

Spirit of Flora

Finishing and Blocking Instructions



“The beauty of life is found in the little things
we do and create each day.”

William Morris



Many crocheters enjoy the mindfulness of their craft and like it to be a relaxing pastime, almost something they don't need to think too hard about. These crocheters probably like to have a clear vision of what the result of their crochet time will look like in the end and don't want to have to spend time choosing alternative colours or creating different layouts to mine. For these crocheters my suggested yarn listings and the blanket layout diagrams are a useful tool and, alongside the images of my finished projects, these help them envisage what they are going to make.

There are other crocheters who like to create something unique. They are less reliant on my guidance as they might want their project to have a point of difference to mine in terms of the colour palette, the type of yarn used or layout for example.

Whichever category you fit into I hope you will enjoy your Spirit of Flora experience and that you will learn a lot along the way. When designing my projects, I keep in mind the idea of crocheters building up their skill levels and growing more confident with their techniques over the course of a project. Some of you may create large pieces, like blankets and throws, while others will create smaller things like bags, cushions, and shawls. It could be that there is only one motif you want to tackle so that you can pop it in a clip frame and gift it to someone or hang it on the wall! Whatever your motive to make this project I really hope the results of your hard work will make you proud!

Janie
x

Jane Crowfoot





As crocheters we enjoy the rhythm of creating a fabric out of yarn with a hook

We get our satisfaction from making lovely crochet motifs, but what we often don't like doing is all the fiddly little bits associated with finishing and making up. Over the years I have learnt to embrace this process and often do much of as it as I go along, like sewing my yarn ends in and joining motifs into larger pieces as I complete them. You can use the following guidance when working on your own project. Try to embrace the process and think of it as part of your cherished craft time and remember that a professional finish (however long it takes) will give you more joy in the long run than a bad one.

For many of the techniques used in the project you can find videos on the Janie Crow YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@janiecrow8472/videos>

Sewing in yarn ends

I feel that sewing in your yarn ends is a safer technique than weaving them in as you crochet. Sewn ends are less likely to come undone and thus unravel your work. Use a large eye needle to sew in your yarn ends. Doing this as you go along will make the process feel less of a chore - I tend to do it every few rounds. Look out for the instructions in the patterns where I suggest you sew in your ends before progressing.

Crochet stitches create a clamp around the chain made at the top of previous stitches. The space at the base of the post of a stitch creates the perfect tunnel through which you can sew your yarn ends. Before cutting your yarns, leave the tail ends relatively long so that you can easily thread them through the eye of a sewing needle and have enough slack to work your stitches easily.

Sew the tail end of the yarn forwards through the tunnel created by stitches for a few stitches then sew back on yourself every now and again. You can think of this as three or four steps forwards, then one step back. Try not to sew too tight and pull slightly to relieve the tension every now and again, then leave a short end of at least 2cm before cutting your yarn end - you can always cut these again once you have blocked your project. Cutting yarn ends too short at this stage could mean they come undone during the blocking process or through use.

Placing Markers

Stitch markers are a life saver for crocheters. You can use them to mark repeats, increases, stitch and chain numbers. You can find markers that look like little safety pins or some that are like a split ring. If you don't have a stitch marker to hand you could use a short end of contrast yarn in its place. Use a large eye sewing needle, or your crochet hook, to draw the yarn through the stitch you want to mark and tie with a loose knot. Untie, remove, and replace as required.

The making up process will be easier if you place a marker into each of the four corner stitches on your motifs. The stitch count on all the motifs is the same, so everything



should naturally line up during the joining process, but matching marked stitches as you join your motifs will ensure you keep everything on track.

Pre-blocked and Blocked tension

The measurements given in the pattern are for pre-blocked sizes throughout. Measuring to a pre-blocked size rather than a blocked size is more accurate as you could over stretch your work in the blocking process.

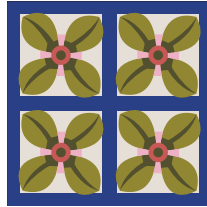
Once the project is complete, I advise you to wash and block your project before using it. This process will alter the tension slightly and will make the yarn appear smoother and the drape will improve. You can find guidance on washing and blocking lower down.

Joining

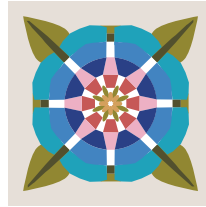
If you know what layout you want, you can start the making up process as you complete motifs, so that you don't have to do it all at the end. It is a good idea to work out the best route for your stitching so that there are not too many yarn joins.

Using the images and diagrams as a guide and **4mm hook** I recommend that you join your motifs using double crochet (US sc) on the reverse side of the work. This joining method creates a visible flat joint that looks a little like stitching between

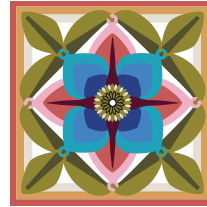
Motif Set One



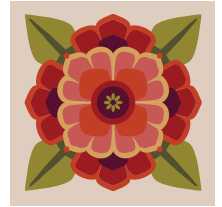
Leaf Trellis



Moffatt Flower

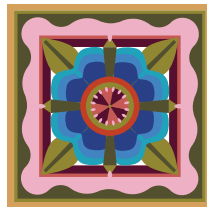


Merton Abbey Flower



Tudor Rose

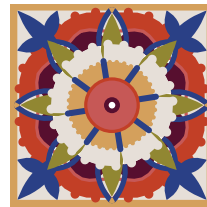
Motif Set Two



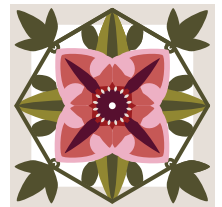
Marlborough Flower



Chelsea Flower



Gillow



Evelyn's Flower

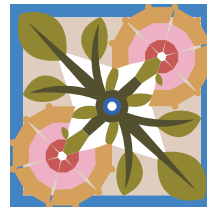
Motif Set Three (*Pair of Roses - pattern includes half motif too).



Sunflower



Pair of Roses*



Double Carnations



Bedford Park Daisy





the crochet pieces. It can appear particularly effective when worked in an alternative yarn shade, but for this project I recommend that you choose yarn shades that match the outside edge of the motifs.

You can find videos that show this technique on the Janie Crow YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@janiecrow8472/videos>

Edging patterns

Putting the crochet motifs together to create a blanket and then adding an edging to make a lovely frame is one of my favourite parts of a crochet project. I really enjoy the joining process and seeing the results of my hard work coming together to create a beautiful heirloom piece. I am aware that I am a bit unusual in my love of the making up process, but I hope that after months of hard work you will also embrace the process and enjoy these last few steps in your Spirit of Flora journey.



I created two rectangular blankets, one where the motifs are grouped in sets of four, and the other where they are set out in a more random way. I also designed a square version that uses fewer blocks. Once you have joined your motifs you can choose to add one of the three border designs I have created. There is a plain border, which is simply a striped design in different yarn shades. The second option is a simple tile effect border that is made using front post stitches on one round and the third border is a more complicated floral design that echoes William De Morgan's edging tiles, created as borders for his fabulous tile designs.

You can find the free download patterns for the edgings on the Janie Crow web site.

Washing and Blocking

Once your project is complete, I suggest you wash and block it. Washing a piece can make a really big difference to its final appearance. Seams become flatter and stitches become more even. It can also make a difference to the size of your project.

Wash your project by hand in warm water and a small amount of liquid detergent specially formulated for that purpose, such as Eucalan or mild soap and make sure you have a colour catching product in the water

in case any dye runs. It is wise to avoid biological liquids or powders as they can contain brighteners that can destroy the yarn fibres, cause bobbles and shade changes.

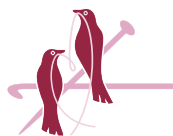
Once the piece has been submerged in water for a short period and appears to be soaked through, rinse with fresh warm water and then wring out as much water as possible being careful not to pull at your crochet. To remove excess water you can roll it in a couple of bath towels and wring gently. Place the blanket in a tied pillowcase or zipped fabric bag and give it a short spin in the washing machine to remove as much water as possible. Don't use a fast spin as this can cause the piece to stretch. Throw in a couple

of bath towels at the same time to minimize the amount of movement the project will have; the towels will also help absorb water. Remove the project from the pillowcase and lay it out on bath towels or a large soft flat surface with RS facing to protect the 3D nature of the crochet.

Use long pins to hold your project to size, inserting a long rust resistant pin almost vertically into the side edges at 2-3cm intervals. Leave your project to dry naturally. Don't place in direct sunlight or over a radiator and do not tumble dry.

Blocked Measurement: Approximately 117cm (46in) wide x 152cm (60in) long.





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crochet

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