

22: Simple Rounds and Spirals – Part 1

In crochet we talk about working 'in-the-round' to mean going around a centre, rather than 'to and fro' across a rectangular strip. When you work in-the-round, the fabric naturally grows outwards in all directions at once. Working in-the-round is good for making not only circles, but most shapes, including geometric ones, such as tri-angles (three-sided), squares (four-sided), pentagons (five-sided), hexagons (six-sided), etc.

Rounds and Spirals

There are two main ways of working in-the-round: in rounds and in spiral formation.

'In rounds' means that you join the end of each round to its own beginning and then make a definite step up to the full height of the next round to start making the next round by working one or more chains – collectively called the starting chain – this normally counts as the first stitch of the new round [but see the tip on page 3!]. Each round then makes a continuous circle (or other shape).

In spiral formation at the end of the first round you carry on by working directly into the tops of the first stitches of the first round and from then onwards you work around and around in a continuous flow. The fabric thus ends with something of a step, like the classic 'Roman' snail shape, depending upon the height of the stitch you have been using. (This can usually be smoothed out to some extent by working some progressively shorter stitches and ending with a slip stitch.)

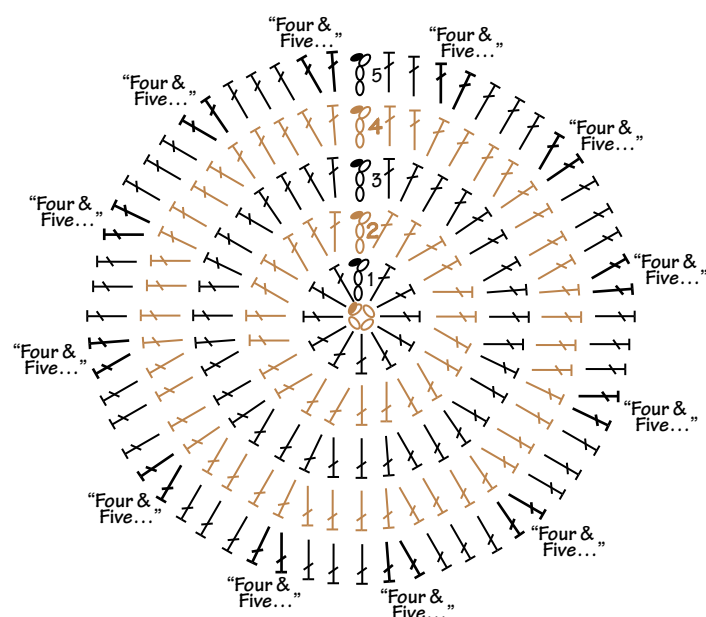
Simple Rounds – Circles

By 'simple' we mean those made of only one type of stitch throughout and which are smooth, flat, solid and as truly circular as possible. The basics for making both Rounds and Spirals are the same whichever stitch you use - the stems of the stitches fan out from the centre like the spokes of a wheel, so the taller they are, the more you need to get right around a complete circuit and still have the fabric lie flat. Luckily there is a single number for each basic stitch which gives you both the correct number of stitches to work in the first round and the number of stitches to add (ie to 'increase') each round after that (see page 2). The stitch diagrams here show the first five rounds of a simple circle using treble stitch

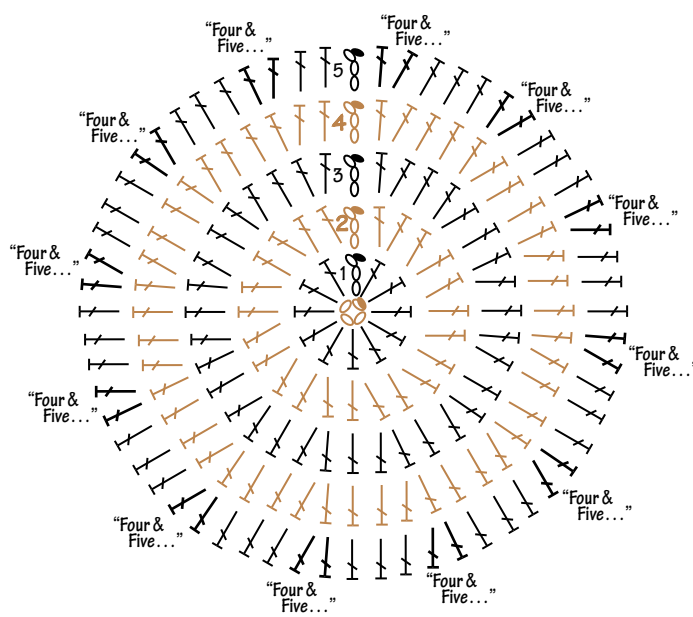
Tip! - To keep track of when to work your increases, count each separate stitch as you complete it (Remember to count 'one' after the starting chain, too, if this is to count!) and carry on until you reach the same number as the round you are working on. Then start counting from 'one' again. Not difficult!

Now all you have to remember is always to work **the last two stitches you count into the same place** - they are the increases! For example, on round 2 you increase in **every** stitch and so count "One & two! ... One & two! ..." and each pair would be into one stitch. On round 5 you increase after three single stitches and so count "One, two, three, four & five! ... One, two, three, four & five! ..." The **four & five** are the two stitches into the same place. (See Stitch Diagrams)

Lefthanded: worked clockwise



Righthanded: worked anti-clockwise



22: Simple Rounds and Spirals – Part 2

What to do ... ??

[Find the numbers you need for the ??s immediately below in the columns on the right – normally the starting chain counts as the first stitch in the round, but if it doesn't, use the figures in brackets.]

How many ... ??

	Single Crochet (sc)	Half Double (hdc)	Double Crochet (dc)	Triple (tr)
Make ?? chains (chs) and join them into a ring thus: insert hook into the first chain made and work 1 slip stitch (1 ss)	3	3	4	4
Round 1: Work starting chain (stch) of ?? ch	1 or 2 (1)	2 (2)	3 (2)	4 (3)
Work ?? stitches (sts), always inserting hook into space in centre of original chain ring.	5	7	11	17
Close round thus: insert hook into top of stch [or first stitch worked] and work 1 ss				
Total number of stitches in Round 1 counts as ??	6	8	12	18
Round 2: Inc, ie work 2 sts into each st, all round thus: work stch of ?? ch to count as first stitch. Work one stitch (1 st) inserting hook into stitch at base of stch, ie same place as the slip stitch you worked to close previous round. All this so far counts as one increase, ie 2 stitches (2 sts) worked into same place.	1 or 2 (1)	2 (2)	3 (2)	4 (3)
Always inserting hook under the 2 loops which lie on top of each stitch, work 2 sts into each stitch all around. Close round with 1 ss as for Round 1				
Total number of incs in Round 2 counts as ??	6	8	12	18
Total number of sts in round after Round 2 counts as ??	12	16	24	36
Round 3: Work as for previous round, except * work 1 single st into first st [normally the stch counts as this] followed by 2 sts (ie inc) into next st; repeat (rep) from * all round. Close round with 1 ss as for Round 1.				
Total number of incs in Round 3 counts as ??	6	8	12	18
Total number of sts in round after Round 3 counts as ??	18	24	36	54
Round 4: Work as for previous round, except * work 1 single st into each of first 2 sts [normally stch counts as first of these] followed by 2 sts (ie inc) into next st; repeat (rep) from * all around. Close round with 1 ss as for Round 1.				
Total number of incs in Round 4 counts as ??	6	8	12	18
Total number of sts after Round 4 counts as ??	24	32	48	72
Round 5, 6, 7, etc: Work as for previous round, except work one more single st before each inc than in previous round.				
Total number of incs in each round always remains constant as ??	6	8	12	18
Total number of sts in each round always increases by ??	6	8	12	18
Fasten off as required				

Tip! - To make a round or spiral with a hole in the middle, start with a chain ring that has the same number of chains as you would have stitches after one or more rounds of a solid piece and then work into those chains as though they were the tops of the stitches of that round

[Use the alternative figures in brackets above whenever the starting chain does not count as the first stitch]

22: Simple Rounds and Spirals – Part 3

Simple Spiral

What to do: Make a chain ring and work Round 1 as for a **Simple Round**, except, when you are using any stitch longer than single crochet, avoid a step at the beginning of the first round by working a selection of short, then progressively longer, stitches totalling the same number as specified for a **Simple Round**, for example:

for **Half double:** work 4 sc and 4 hdc = 8 sts.

for **Double crochet:** work 4 sc, 4 hdc and 4 dc = 12 sts.

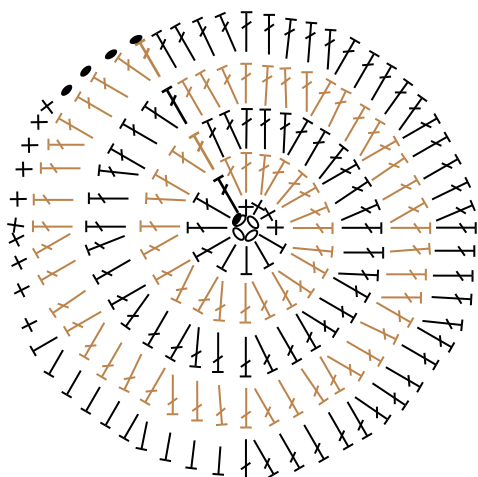
for **Treble:** work 4 sc, 4 hdc, 5 dc and 5 tr = 18 sts

Do not close Round 1 with ss. Put a marker thread into the top of the last stitch worked to denote 'last stitch of Round'. Omit all starting chains (which do not come into spirals!) and carry on as for Simple Round.

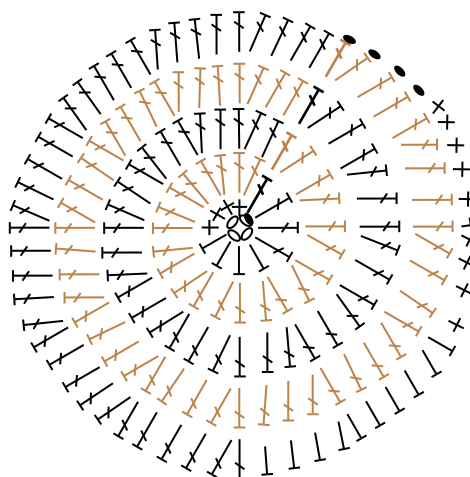
Important Note: there is no 'step' to remind you when each round is finished and you'll not know when you need to 'change gear' for increasing (it quickly becomes difficult determine which round you are actually on just by looking), so it is helpful determine the end of each round by counting the incs and to insert a marker into the top of the last stitch of every round – you'll see that the ends of rounds do not line up in a straight line on a radius, as they do when you work true rounds. Fans of Fibonacci will be delighted, but not surprised by this

End by working a selection of progressively shorter stitches, followed by one or more slip stitches to smooth out any unwanted step.

Lefthanded: worked clockwise



Righthanded: worked anti-clockwise



Tip! - Unless otherwise stated, when you're following pattern instructions in rounds:

- the 'right' side of the fabric is the one which is facing you when you work the first round
- do not turn the work between rounds

Tip! - If you're a beginner, make sure you can work correctly with trebles before you tackle double crochet! The shorter double crochet stitches may seem easier to work, but you'll find it is much more difficult to see what you have done and where you are going

Tip! - The starting chain, when counted and treated as the first stitch, can make an undesirable 'seam' line. To eliminate this, treat the starting chain as an extra (use the figures in brackets), that is, work a proper stitch as well and, at the end of each round, pass over the starting chain and work the joining slip stitch into the top of that first genuine stitch. The starting chain then hides on the wrong side of the fabric.

'Flying Stitch': better still, fasten off at the end of each round and start again in a different place selected at random. Instead of joining in and making chains, however, work a 'Flying' stitch (that's a real stitch made "out of the air") – to do this you need make a slip knot on the hook and to hold the short end against it to stop the slip loop sliding around the hook whilst you make the 'yarn over' and the stitch. (See also Worksheet #24)