



THE **Alzheimer**

SOCIETY OF IRELAND

CROCHET ACTIVITY SUPPORT PLAN





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Aim

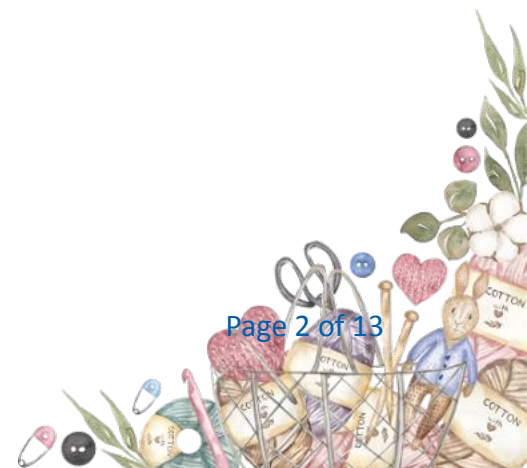
To support engagement in a familiar and enjoyable craft activity while promoting relaxation, conversation, and a sense of achievement.

Materials

- Large crochet hook (5mm to 8mm)
- Chunky, light-coloured wool
- Good lighting
- Comfortable chair and table if required
- Small basket to keep materials together
- Example crochet piece (optional)

Preparation

- Ensure glasses are available if used.
- Sit in a quiet area with minimal distractions.
- Place all materials within easy reach.
- Begin with casual conversation about crafts, hobbies, or previous crochet experiences.
- Introduce the activity in a relaxed manner.





Step 1: Explore the Materials

Allow time to:

- Feel the texture of the wool.
- Discuss colours.
- Hold and examine the crochet hook.
- Talk about previous projects they may have made.

If they enjoy conversation, use this stage to discuss:

- Clothes they might have made.
- Gifts they have given.
- Favourite colours and patterns.
- Family members who crocheted or knitted.

Step 2: Establish a Starting Point

Observe which level of support is most appropriate.

Option A: **Independent**

If they remember the process, encourage them to begin.

Option B: **Guided**

Provide gentle prompts:

"What comes next?"

"Would you like me to hold the wool while you start?"

Option C: **Supported**

The companion prepares the foundation chain and invites them to continue with familiar stitches.



Step 3: Crocheting

Focus on enjoyment rather than the finished product.

Use one-step instructions if needed:

- Hold the hook.
- wool over.
- Pull through.
- Repeat.

Avoid giving several instructions at once.

Helpful prompts:

- "Can you show me how you do that stitch?"
- "That looks very neat."
- "Would you like to do another row?"

Step 4: Encourage Natural Conversation

Use the activity as a focal point.

Topics might include:

- Learning crochet.
- Favourite handmade items.
- Family traditions.
- Craft groups or social activities.
- Previous work involving sewing, embroidery or textiles.

If conversation becomes repetitive or difficult to redirect, gently return attention to the activity:

- "Could you show me the next stitch?"
- "What colour wool would you choose for this?"
- "Can you tell me what happens after this row?"



Step 5: Managing Challenges

If Frustration Occurs

- Reassure and validate.
- Simplify the task.
- Offer short breaks.
- Focus on handling the wool rather than producing a finished piece.

If Vision Becomes a Barrier

- Use chunkier wool.
- Use a larger crochet hook.
- Position lighting directly over the work.
- Shift focus to discussing patterns, colours and previous projects if the practical task becomes difficult.

If Attention Drifts

- Comment on the materials.
- Ask for guidance or advice.
- Bring attention back to one simple action.

Step 6: Finishing the Session

Allow time to look at what has been completed.

Acknowledge participation and effort:

- "We got a lovely bit done today."
- "Thank you for showing me your crochet skills."

Store materials together and leave the option open for another session.



Adaptations

Easier

- Larger hook and chunky wool.
- Care worker completes set-up.
- Focus on one stitch type only.
- Shorter sessions.

More Advanced

- Follow a simple pattern.
- Create a small square or scarf.
- Choose colours for a project.
- Teach the care worker a technique.

Notes for Companion

- The process is more important than the outcome.
- Encourage choice and independence where possible.
- Use praise frequently.
- Follow the person's pace and interests.
- Allow conversation and reminiscence to develop naturally through the activity.

Success is measured by enjoyment, engagement and participation, not by completing a finished crochet item.



How to Crochet

At first glance, a crochet hook and a ball of wool may not seem like much, but they can open the door to endless creative possibilities.

With just a few simple steps, you can learn the basics of crochet and soon be creating scarves, tea towels, and more with confidence.

Part 1: Learning about Hooks and Wool



One

Know about the different kinds of wool. There are many different kinds of wool that you can crochet. The type of wool you pick will depend on the type of project you are doing. If this is your first time trying to crochet, it is best to stick with a simple, plain wool made of cotton or soft acrylic wool. Choose a solid colour for the wool so that as you're learning, you can see how the stitches are made. (Patterned wool would make this more difficult.)

- **Soft acrylic wool:** This type of wool is less expensive than other wools, which makes it good for beginners who are just learning new patterns. Try to avoid the absolute cheapest wool when you do begin making projects to give away, as many cheap wools can be scratchy (and who wants a scratchy scarf?)
- **100% Cotton wool:** Cotton wool is good for making things that you think will get washed a lot (such as dish towels). Cotton wool is absorbent and easy to wash.
- **Novelty wool:** This wool is the most varied and generally the most expensive. Novelty wool can be made of very soft, fine wool that results in deliciously soft sweaters and scarves. Keep in mind that this kind of wool can't be washed as often as cotton wool.

Two

Look at the wool's label to determine your hook size. These days, almost every wool has a label on it that will tell you which size hook to use.



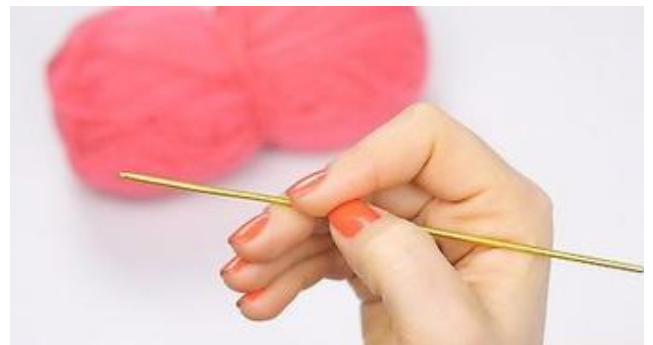
If you do not own any hooks and this is your first time crocheting, purchase the hook size that the wool you would like to work with recommends. Hook sizes are measured in millimetres or fractions of an inch.

- As a general rule, the thicker the hook, the thicker the wool will need to be.

Three

Hold the crochet hook in a way that feels comfortable for you.

While there is no right way to hold a crochet hook, there are two basic styles which can be reversed, depending on which is your dominant hand.



Holding the hook incorrectly can lead to your hand cramping.

- **Using the Over-the-Hook position:** Hold the hook so that the handle rests against your palm, like a pencil. Your hand should go over the hook with your thumb and index finger placed so that they are grasping the thumb rest (an indentation in the handle)
- **Using the Under-the-Hook position:** Hold the hook like you are holding a spatula. Your hand should be under the hook with your thumb and forefinger placed on the thumb rest.

Part 2: Learning Basic Crochet Patterns

One

Make a test swatch. As you're learning, your tension may vary. Before you begin a pattern, make a test swatch. A test swatch is when you practice a specific stitch without trying to make anything.

You are simply practising how to do the stitch while also figuring out your preference on how tight or loose you would like your stitch to be.



Two

Crochet a chain. Every crochet project begins with a chain stitch, usually abbreviated as **ch**, in instruction pamphlets.

Practice crocheting a chain for about 10 to 15 minutes a day until you are able to hold the wool so that it is not too loose or too tight.



- Form a slip knot around the hook, and wrap the wool around the hook. To make a slipknot, make a loop with your wool so that the tail of the wool hangs down behind the loop. Guide the hook through the loop under the tail and then back out of the loop. Pull the tail, which will tighten the wool around the hook, making a slipknot.
- Use your thumb and middle finger of your left hand (if you're right-handed) to hold the end of the slipknot. Use your left index finger to guide the wool from the back to the front around the handle of the hook. Use the hook to pull the wool through the loop on the hook--one chain link will form. Repeat this process to make a chain stitch.

Three

Make a slip stitch (abbreviated **sl st.**) This stitch is used to join work, bind off stitches, reinforce edges or carry wool to a different working position without adding extra height.



- Make a chain stitch that is six chain links long. Slide the hook through the first chain link you made; doing this should form a ring. (The first chain link is the one furthest away from the hook, since you made it first.)
- With the hand that you use to move the wool (not your dominant hand) wrap the wool around the hook from back to the front. At the same time, rotate the hook so that it's throat (so the tip of the hook is facing you.)
- Pull the wool and hook back through the stitch and then through the loop on the hook. This completes one slip stitch.

Four



Make a single crochet (sc). Draw a new loop through the chain stitch (but not through the loop that is already on the hook). You should now have two loops on the hook. Pull a new loop of wool through both, remaining with a single loop.

Repeat

- Single crochet is a relatively tight stitch and will result in a more closely stitched material.

Five

Double crochet. Double crochet stitches are great for making sweaters and scarves because they are a bit looser than other stitches (so your sweaters will be more comfy.)



- Make a chain with 15 chain links in it. wool over the hook from front to back. Slide your hook between the first two front loops and under the fourth chain link from the hook. wool over the hook again.
- Pull the wrapped wool through the chain stitch by gently guiding the wrapped hook through the chain. This should result in having three loops on your hook.
- Pull your hook through the first two loops on the hook. wool over the hook again and then pull the hook through the last two loops on the hook. Your double crochet is complete. Repeat.

Part 3: Ideas for More Advanced Projects

1



Learn how to make a turning chain.

Turning chains are helpful when you want to change direction with your stitch.

2

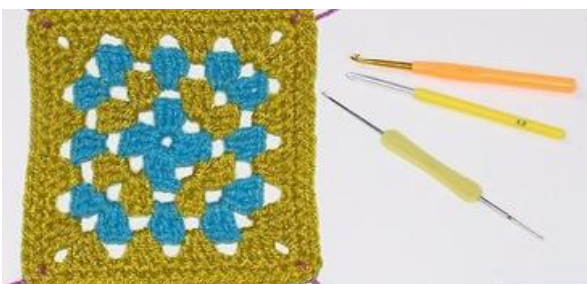


Crochet in the round.

Crocheting in the round allows you to create circular things like hats and coasters.

If you don't feel quite ready to start crocheting in the round yet, try working in flat rows first.

3



Crochet a granny square.

Granny squares help us to whip together a crocheted blanket in the blink of an eye.

4



Crochet a rag rug.

Have a lot of clothing and old blankets that are dear to you but pretty worn down? Preserve their memory by making them into a rug!



Go green by crocheting your own pot scrubber.

Making a scrubber that can be used endlessly will lend your kitchen a bit of eco-friendliness that we should all strive for.



Crochet a vintage rose doily.

Doilies add elegance to anything they get placed on, even the most scratched of tables. Add a touch of the refined to your home by crocheting doilies.



Baby Bib

What could be cuter than a baby wearing a homemade baby bib? A baby that is wearing a bib you crocheted yourself.