

7: Scrumbling

Scrumbling consists of crocheting a variety of organically shaped, textured pieces and joining these together afterwards to make your fabric.

To make a scumbled bag, cushion, throw or garment, or pieces for appliqué:

First Scumble

Row 1: 4 ch, 4-6 tr into 4th ch from hook, turn.

Row 2: 3 ch, 2 tr into each st - choose whether you want to stop and turn at the end, or before the end, or perhaps to work 5-6 tr into the end st and cont along side of row 1 - turn

Row 3: work any st of your choice, except inc as required to go around any corners - choose sometimes to work a bobble (see below) - stop and fasten off when you like.

Row 4: Join in new yarn at a different place on the edge and work around some part of the edge in tr with incs as necessary. Choose when to stop and turn.

Rep rows 3 & 4 to keep adding to the fabric, changing to different colours/textures after every few sts. To avoid a 'step': join in, then work 1 or 2 dc, then 1 or 2 htr, then cont in tr. End with 1 or 2 htr, then 1 or 2 dc, then ss and fasten off. Try also working 'Shells' thus: miss next 1 or 2 sts (or equivalent interval), 5-6 tr into next st, miss next 1 or 2 sts, ss into next st - Shell completed.

More Scumbles

❖ Same difference! - Make the shapes, sizes and stitch details of each piece different, but use the same routines, if you want them all to have a similar overall character. Even when making large fabrics, keep the individual scumble pieces small.

❖ Texture - use textured yarns and make plenty of bobbles, etc. That way, your pieces don't need to lie flat. They can be scrunched



up when you join them to enhance the surface texture. (Even flat pieces often have to be scrunched up to fit.)

- ❖ Colour - use lots of tones of the same family
- ❖ When working around an edge, stop, turn and/or change yarn before you get the whole way round
- ❖ Change something - either stitch or yarn - after every few stitches
- ❖ Work over stray yarn 'tails' as you pass by them or bring them up into your current stitches - this enhances texture and colour mixing (And saves you hours of darning-in at the end!)
- ❖ Insert the hook into tops or sides of stitches as required, usually picking up at least two individual threads. Keep to the edge if you want to make the piece larger or go into the surface to build it up in three-dimensions.

To Join Scumbles:

Make all the pieces separately and join afterwards either by sewing [work a flat, woven seam, using a wool needle] or crocheting with sc or ss. You can butt the pieces up to each other or overlap them. You will need to scrunch up some pieces when fitting them together. For joining use whichever of your yarns seems most suitable - remember that the join can be a visible part of the design, if you work it with the 'right' side facing.

To make a Bobble:

This bobble is based on 5 tr worked into the same place and joined at the top: *yoh, insert hook, yoh, draw loop through, yoh, draw through 2 lps; rep from * into same place 4 more times [6 lps on hook], yoh, draw through all lps. Bobbles work best when worked between short stitches, eg dc, and on 'wrong' side rows, because, although they always can be pushed through to either side of the fabric, they stick out better towards the back of the work. In the same way (by omitting the last 'yoh' of each stitch until the end) you can make smaller/larger bobbles with shorter/longer/fewer/more stitches.

Fitting a shape:

Draw the outline shape your fabric is to fit, preferably on some stable material, strong enough to allow you to safety-pin your crochet pieces to it and use it as a template. From time to time place your crochet fabric down on this template (resting on a flat surface!) to check that no part of it extends beyond the outline. When it is nearly large enough all round, ie it just touches in parts and there is no room to squeeze in any more circles anywhere, pin it in position and begin to work around the

edge wherever any 'filling' is required: work short stitches, eg dc or even ss, where the crochet fabric already touches the outline and progressively longer stitches, eg htr, tr, dtr, etc, in the 'dips'. Be careful at the same time to work sufficient stitches to keep the edge flat - too few and you will be 'gathering'; too many and the edge will frill. Maybe you'll need to work more than one row in this way in some places.