

Traditional Granny Square



‘A Granny Square is not just a square, it’s a canvas of creativity,
a tiny piece of love that can be woven into something bigger,
just like the stories of our grandmothers.’

Anon





The first Granny Square I ever made was nothing like the name suggests in that it wasn't square! It was messy, incredibly wavy and had five, possibly six corners! Despite all its flaws, however, I instantly found a sense of calm and mindfulness in the repetitive nature of making the groups of stitches and chain spaces to create the motif and I still find a lot of joy in making them.

Like many traditional crochet patterns, the origin of the design is a little unclear. According to Wikipedia, the earliest known example of a traditional Granny Square was designed by Mrs Phelps and the pattern was published in the April 1885 edition of *The Prairie Farmer* newspaper in the USA. This gloriously simple pattern seems to have stayed a firm favourite amongst beginner crocheters and experts ever since and making one is considered a rite of passage for any serious crafter.

My Great Grandmother learnt how to make a Granny Square in the 1970s when crochet was enjoying a huge resurgence in popularity. She was an incredibly proficient crocheter and had been brought up in the Victorian era when many ladies made fine, lace style crochet pieces. The humble Granny Square provided her with the chance to really play with colours and she would source yarn at charity shops and unravel old sweaters, wash the yarn and reuse it, to make her crochet projects. In her lifetime she must have made hundreds of blankets, from cot to double bed size, and many members of my family still have one of her heirloom creations.

You can use any yarn to make a Granny Square, but if you are a beginner, it is easier to use something that is smooth and relatively thick. Avoid fluffy or splitty yarns and match the hook size you use to your choice of yarn. If you think you are working a little tight, use a larger size hook. If you seem to be a little loose, use a smaller one.

You can make a Granny Square in any combination of colours you fancy, or in just one yarn shade. Don't worry if it takes you a while to make your first one - the more you practice the easier it will become and soon I am sure you will be just as addicted to making them as I am!

Janie
x

Jane Crowfoot





Understanding Charts

The beauty of crochet charts is that the symbols within them are universal regardless of the language the pattern is written in. Charts mean you can quickly envisage what your crochet should look like.

Patterns don't always include charts, but they have become more common over the last few years. In this pattern you will find a key next to the main chart that shows the symbols and their abbreviations.

- chain (ch)
- slip stitch (ss)
- ⌋ UK treble crochet (tr)
- ⌋ US double crochet (dc)

Making chain at the beginning of a Round

When working treble crochet (**double crochet**) you need to make three chains at the beginning of each round. These chain count as your first stitch even though they don't look the same as a stitch. If you find they are a little loose, and that the three chain is therefore higher than your usual stitches, you can work them a little tighter or choose to make two chains instead of three.

Counting Stitches

To count your stitches, look for their vertical posts rather than the chains that run along the top of them. When you look at a group of stitches you should be able to see a small gap between the posts of them.

To keep track of the pattern you may find it helpful to use a ruler or some sticky Post It notes. You might also want to use a pencil to mark down some notes in a notebook. Taking some photos on your mobile phone as you progress may also help you keep track of where you are.

Turning your Work

If you continuously work a Granny Square with the right side facing (RS) it will start to skew and therefore not retain its square shape. To stop this from happening you can turn the work at the end of each round so that you have either the right side (RS) or wrong side (WS) facing you. Starting to work each round of stitches at different corners will also help keep your work neat.

Dealing with Yarn Ends

Sewing yarn ends in as you go makes the finishing process much easier and means you are less likely to lose stitches or make errors with tension.

INSTRUCTIONS

Method

Start by making a slip knot and place it on the hook.

Make the Ring

Make 4ch, insert hook into the first ch that you made (this is the fourth ch from the hook, which is the first ch above the slip knot), yrh, draw yarn through the ch and the yarn loop on the hook to create a slip stitch (ss) to join the ch and thus make a small ring.

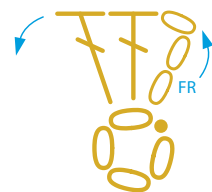
Use your fingers to open the ring so that you can see the centre of it ready for the next round of sts.



Foundation Round: Make 3ch (this counts as your first st),

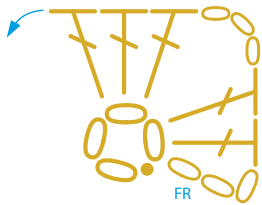


make 2tr (**dc**) into the ring (including the 3ch made on the last step, you now have a group of 3sts),



make 3ch, (this counts as a corner ch-sp)





[3tr (**dc**) into the ring, 3ch] 3 times, (four groups of 3sts and three corner ch-sps made).



Insert hook into third ch of 3ch made at beginning of round, yrh, draw yarn through the ch and the yarn loop on the hook to create a slip stitch (ss) to join. (four groups of 3sts and four corner ch-sps made).



Fasten off: Pull your hook a little so that the yarn loop on it becomes a little bigger. Cut the yarn end leaving a tail end approximately 12.5cm (5in) long.

yrh, draw yarn through the ss to create a new ch, continue to draw the yarn through until the tail end has passed through the ch and a small knot has been made.

Note: The four groups of 3ch create corner ch-sps - you will see that your crochet is not a true square shape at this point.

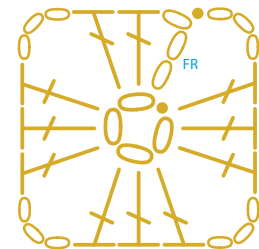
You can sew in your yarn ends at this point if you want to. I prefer to sew in ends after every couple of rounds.

Turn the work over so that you have the other side facing you. This is referred to as the wrong side (WS).

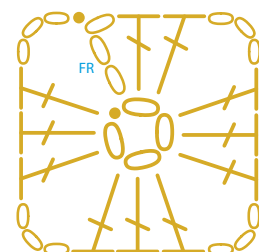
Use the images for guidance on which is the right side (RS) and wrong side (WS) of the work. If you cannot see a difference between them, pop a stitch marker on the right side of the work before you turn.



Right Side (before turning)



Wrong Side (turned)





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Using a new shade of yarn continue as follows:

Round 1: (WS facing) Insert your hook into one of the four corner ch-sps made on the previous round from the front, holding the tail end of the new shade of yarn, yrh, draw yarn through the ch-sp, yrh again, draw yarn through the yarn loop on the hook to make 1ch. (this is a joining ch and counts as the first ch of the next group of ch)

Note: Be careful that your tail end of yarn does not get drawn through the ch-sp.



make 2 more ch (along with the first joining ch made on the previous step, the 3ch counts as your first st),



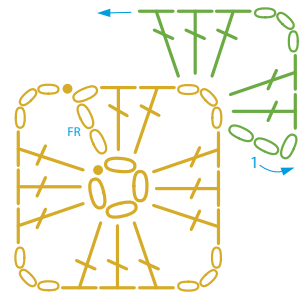
make 2 more tr (dc) into the same corner ch-sp so that you have a group of 3sts,



make 3ch (this counts as a corner ch-sp),



make 3tr (dc) into the same corner ch-sp (two groups of 3sts and a new corner ch-sp made),



make 1ch (this counts as a ch-sp),



* Work the following bracketed sts into the next ch-sp: [3tr (dc), 3ch, 3tr (dc)]

make 1ch (this counts as a ch-sp),**

At this point you have made four groups of 3sts, two corner ch-sps and two 1ch-sps.





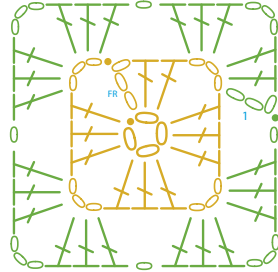
Repeat the sequence of sts from the first asterisk * to the group of two asterisks ** twice.

Insert hook into third ch of 3ch made at beginning of round, yrh, draw yarn through the ch and the yarn loop on the hook to create a slip stitch (ss) to join. (eight groups of 3sts, four 1ch-sps & four corner ch-sps made).



Fasten off in the same way you did at the end of the Foundation Round.

You can sew in your yarn ends at this point if you want to.



Turn the work over so that you have the other side facing you. This is referred to as the right side (RS) as your Foundation Round is now facing forwards.



Note: You can no longer see the 3ch or 1ch that has created the ch-sps on the Foundation Round as these are now covered by sts.

Using a new shade of yarn continue as follows:

Round 2: (RS facing) Join yarn into any corner ch-sp in the same way you did at the beginning of Round 1 by making 1ch,

make 2 more ch (3ch counts as your first st)





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make 2 more tr (dc) into the same corner ch-sp so that you have a group of 3sts,



make 3tr (dc) into the same ch-sp,



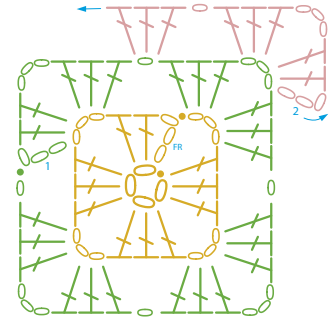
skip next 3sts made on previous round, 3tr (dc) into next ch-sp (this is a 1ch-sp),



make 3ch to create a corner ch-sp,



make 1ch (this counts as a ch-sp),



make 1ch (this counts as a ch-sp),

* Work the following bracketed sts into the next ch-sp: [3tr (dc), 3ch, 3tr (dc)]



make 1ch (this counts as a ch-sp),





3tr (dc) into next 1ch-sp, make 1ch**



Repeat the sequence of sts from the first asterisk * on P8 to the group of two asterisks ** above twice.

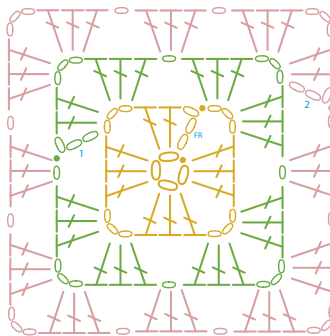


Insert hook into third ch of 3ch made at beginning of round, yrh, draw yarn through the ch and the yarn loop on the hook to create a slip stitch (ss) to join. (twelve groups of 3sts, eight 1ch-sps & four corner ch-sps made).



Fasten off in the same way you did at the end of the Foundation Round.

You can sew in your yarn ends at this point if you want to.



Note: You can no longer see the 3ch or 1ch that created the ch-sps on Round 1 as these are now covered by sts.

Turn the work over so that you have the other side facing you. This is referred to as the wrong side (WS).



Round 3: (WS facing) Join yarn into any corner ch-sp in the same way you did at the beginning of Round 1 by making 1ch,

make 2 more ch (3ch counts as your first st)



make 2 more tr (dc) into the same corner ch-sp so that you have a group of 3sts,



make 3ch to create a corner ch-sp,



make 3tr (dc) into the same ch-sp,





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make 1ch (this counts as a ch-sp),



* Work through the following bracketed instructions twice: [skip next 3sts made on previous round, 3tr (dc) into next ch-sp, 1ch],



skip next 3sts made on previous round,

Work the following bracketed sts into the next ch-sp: [3tr (dc), 3ch, 3tr (dc)]

make 1ch (this counts as a ch-sp), **



Repeat the sequence of sts from the first asterisk * to the group of two asterisks ** twice,



Work through the following bracketed instructions twice: [skip next 3sts made on previous round, 3tr (dc) into next ch-sp, 1ch],



Insert hook into third ch of 3ch made at beginning of round, yrh, draw yarn through the ch and the yarn loop on the hook to create a slip stitch (ss) to join. (sixteen groups of 3sts, twelve 1ch-sps & four corner ch-sps made).

Fasten off in the same way you did at the end of the Foundation Round.

You can sew in your yarn ends at this point if you want to.



Note: You can no longer see the 3ch or 1ch that created the ch-sps on Round 2 as these are now covered by sts.

To Continue: You can add rounds to a granny square infinitely by working the groups of [3sts, 3ch and 3sts] into each corner ch-sp and groups of 3sts into each 1ch-sp, preceded and followed by 1ch in between each corner. The number of groups of 3sts between the corner groups will grow on each round.

Remember to turn at the end of each round.

Working from an abbreviated pattern

The instructions above have been broken down into lots of steps, therefore the pattern is not written in a standard format. If you feel ready to follow a pattern written in a more conventional way, you can find it in UK and US terms, written in our JANIE CROW house style below.

Method (UK terminology)

Using first choice of yarn shade make 4ch, ss to join to form a ring.

Foundation Round: 3ch (counts as one st), 2tr into ring, 3ch, [3tr into ring, 3ch] three times, ss to join, fasten off, turn. (12sts & 4 ch-sps)

Round 1: (WS facing) Using next choice of yarn shade join yarn into any corner ch-sp by working 1ch + 2ch (counts as one st), [2tr, 3ch, 3tr] into same ch-sp, 1ch, * [3tr, 3ch, 3tr] into next corner ch-sp, 1ch; repeat from * to end, ss to join, fasten off, turn. (24sts & 8 ch-sps)

Round 2: (RS facing) Using next choice of yarn shade join yarn into any corner ch-sp by working 1ch + 2ch (counts as one st), [2tr, 3ch, 3tr] into same ch-sp, 1ch, 3tr into next ch-sp, 1ch, * [3tr, 3ch, 3tr] into next corner ch-sp, 1ch, 3tr into next ch-sp, 1ch; repeat from * to end, ss to join, fasten off, turn. (36sts & 12 ch-sps)



Round 3: (WS facing) Using next choice of yarn shade join yarn into any corner ch-sp by working 1ch + 2ch (counts as one st), [2tr, 3ch, 3tr] into same ch-sp, 1ch, [3tr into next ch-sp, 1ch] twice, * [3tr, 3ch, 3tr] into next corner ch-sp, 1ch, [3tr into next ch-sp, 1ch] twice; repeat from * to end, ss to join, fasten off, turn. (48sts & 16 ch-sps)

Continue to work as set to create a granny square to the size you require.

Method (US terminology)

Using first choice of yarn shade make 4ch, ss to join to form a ring.

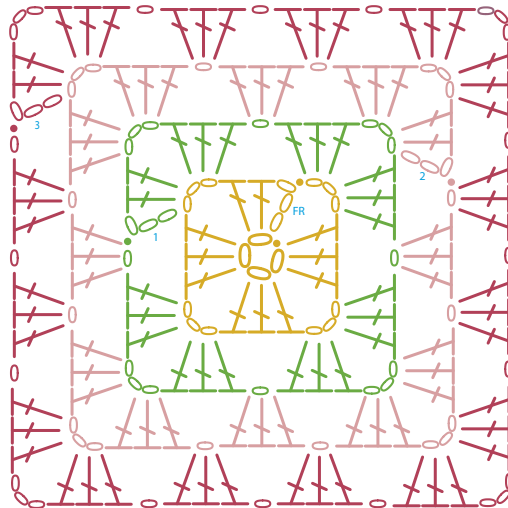
Foundation Round: 3ch (counts as one st), 2dc into ring, 3ch, [3dc into ring, 3ch] three times, ss to join, fasten off, turn. (12sts & 4 ch-sps)

Round 1: (WS facing) Using next choice of yarn shade join yarn into any corner ch-sp by working 1ch + 2ch (counts as one st), [2dc, 3ch, 3dc] into same ch-sp, 1ch, * [3dc, 3ch, 3dc] into next corner ch-sp, 1ch; repeat from * to end, ss to join, fasten off, turn. (24sts & 8 ch-sps)

Round 2: (RS facing) Using next choice of yarn shade join yarn into any corner ch-sp by working 1ch + 2ch (counts as one st), [2dc, 3ch, 3dc] into same ch-sp, 1ch, 3dc into next ch-sp, 1ch, * [3dc, 3ch, 3dc] into next corner ch-sp, 1ch, 3dc into next ch-sp, 1ch; repeat from * to end, ss to join, fasten off, turn. (36sts & 12 ch-sps)

Round 3: (WS facing) Using next choice of yarn shade join yarn into any corner ch-sp by working 1ch + 2ch (counts as one st), [2dc, 3ch, 3dc] into same ch-sp, 1ch, [3dc into next ch-sp, 1ch] twice, * [3dc, 3ch, 3dc] into next corner ch-sp, 1ch, [3dc into next ch-sp, 1ch] twice; repeat from * to end, ss to join, fasten off, turn. (48sts & 16 ch-sps)

Continue to work as set to create a Granny Square to the size you require.



- chain (ch)
- slip stitch (ss)
- ⌣ UK treble crochet (tr)
US double crochet (dc)

- Foundation Round (FR)
- Round 1
- Round 2
- Round 3





Traditional Granny Square



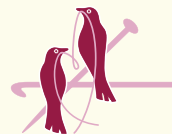
Granny Squares are always in style, and you can make lots of projects with them. They are infinitely customizable as you can play around with your yarn shades and textures and make them as large as you like. A simple search online will throw up a myriad of projects for you to make.

My Indigo and Crimson Dreams blanket project includes Granny Squares and I also used them as part of my Persian Tiles design.

If you want to progress to a project where you work in rows rather than in the round, then my Sunshine and Showers blanket is a good place to start as it includes lots of different stitches.

If you have enjoyed working through this Granny Square pattern and would like a taster of some more of my designs, you can also find the patterns for my Lily Pond and Frida's Flowers crochet along projects available for free on the Stylecraft website.

If you feel ready to tackle something more complicated, look at the Janie Crow website, which is full of crochet inspiration!



www.janiecrow.com

mail@janiecrow.co.uk



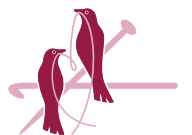
“Crochet is a magnificent adventure
that opens the doors to your wildest
imagination and creativity.”

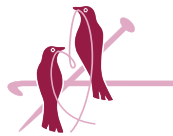
Marie-Noelle Bayard





A series of horizontal lines for writing, spanning most of the page width.





www.janiecrow.com
mail@janiecrow.co.uk

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Graphic Design: Steph Peat • **Charts:** Irene Strange • **Photography:** Emma Corbett and Leanne Jade
Images of Indigo Dreams with thanks to *Inside Crochet Magazine*. Styled by Claire Montgomerie



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