

Teaching a Crochet Class

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Thinking of teaching crochet? At a loss as to where to start? Well, here's something to get you started. Keep in mind this is only my opinion. If you have done it differently that's great! If you have been to a class conducted differently, no problem. This is just a help to get someone started who has never done a class and maybe would do one if only they knew where to begin. :-) Also, as always, this is a work in progress.

Note that any extra tutorials that are linked to here, or any others on the site, are not free for the taking. I spend many hours on these. They are available - but please see [copyright notice](#) for more information.

My daughter conducted a small class with some of her friends. We did many of these things for her class. The class was free, but the students paid for their own hooks. I purchased all the how-to leaflets so they would have the same one and they would be in on time. For Christmas we got them each a small Rubbermaid container to hold their supplies. This might work for a girl's club, like Girl Scouts, Camp Fire or Keepers at Home. As a first project, or after the girls learn the basics, they could do a charity project. Also, clubs usually have paid dues which could defray expenses. Sometimes local companies will donate supplies towards this sort of thing.

I. Fees

A. Supplies: (usually students keep supplies like hooks and yarn – if you want to re-use you should say up front, otherwise it will be considered part of class fee)

1. You buy supplies and they pay for them at least a week ahead
2. They buy supplies from a list you give them
3. You buy supplies and donate them
4. Before you do either, make a list of supplies (you may use list below. basic supplies for first class, beginner student would be light color worsted weight yarn, I hook, #16 needle, scissors, stitch gauge or small hard ruler). You should decide on what project you want to work on and how many skeins will need to be purchased at one time.

B. Class fee which the students will pay

1. Regarding fees, I guess it depends on if you are independently wealthy or have some donated supplies to work with as to whether you charge for the class. If you prefer to purchase the supplies yourself, to be sure they are correct, then make up a price list and require that payment be made at least a week before class is to begin. The list may include your fee for conducting the class, if applicable, which you may or may not require to be paid ahead. It is okay to round off prices, but do not charge above what they cost you unless you are buying wholesale because you own a business. If you are holding a class in a craft store, they will probably require that all supplies be purchased there. You could do this AT the first class if you want to hold registration open until then.

2. If you are doing a service class such as for a school, church, or nursing home, you might volunteer the time but charge for the supplies. If you are doing a community education or other type class, you might charge a small per person fee. I'm not going to set fees because since the time I wrote this, prices have changed so I imagine five years from now they will have changed again. Find out what others in the field are charging or set the minimum amount that you want to make the class worth your time. If you just want to have fun and are not out to make a lot of money, charge less. If you are in this because you need the income, then be realistic in your prices but not stingy to yourself. If you are being hired to teach the class, of course, your employer will make those decisions. If you make the class too expensive, no one will register to take it. Remember that this is a leisure activity, not a necessity.

C. If you are teaching a class for a business, you will need a contract stating what is expected of both parties and the amount you will be paid for your services.

II. Choose Location

A. Home—great for a small group. You have the advantage of having all your supplies at hand for emergencies, but you will have to clean house before they arrive ☺ and make arrangements for babysitters (for your own children, unless you have said that you are supplying child care for your students) and such.

B. Church—great ministry. There is usually ample space, tables and chairs, VCR setups if you are doing video class, and such. Be sure to get permission to use the premises and leave the area in the same condition it was in when you arrived - or better!

C. School—great idea! Teach a class the basic stitches and have them make premie afghans or donate squares towards Project Linus or Warm Up America, or perhaps there is a family in the community or class who has just had a baby, or lost their home through disaster. Many ideas here!

D. Nursing Home—Many of the senior citizens in the community would love to help with a charity project but just don't know what to do. You could teach them a new skill and give them a way to contribute and feel useful and needed. Remember that some will have trouble because of arthritis, vision problems and other ailments. Do your best to include all those who are able. There are supplies for crochet and other needlework to help with just these problems. Many of them will not be familiar with the computer and unable to get patterns from there. Also, when you print patterns, remember to use a large font to help with poor vision. (You might even consider tape recording a few patterns for those who really have trouble, and see if that helps.) Remember that some of them will have some needlework experience and may be able to offer some hints to get past their difficulties. Remember to get permission to use any patterns that are not designed by you.

E. Business (contract)—A craft store might hire you to teach a class. They may want a beginner class or may have a special stitch or project they want you to do. Be professional. You should have a contract, detailing what is expected of both parties.

III. Determine Hours: (depends on student age and availability - don't forget to account for holidays and local special events)

A. For young children, consider 1 hour lessons twice a week for 2 weeks

B. 2 hour/once a week for 6 or 8 weeks

C. 1 hour/twice a week for 6 or 8 weeks

D. 1 hour a week for 12 weeks

E. During summer, you might consider single sessions, or two classes back to back, or a one-day workshop. Many people take vacations during this time and don't want to commit to a lengthy term.

F. When scheduling consider your students. Mothers need time in the morning to get their kids off, working folks need time to get home, have their evening meal etc, kids have short attention spans and so on. Consider 10-12, 1-3, 7-9 as possible times.

G. Longer classes are possible too, depending on your available time and the needs of the students.

H. You may find that 1 hour is not long enough to feel you have accomplished something. Then again, if you have a young group, you may find their attention won't hold for 2 hours. You will have to adapt as you gain experience and work with different groups. Be sure to consult parents/teachers if you are working with a group of children and your plans change. It may even be a good idea to invite parents to sit in on the lessons so they can help and encourage the younger ones at home or offer classes with one fee for parent/child together. (*Note: You may want to have extra hooks with you during class as if the students take their hooks home, they may not make it back to class. Be sure they don't take loaners back home with them.*)

IV. Students

A. Class Size— how many students can you handle based on your space and skills. I would suggest about 6-8 students to one person

B. Are you willing and able to teach both right handed and left handed crocheters

V. Determine how many helpers, if any, you will need

A. Have someone who knows at least the basics of crochet help you during (and after) the lesson. As the students are trying to crochet on their own, they will have questions and you can't be 6 places at once. If you are using a video or computer program, you can always replay a difficult concept.

VI. Class Preparation

A. Samples and tools for first class

1. Hook samples in different sizes and with different style hooks [Inline (Bates) or rounded (Boye)]

- a. wooden
- b. aluminum
- c. steel
- d. afghan hook
- e. cro-hook
- f. broomstick lace pins
- g. special hooks, such as Corian, clay handles, lighted, custom made etc)

2. Yarn samples

- a. cotton
- b. acrylic
- c. wool
- d. variegated
- e. thread
- f. mohair, chenille, or other specialty yarn
- g. fingering, sport, worsted weight

3. Project samples

- a. dishcloth
- b. afghan
- c. sample squares (for each stitch)
- d. doily
- e. edging crocheted on a cloth blanket
- f. toy (teddy bear, alphabet block etc.)
- g. clothing

4. Tool samples: (whatever you have or pictures from catalogs)

- a. carriers
- b. different size place holders
- c. needles
- d. pattern holders

5. Catalog samples: (whatever you have on hand)

6. Magazine and book samples: (whatever you have on hand, preferably with subscription and/or purchase information)

Note: If you do not have the means or time (or energy) to carry these things to class, you might consider bringing pictures of various projects, or having catalogs which show them. It would be nice to have sample yarns there as it is really the feel of the different types of yarn that you want the students to appreciate. Yarn is not very heavy and can be easily transported in a carryall bag.

7. Tools - teacher

a. Hooks — remember to have different sizes on hand, just in case, but purchase same size for each student—maybe an "H" or "I" hook?) – If a student absolutely cannot work with the size hook you have decided to purchase for the class (or their stitches are way off in size with that hook because they crochet very loosely or tightly) , you might allow them to borrow one of yours and suggest they might like to purchase the new size before the next class

- b. Needles (large eye)
- c. Flexible measuring tape or ruler
- d. carrying bag
- e. scissors (small, sharp)
- f. tags to attach to project to note the pattern and hook used (office supply store)

- g. safety pins or stitch holders or teach Lil's Knot to keep project from unraveling
- h. yarn — (4 ply, acrylic, worsted weight in a light solid color, not fuzzy or furry or dark) BE SURE TO EXPLAIN ABOUT DYE LOT AND COLOR NUMBERS. If you are planning to have them begin a project which will take more than one skein, be sure they are aware they should purchase yarn at one time in the same dye lot or have enough in one dye lot for each student if you are purchasing the supplies. You will encounter less difficulty if you have the same color for all the students, but you could allow students to purchase their own yarn in the color of their choice. If they all have the same color yarn, you might suggest that they use the above tags to note their name, and the hook size they are using right on the project in case things get a bit mixed up. You could even provide plastic bags (or if you have the means a canvas bag with the name of your class) for them to keep their own supplies together.
 - i. patterns, including how-to book for later reference (do not make illegal copies)
 - j. list of catalogs and how to receive them
 - k. list of crochet web sites (and how to do an online search for inexperienced students)
 - l. list of magazines and purchasing information — Pull subscription cards out of your magazines or photocopy and bring to class in case some students want to subscribe – be ready to name your favorites and why you like them, as they will probably ask for recommendations.
 - m. sample list of books available — suggest library, bookstores, craft supply stores etc. from your locale, as well as internet suppliers like Amazon.com. Again, they'll likely ask your favorites. Note authors.
 - n. video crochet lesson or computer lesson (or good how-to reference). There are plenty online - just get permission if you're going to use actual videos for a class.)
 - o. color wheel sheet—These can be purchased, you can make one, or print the one I have [here](#). Younger student might like to actually color them. If you do this, be sure you have the proper color crayons or markers. I prefer crayons—less messy and fun, even for older students. I love to color!
 - p. paper handouts - pattern abbreviations , how to join squares, simple patterns for beginners and a Crochet Journal master sheet , I also have a page with charts only .
 - q. Sign up sheets so you will know who attended.
 - r. Teacher evaluation form so you can improve for your next class
 - s. anything special you need if you are going to teach students who use a different hand than yourself (if you are right handed but teaching lefties for example)
- 8. Tools - student (basic supplies for first class, beginner student would be light color worsted weight yarn, I hook, #16 needle, scissors, stitch gauge or small hard ruler)
 - a. Teacher tools 1-8
 - b. paper for notes or highlighter to mark handouts
 - c. small binder or folder to keep handouts orderly

First class

If you have samples of crocheted items, place them strategically throughout the room and have available for viewing before and after class. During class, you may use an item to give an example of a project done in a certain stitch. If you can, you might show the same pattern made with different color schemes.

Do the same thing with your books, magazines, leaflets, crochet hooks and other samples. Keep small items close to where you will stand and furthest from the classroom entrance, just to help keep folks honest and temptation away.

If you do not have items, but pictures, you can pass these around whenever you think appropriate.

If you are using a video or computer program, it's easy. Just put it in and play it. Stop whenever there are questions, or if you feel a particular part went too fast and you need to demonstrate personally. I have previewed several crochet videos and there wasn't one that did *everything* the same way I do. You should always preview your video before class and make sure that at least the majority of it is shown correctly. You may want to stop the tape every now and then to make sure that everyone is keeping up. If the tape is an hour long, with the last section being the creation of an afghan, you might want to show it in two sessions. I would not suggest lending out your video. If your local library has a crochet video, suggest that students who miss a class borrow that one, or offer to do a make-up class at a time of your convenience.

If you are NOT using a video or computer program, then you must make sure everyone has their supplies. Then begin teaching with the slip knot (or other method), how to hold the hook (two methods – they should use the one that is most comfortable for them), and making a foundation chain. You might note that when someone has problems with carpal tunnel or similar ailments, changing the position of the hook will sometimes give some relief. Then begin with single crochet and move on as you feel the class is ready. You can teach slip stitch when you begin work in rounds.

Remember to review each step and to recap at the end of the lesson. Also, make sure any homework is clearly understood.

Standard procedure would be to **Review** previous information, then for new info **1) explain 2) demonstrate 3) have student do what you did 4) observe 5) recap and homework**

Some people teach the granny square as a first project. However, I think it would be easier to make a sampler square instead and teach working in rounds at another lesson. This way the student can learn chaining and turning by going back and forth along a row.

Another method of teaching is to come to class with one row already worked into the foundation chain. The students learn how to crochet *into* that first row and later learn the rest. This is an option if you have the time to make enough beginning pieces. Of course, you won't be there when they start their *second* square. :-) I think this would be a good way to teach your own kids, or perhaps a neighborhood group who are close by.

VII. Order of instruction for beginners. (see bottom of page for pdf files suitable for printing)

Standard procedure would be to Review previous information, then for new info 1) explain 2) demonstrate 3) have student do what you did 4) observe 5) recap and homework

- A. Slip knot
- B. Holding the hook (right handed, for left handed - use mirror if necessary or buy leaflets that have left-hand instructions)
- C. Foundation chain
- D. Going into the chain
 - 1. what chain to go into
 - a. single crochet
 - b. half double crochet
 - c. double crochet
 - d. triple crochet
 - 2.. front loop, back loop, or both loops (3 different methods)

E. Stitches—You might begin with the single crochet and continue in this or future lessons to include double crochet, triple etc. When your students are comfortable with these stitches, you can move on to more specialized things and fancier stitches. How and when will be determined, in part, by how fast your students catch on, what age they are, how many classes you're doing, etc. Try to allow them to complete a small project during the class so they will feel they have accomplished something - like a dishcloth, potholder, or square to be joined together for a charity project.

- 1. Basic stitches — You might make a sample swatch showing the difference between single crochet, double crochet, triple crochet.
- 2. where's the last stitch of the row? (demonstrate and go round to show everyone individually)
- 3. turning chains (chart) — The number you chain here will bring your stitch to the height of the upcoming stitches on your row. That is the purpose of chaining to turn.
- 4. what stitch to go into on succeeding rows (make sure they understand this as it will affect all future projects)
- 5. what makes a stitch including ,where stitch begins and ends (particularly for measuring)
- 6. front and back of stitch
- 7. joining new yarn

8. finishing off (leave at least 6" for sewing in) VERY IMPORTANT - if your work is not finished properly it will come undone, leaving a hole in the finished piece. At the very least it will be unsightly so teach your students how to do a finishing that will look nice and that they can be proud of. Consider the Invisible Finish Off.

9. weaving in ends so no one can tell you did
10. recognizing the top chain in your turning chain

F. borders / finishing edges

G. joining squares - different types of seams

H. Additional Instruction:

1. gauge — This is important if you are making clothing or something where pieces must fit together in a certain way. I make a lot of afghans and you can't make an afghan too big, so I rarely check gauge.

2. tension — Tension should be kept steady throughout or your stitches will not be the same size. You may particularly notice a change in your stitches if you put down a project for a long time and then pick it up again. Over time, your methods and tension may have changed. You may have to change hook to get your stitches to look the same size.

3. Increase/decrease
4. care of items
5. blocking
6. designing

7. Color Wheel: - The simple, basic color wheel is divided into 12 equal parts. It is important that they be equal so your "opposite" colors will be correct. The colors are placed all around the circle with each piece of the pie a different color. The order of colors is: red, red orange, orange, yellow orange, yellow, yellow green, green, blue green, blue, blue violet, violet, violet red. A sample color wheel is available that you can print out.

- a. Primary Colors -blue, red, yellow
- b. Secondary Colors - orange, violet, green (made from 2 primary colors)
- c. Tertiary Colors -blue green, yellow green, blue violet, red violet, red orange, yellow orange; (made from a primary and a secondary color)
- d. Monochromatic - shades of a single color (ex. blue, blue green, blue violet)
- e. Analogous - colors close together on the color wheel (ex. blue green and blue)
- f. Complementary: - colors opposite one another on the color wheel (ex. red and green)
- g. Monotone: - colors with the same tone (intensity or brightness) ex. all brights, all pastels
- h. changing colors mid-row and end of row — For mid-row color changes, lay your new color a few inches before you need it and crochet over it. Another method of changing colors is to work your stitch until the next to last step, and then complete the stitch in the new color. To change colors at the end of a row, work your stitch until the next to last step, cut old color remembering to leave at least a 6" strand, complete your stitch with new color. Weave in ends either at the moment you change, or when you've finished your project. Do not knot your ends.

8. working in rounds (granny squares and hats)
 - a. where the round begins and ends
9. recognizing the top chain in your turning chain

I. Special Stitches that are commonly used (See tutorial section on Special Stitches):

1. V stitch (quick, easy, open-weave)
2. Shell (also quick, many variations)
3. Puff (close stitch, no holes in project, very warm, can make any design)
4. long stitch (lsc, ldc) (decorative)
5. popcorn (also close, no holes, warm, little more difficult than puff but similar in look)
6. post stitch (fpdc - front post double crochet, bpdc - back post double crochet) (decorative)
7. reverse single crochet (also called crab stitch)
8. picot
9. Cross-stitch

J. Specialized crochet (these are just a few):

1. Broomstick Lace
2. Tunisian Crochet (Afghan Stitch)
3. Hairpin lace
4. Mesh - Filet Crochet, woven overlay.
5. Buttons/buttonholes
6. Ornamentation - pom poms, tassels, fringe
7. Making garments
8. Cross-stitch on single crochet and afghan stitch

K. Publicity

- a. Let the community know what, when, and where you'll be teaching