

Tools & Materials

Here is information on the main tools and materials you will need to make the toys in this book. Some projects may also need other items, which will be listed at the start of the project.

YARN

There is a wide variety of yarn from which toys can be crocheted. However, cotton rich or 100% cotton is the best—I do not recommend using wool yarn because it often causes allergies. 100% acrylic yarn is not as comfortable to crochet with, although it is hypo-allergenic. Make sure the yarn is firmly twisted and smooth for more convenient crocheting. Choose only yarn that can be washed. For all projects in this book I used a 4-ply sport weight part-cotton yarn: YarnArt Jeans (55% cotton, 45% acrylic) 174yd (160m) per 1¾oz (50g) skein.

EMBROIDERY THREADS

I prefer to embroider eyes, blush, and other decorations on the toys because it is the safest method. For the embroidery I use the same yarn that I use for the crochet because 4-ply yarn consists of four twisted threads and can easily be divided into separate threads (like floss). The most used colors are black and pink, with orange, cream, and brown used less often.

GAUGE (TENSION)

In these projects achieving an exact gauge is not important, but children's toys should be crocheted to make a tight fabric—there should be no holes between stitches because it is very important that the child does not have access to the stuffing. For this reason you should choose a hook smaller than the manufacturer of your chosen yarn recommends. I also recommend crocheting a small swatch to make sure that the hook gives the correct result. If your sample is too soft and has holes between stitches, try using a smaller hook to get the correct result.



CROCHET HOOKS

Most of the toys in this book will need one main crochet hook, and only the quiet books will require an additional larger crochet hook. I mainly used a US size B/1 (2mm) with a US size D/3 (3mm) for the quiet books.

STUFFING

Polyester stuffing is the best for toys because it is hypoallergenic, lightweight, and washable.

OTHER TOOLS AND MATERIALS

- Blunt-ended yarn needle (tapestry needle)—for sewing on details
- Thin sewing needle—for embroidery
- Tweezers or a wooden stick—for more convenient stuffing of small parts
- Spandex thread—to make movement straps in quiet books more durable (optional)
- Stitch markers—or you can use small pieces of yarn in a contrasting color instead

The following tools are not specifically mentioned in the patterns, but they are assumed to be used as necessary:

- Scissor or yarn snips
- Ruler or measuring tape
- Sewing pins

NOISE MAKERS

Adding a noise maker is optional, but it does create an extra element of interest in the toy.

Rattle inserts:

For unstuffed pieces in the quiet books use a flat box rattle insert (about $\frac{3}{4}$ in/22mm in diameter).

For baby rattles (and any other stuffed pieces) it is better to use a ball-shaped rattle insert because after stuffing the sound will be louder. I use $1\frac{1}{2}$ in (28mm) diameter ball rattles but it is OK if your ball is a little smaller or bigger.

Squeakers:

For the quiet books I recommend you use flat squeakers (about $\frac{3}{8}$ in/10mm thick).

For other toys, you can use thicker squeakers, I recommend about $1\frac{1}{4}$ –2in (30–50mm) in diameter.

Rattle cellophane or baking sleeve:

This is very thin and creates a rustling sound.



Handy Tips

ABBREVIATIONS

approx.	approximately
BLO	back loop only
ch	chain
cont	continue
dec	decrease
dc	double crochet
FLO	front loop only
foll	follows
hdc	half double crochet
inc	increase
inv dec	invisible decrease
inv sc3tog	invisible single crochet 3 stitches together
opp	opposite
patt	pattern
PM	place marker
rep	repeat
RS	right side
sc	single crochet
sc3tog	single crochet 3 stitches together
slst	slip stitch
st(s)	stitch(es)
tog	together
WS	wrong side

US/UK TERMINOLOGY CONVERSIONS

The patterns are written in US terminology. For the equivalent UK terms, see below:

US	UK
single crochet (sc)	double crochet (dc)
half double crochet (hdc)	half treble (htr)
double crochet (dc)	treble (tr)
skip	miss
yarn over	yarn round hook

HOW TO READ THE PATTERNS

The patterns in this book are written in an abbreviated style. Let's take a look at some examples:

Round 4: [2 sc, inc] 6 times. (24 sc)

This means: work 1 single crochet in each of the next 2 stitches, then increase in the next stitch. Repeat the instruction in brackets a total of 6 times. There are 24 stitches in this round.

Rounds 6 to 8: 4 sc, 3 inc, 2 inv dec. (3 rounds)

This means: Rounds 6, 7, and 8 have the same instruction. Work 1 single crochet in each of the next 4 stitches, increase in the next 3 stitches, then work an invisible decrease twice.

Rows 2 and 3: 34 sc, ch1, turn. (2 rows)

This means: Rows 2 and 3 have the same instruction. Work 1 single crochet in each of 34 stitches, chain 1 and turn the work from right to left clockwise to begin the next row.

COLORWORK

Left-handed crocheters should read colorwork instructions backwards (from left to right).

For example: If the instruction says: "Row 26: 4L, 18B, 12L, ch1, turn."

You should work: "Row 26: 12L, 18B, 4L, ch1, turn."

TOY CARE

Place the toy in a washing bag and wash in the machine on a delicate cycle in accordance with the yarn manufacturer's recommendations. Be sure to turn on an additional rinse cycle and spin at low speed. After washing, gently pull the toy into shape and dry naturally on a flat surface.

YARN OVER VS YARN UNDER TECHNIQUES

Crocheted toys are mainly worked with single crochet (sc) stitches. There are two ways to work this stitch: with a yarn over or with a yarn under. The methods differ in how you grab the yarn with your hook:

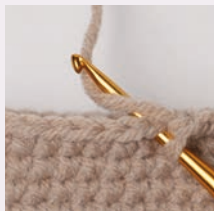
If the yarn is grabbed from below (i.e. yarn over the hook), then the stitches will be V-shaped.

If the yarn is grabbed from above (i.e. yarn under the hook), then the stitch will be X-shaped.

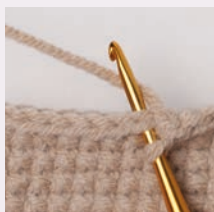
This table compares the difference between the methods:

	Yarn over	Yarn under
Stitch appearance	V-shaped	X-shaped
Gauge (tension)	Looser (softer)	Tighter (stiffer)
Finished size of toy	Bigger	Smaller
Yarn consumption	More	Less
Skew	More	Less

When crocheting toys, both of these methods are fine so you can decide which to use. I use yarn under, therefore if you use yarn over your toys will be bigger and you may need more yarn. In addition, the yarn over method gives more skew and as a result you may have to adjust the pattern.



Yarn over the hook and the fabric created.



Yarn under the hook and the fabric created.

SAFETY FIRST

- The toys in this book are intended for children under three years of age, so special attention should be paid to safety issues.
- Ensure all parts are sewed on VERY tightly.
- Toys for children under 36 months old should not have small parts (defined as any object that fits completely into a test cylinder 2¼in long by 1¼in diameter, or 57.1mm long by 31.7mm diameter).
- Although hand seams are very strong, regularly inspect toys for damage that could cause small pieces to become detached.
- When stretched, cords should be shorter than 8½in (22cm) if toys are for children under 18 months, or less than 12in (30cm) for children from 18 to 36 months. Laces should not form a movable or fixed loop with a circumference of more than 14¼in (36cm). So, in most cases, the cords/ laces should be shorter than 7in (18cm).
- Granules (or other loose elements) used as stuffing should be placed in a sewn fabric cover.
- Crochet tightly, without holes in the crocheted fabric, so there is no access to stuffing.
- Do not use beads, fuzzy yarn, paper, or cardboard. Also do not use paint, colored pencils, crayons or pens to color pieces.
- Please also check toy safety regulations in your country.
- NEVER leave a baby unsupervised with a handmade toy, because it has not been safety certified. Any small toy can become a choking hazard.



YARN

4-ply sport weight semi-cotton or cotton in the following shades:

- 2⅞oz (60g) of gray
- ½oz (15g) of cream
- ⅓oz (5g) of yellow

HOOK

US size B/1 (2mm) crochet hook

OTHER TOOLS AND MATERIALS

- Stitch markers
- Polyester stuffing (I used about 2oz (60g), but you may need more)
- Tweezers or wooden stick for stuffing
- Blunt-ended yarn needle
- Black and pink threads for embroidery
- Thin sewing needle
- Optional: piece of rattle cellophane (or baking sleeve) for rustling effect, ball rattle to insert into head

FINISHED SIZE

6in (15.5cm) without cap, 7⅞in (18cm) with cap

Elephant

Stacking Toy

This stacking toy is designed so that it can't be assembled incorrectly; the rings have different diameters, and the central rod is cone shaped. The toy itself will teach young learners how to play with it, so it is ideal for a first acquaintance with stacking rings.

Project Notes

All pieces, unless otherwise indicated, are crocheted in continuous spiral rounds.

For the Ridged Ring Rounds 9, 12, 15, and 18, the Legs Round 7, and the Arms Round 6 you will need to join rounds in the back loop of previous rounds. To do this, insert the hook into the next stitch as usual and in the remaining back loop of the previous round as noted in the pattern. Grab the yarn with your hook and pull it through the back loop and through the stitch (two loops on hook). Slightly tighten the pulled loop so that the back loop and the stitch are closer. Yarn over and pull through both loops to complete the single crochet stitch. Repeat all round.



LARGE RING

Using gray, ch42 very loosely, join with slst into a ring.

Round 1: 1 sc in all back bumps of chain. (42 sc)

Round 2: 3 sc, inc, [6 sc, inc] 5 times, 3 sc. (48 sc)

Round 3: [7 sc, inc] 6 times. (54 sc)

Round 4: 4 sc, inc, [8 sc, inc] 5 times, 4 sc. (60 sc)

Round 5: [9 sc, inc] 6 times. (66 sc)

Round 6: 5 sc, inc, [10 sc, inc] 5 times, 5 sc. (72 sc)

Round 7: [11 sc, inc] 6 times. (78 sc)

Round 8: 6 sc, inc, [12 sc, inc] 5 times, 6 sc. (84 sc)

Rounds 9 to 14: 84 sc. (6 rounds)

Round 15: 6 sc, inv dec, [12 sc, inv dec] 5 times, 6 sc. (78 sc)

Round 16: [11 sc, inv dec] 6 times. (72 sc)

Round 17: 5 sc, inv dec, [10 sc, inv dec] 5 times, 5 sc. (66 sc)

Round 18: [9 sc, inv dec] 6 times. (60 sc)

Round 19: 4 sc, inv dec, [8 sc, inv dec] 5 times, 4 sc. (54 sc)

Round 20: [7 sc, inv dec] 6 times. (48 sc)

Round 21: 3 sc, inv dec, [6 sc, inv dec] 5 times, 3 sc. (42 sc)

Rounds 22 to 24: 42 sc. (3 rounds)
Slst to join. Fasten off, leaving 35½in (90cm) end for sewing (1).

Thread yarn end into yarn needle. Fold ring flat so both edges are touching and join with double whip st (2), stuffing as you sew. With about a quarter left unstitched, stuff to end and sew completely. Secure yarn end and hide inside (3).

CONE

Using gray, make a magic ring. Stuff cone tightly as you crochet. Add more stuffing in bottom of cone to keep bottom ring tight.

Round 1: 6 sc in ring.

Round 2: [Inc] 6 times. (12 sc)

Round 3: [1 sc, inc] 6 times. (18 sc)

Round 4: 1 sc, inc, [2 sc, inc] 5 times, 1 sc. (24 sc)

Round 5: [3 sc, inc] 6 times. (30 sc)

Round 6: 2 sc, inc, [4 sc, inc] 5 times, 2 sc. (36 sc)

Round 7: [5 sc, inc] 6 times. (42 sc)

Round 8: 42 scBLO.

Round 9: [5 sc, inv dec] 6 times. (36 sc)

Rounds 10 to 12: 36 sc. (3 rounds)

Round 13: [4 sc, inv dec] 6 times. (30 sc)

Round 14: 30 sc.

Round 15: [13 sc, inv dec] twice. (28 sc)

Round 16: 28 sc.

Round 17: [5 sc, inv dec] 4 times. (24 sc)

Rounds 18 to 23: 24 sc. (6 rounds)

Round 24: [4 sc, inv dec] 4 times. (20 sc)

Rounds 25 to 32: 20 sc. (8 rounds)

Round 33: [8 sc, inv dec] twice. (18 sc)

Rounds 34 to 38: 18 sc. (5 rounds)

Round 39: [1 sc, inv dec] 6 times. (12 sc)

Round 40: [Inv dec] 6 times. (6 sc)
Cut yarn, leaving 6in (15cm) end.

Tighten loops. Secure yarn end and hide inside (4).

RING WITH RIDGED ROUNDS

Using cream, ch36 very loosely, join with slst into a ring.

Round 1: 1 sc in all back bumps of chain. (36 sc)

Round 2: [5 sc, inc] 6 times. (42 sc)

Round 3: 3 sc, inc, [6 sc, inc] 5 times, 3 sc. (48 sc)

Round 4: [7 sc, inc] 6 times. (54 sc)

Round 5: 4 sc, inc, [8 sc, inc] 5 times, 4 sc. (60 sc)

Round 6: [9 sc, inc] 6 times. (66 sc)

Round 7: 66 scFLO.

Round 8: 66 sc.

Round 9: *Insert hook in next st and remaining back loop of Round 6 (5). Grab yarn and pull through back loop and st (two loops on hook). Slightly tighten pulled loop so back loop and st are closer, yarn over, pull through both loops to complete st; rep from * to end.

Rounds 10 to 18: Rep Rounds 7 to 9 three more times. (9 rounds)

Round 19: [9 sc, inv dec] 6 times. (60 sc)

Round 20: 4 sc, inv dec, [8 sc, inv dec] 5 times, 4 sc. (54 sc)

Round 21: [7 sc, inv dec] 6 times. (48 sc)

Round 22: 3 sc, inv dec, [6 sc, inv dec] 5 times, 3 sc. (42 sc)

Round 23: [5 sc, inv dec] 6 times. (36 sc)

Rounds 24 to 26: 36 sc. (3 rounds)
Slst to join. Fasten off, leaving 27½in (70cm) end for sewing (6).

Sew and stuff as for Large Ring (7).

SMALL RING

Using gray, ch30 very loosely, join with slst into a ring.

Round 1: 1 sc in all back bumps of chain. (30 sc)

Round 2: [4 sc, inc] 6 times. (36 sc)

Round 3: [5 sc, inc] 6 times. (42 sc)

Round 4: 3 sc, inc, [6 sc, inc] 5 times, 3 sc. (48 sc)

Round 5: [7 sc, inc] 6 times. (54 sc)

Round 6: 4 sc, inc, [8 sc, inc] 5 times, 4 sc. (60 sc)

Rounds 7 to 11: 60 sc. (5 rounds)

Round 12: 4 sc, inv dec, [8 sc, inv dec] 5 times, 4 sc. (54 sc)

Round 13: [7 sc, inv dec] 6 times. (48 sc)

Round 14: 3 sc, inv dec, [6 sc, inv dec] 5 times, 3 sc. (42 sc)

Round 15: [5 sc, inv dec] 6 times. (36 sc)

Round 16: [4 sc, inv dec] 6 times. (30 sc)

Rounds 17 and 18: 30 sc. (2 rounds)

Slst to join. Fasten off, leaving 27½in (70cm) end for sewing.

Sew and stuff as for Large Ring (8).



TIP

See Project Notes for how to join edges by working into the back loop of stitches in a previous round.





TIP

Put the tip of the cone into the concave hole before stuffing the Head to prevent the hole deforming as you stuff.



HEAD

Using gray, make a magic ring.

Round 1: 6 sc in ring.

Round 2: [Inc] 6 times. (12 sc)

Round 3: [1 sc, inc] 6 times. (18 sc)

Round 4: [2 sc, inc] 6 times. (24 sc)

Round 5: 24 scFLO.

Rounds 6 to 11: 24 sc. (6 rounds)

Note: After Round 11, WS should be on outside (9). If necessary, turn out the piece so that RS is inside.

Round 12: [3 scBLO, inc] 6 times. (30 sc)

Round 13: [4 sc, inc] 6 times. (36 sc)

Round 14: [5 sc, inc] 6 times. (42 sc)

Round 15: 3 sc, inc, [6 sc, inc] 5 times, 3 sc. (48 sc)

Round 16: [7 sc, inc] 6 times (10). (54 sc)

Rounds 17 and 18: 54 sc. (2 rounds)

Round 19: 12 sc, ch12 very loosely, skip 6 sc, 36 sc to end of round. (60 sts, including ch)

Round 20: 12 sc, 1 sc in each back bump of chain, 36 sc. (60 sc)

Rounds 21 to 29: 60 sc. (8 rounds)

Round 30: 4 sc, inv dec, [8 sc, inv dec] 5 times, 4 sc. (54 sc)

Round 31: [7 sc, inv dec] 6 times. (48 sc)

Round 32: 3 sc, inv dec, [6 sc, inv dec] 5 times, 3 sc. (42 sc)

Round 33: [5 sc, inv dec] 6 times. (36 sc)

Round 34: 2 sc, inv dec, [4 sc, inv dec] 5 times, 2 sc. (30 sc)

Round 35: [3 sc, inv dec] 6 times. (24 sc)

Stuff Head around concave area on Head with which it will be put onto Cone.

Round 36: [2 sc, inv dec] 6 times. (18 sc)

Add more stuffing as you close hole.

Round 37: [1 sc, inv dec] 6 times. (12 sc)

Round 38: [Inv dec] 6 times. (6 sc)
Cut yarn, leaving 6in (15cm) end. Tighten loops. Secure and hide yarn ends inside.

TRUNK

Turn Head with concave area on top.

Round 1: Join gray at end of opening on side of head, ch1, 12 sc in ch (see 11 for direction of work), 6 sc in skipped sc of Round 19. (18 sc)

Note: To avoid holes in the side of the Trunk, when crocheting Round 1, on the 13th and 18th sc pick up the side sc (12).

Rounds 2 and 3: 18 sc. (2 rounds)

Round 4: 11 sc, inv dec, 3 sc, inv dec. (16 sc)

Rounds 5 to 7: 16 sc. (3 rounds)

Round 8: 10 sc, inv dec, 2 sc, inv dec. (14 sc)

Rounds 9 and 10: 14 sc. (2 rounds)

Round 11: 12 sc, inv dec. (13 sc)

Round 12: 13 sc.

Round 13: 11 sc, inv dec. (12 sc)

Round 14: 10 sc, inv dec. (11 sc)

Round 15: Inv dec, 9 sc. (10 sc)

Cut yarn, leaving 8in (20cm) end. Stuff Trunk. Add more stuffing to top part of Trunk using tweezers or wooden stick. Tighten loops. Secure and hide yarn ends inside.

Sew any holes on side Trunk, with separate piece of yarn. Hide yarn ends inside (13).

COLLAR

Work in joined rounds.

Join yellow to any remaining front loop of Round 11 on Head at edge of concave area (14). Beginning from same loop, work Round 1 of Collar on remaining front loops, ch1.

Round 1: [3 sc, inc] 6 times, slst in first sc to join. (30 sc)

Round 2: Ch2, beginning from same st as slst, [1 dc, 2 dc in next st] 15 times, slst in first dc to join. (45 sc)

Round 3: Ch2, beginning from same st as slst, [2 dc in next st] 45 times. (90 sc)
Invisible fasten off.

Weave in yarn ends.

Spread out Collar (15).

EAR (make 2)

Using gray, make a magic ring.

Round 1: 6 sc in ring.

Round 2: [Inc] 6 times. (12 sc)

Round 3: [1 sc, inc] 6 times. (18 sc)

Round 4: [5 sc, inc] 3 times. (21 sc)

Round 5: Ch8, beginning in 2nd ch from hook, 7 sc (move marker in first sc to mark start of round), 1 sc around post of last st in 4th round (16), cont crocheting through main round (21 sc), 6 sc in 2nd side of chain, inc (17). (37 sc)

Rounds 6 to 8: 37 sc. (3 rounds)

Note: The start of the round should be on the side of the Ear.

Left ear:

Round 9: 17 sc, inv dec, 16 sc, inv dec. (35 sc)

Round 10: 17 sc, inv dec, 14 sc, inv dec. (33 sc)

Round 11: 17 sc, inv dec, 12 sc, inv dec. (31 sc)

Round 12: 17 sc, inv dec, 10 sc, inv dec, slst to join. (29 sc)

Fasten off, leaving 27½in (70cm) end for sewing.

Right ear:

Round 9: Inv dec, 16 sc, inv dec, 17 sc. (35 sc)

Round 10: Inv dec, 14 sc, inv dec, 17 sc. (33 sc)

Round 11: Inv dec, 12 sc, inv dec, 17 sc. (31 sc)

Round 12: Inv dec, 10 sc, inv dec, 17 sc. (29 sc)

Slst to join. Fasten off, leaving 27½in (70cm) end for sewing (18).

LEG (make 2)

Using gray, make a magic ring.

Round 1: 8 sc in ring.

Round 2: [3 sc in next st, 3 sc] twice. (12 sc)

Round 3: [3 inc, 3 sc] twice. (18 sc)

Round 4: [Inc, 1 sc] 3 times, 3 sc, [inc, 1 sc] 3 times, 3 sc. (24 sc)

Round 5: 24 scFLO.

Round 6: 24 sc.

Round 7: 24 sc in both loops of Round 6 and remaining back loop of Round 4.

Round 8: 24 sc.

Round 9: [1 sc, inv dec] 3 times, 15 sc. (21 sc)

Round 10: 21 sc.

Slst to join. Fasten off, leaving long end for sewing.

Push Rounds 1 to 4 inside Leg **(19)**.

ARM (make 2)

Using gray, make a magic ring.

Round 1: 6 sc in ring.

Round 2: [Inc] 6 times. (12 sc)

Round 3: [3 sc, inc] 3 times. (15 sc)

Round 4: 15 scFLO.

Round 5: 15 sc.

Round 6: 15 sc in both loops of Round 5 and remaining back loop of Round 3.

Round 7: 15 sc.

Round 8: [3 sc, inv dec] 3 times. (12 sc)

Rounds 9 to 16: 12 sc. (8 rounds)

Stuff Arm slightly.

Row 17: Flatten Arm, work 5 sc through both layers to join **(20)**.

Push Rounds 1 to 3 inside Arm **(21)**.

Fasten off, leaving long end for sewing **(22)**.

CAP

Using cream, make a magic ring.

Round 1: 6 sc in ring.

Round 2: [Inc] 6 times. (12 sc)

Round 3: 12 sc.

Round 4: [Inv dec] 6 times. (6 sc)

Change to yellow. Stuff top of Cap using tweezers or wooden stick.

Rounds 5 and 6: 6 sc. (2 rounds)

Round 7: [2 sc, inc] twice. (8 sc)

Round 8: [3 sc, inc] twice. (10 sc)

Round 9: [4 sc, inc] twice. (12 sc)

Round 10: [3 sc, inc] 3 times. (15 sc)

Round 11: 15 sc.

Slst to join. Invisible fasten off, leaving long end for sewing **(23)**.

ASSEMBLY

Check that rings and Head fit easily onto Cone. If rings are too tight, stretch them slightly on the inside.

Sew Ears on sides of Head with mattress st, between 12–25th rounds of Head counting from above, and about 10–11 sc from Trunk **(24)**.

Optional: When half of the Ear is sewn on, insert a piece of rattle cellophane (or baking sleeve) into it for a rustling effect.

Do not stuff Ears. Secure and hide yarn end inside **(25)**.

Sew Cap on one side of top of Head with backstitch. Stuff Cap as you sew **(26)**.

Using a thin needle, embroider eyes 2 rounds high and 1 to 1.5 sc wide with black thread **(27)** on 18–19th rounds of Head (counting from above). Distance between eyes is 10 sc, and from eyes to ears about 10 sc.

Using pink thread, sew a couple of blush stitches **(27)** about 2 sc long one round below eyes.

One round above eyes make 2 sc long diagonal eyebrow stitches **(27)**.

With WS of last row facing up, sew Arms onto Small Ring in middle of height using mattress st. The distance between Arms is about 16 sts from front and about 32 sts from the back **(28)**.

Using mattress st, sew Legs to Large Ring, with distance between Legs about 16 sts. Stuff Legs as you sew **(29)**.

Optional: To make a tail on Large Ring, join gray to ring (opposite Legs), ch20, beginning in 2nd ch from hook, 19 slst along chain, surface slst in st on ring. Fasten off, secure and hide yarn end inside.

Insert Cone in Large Ring and stack other parts in order.

