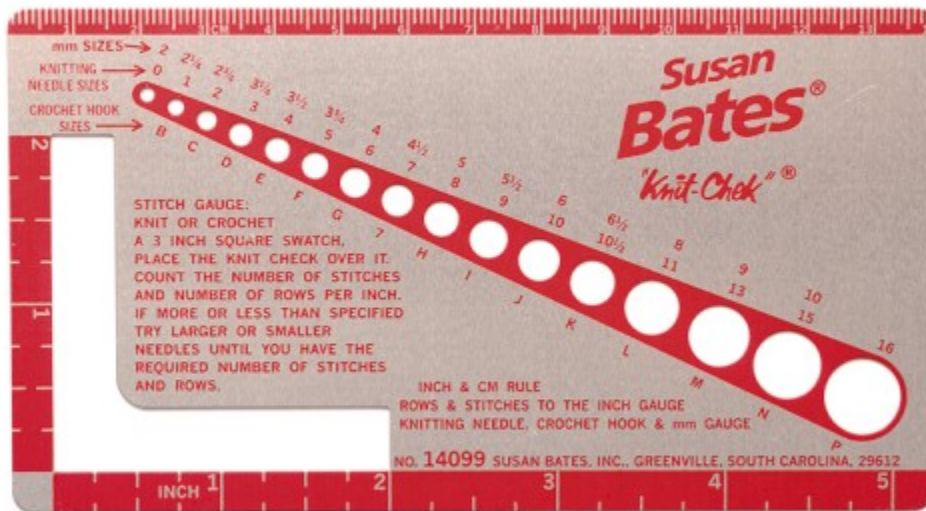
Use a measuring tape to take body measurements before you begin to crochet a garment. A measuring tape also comes in handy when checking gauge (see Chapter 7) and to keep track of your progress on a project. Measure your work frequently to make sure everything is going as planned.



Hook Gauge

The hook-gauge holes help you to determine the size of an unmarked hook. (See the section “Compare Hook-Size Labels” on page 8.)

Note: *Using the L-shaped window of hook gauges such as this one doesn't work well with certain textured stitches like bobbles and shells. To measure your gauge in these stitches, use a ruler or tape measure.*



Stitch Markers

Stitch markers are useful in many situations. For example, when working in the round (see Chapter 3), you can mark the beginning of the round by placing a marker in the first stitch. You can buy stitch markers designed for this purpose or improvise with scraps of yarn or even earrings. When crocheting a garment, use stitch markers to indicate the placement of increases and decreases for shaping (see Chapter 3). Stitch markers are like a breadcrumb trail: Use them whenever you need to keep track of what you're doing.



Tapestry Needle

A tapestry needle (or yarn needle) has a blunt tip and a large eye to accommodate thick yarns. Use your needle to sew together pieces (see Chapter 6) or to weave in yarn ends after you have completed your project (see Chapter 3).



Yarn Fibers

Fiber and construction define a yarn and whether it will be a good match for the project you have in mind. Different types of fibers include natural fibers and synthetic fibers.

Natural Fibers

Natural fibers come from plants or animals. The most common are cotton and wool, but there are many others.

Plant fibers are usually lightweight, can be machine washable, have little stretch, and breathe well. They include cotton, linen, soy, hemp, bamboo, and jute.

Animal fibers are very warm (even when wet), have some natural stretch, and breathe well. They include wool, mohair, cashmere, silk, angora, and alpaca, and generally must be washed by hand, unless they have been treated to be machine-washable (labeled *superwash*).