

5

tips for crocheting the cutest amigurumi ever!



Oh yeah, and super-easy, too!



from Stacey,
awesome designer for



www.freshstitches.com

what does amigurumi mean?

'amigurumi' is a Japanese word, roughly meaning 'knitted doll'. It's come to mean (in the crochet world), adorable stuffed animals that are worked in the round.

Amigurumi make fabulous projects: they're quick, cute and easy! If you can single crochet, you can make something adorable!



wanna know what i think?

Crocheting should be fun, and not stressful. And no matter what your know-it-all friends say, there's no 'right way' to crochet!

But there are some tips that will make your life easier, and we all want easy, right?

I hope you enjoy the tips I'm sharing with you in this ebook... I want you to be the proud creator of some adorable amigurumi!

 Stacey

tip 1: develop a nice, even crochet stitch

Rumor has it that you need to crochet super-tightly (and differently from normal) to do amigurumi. Not true!

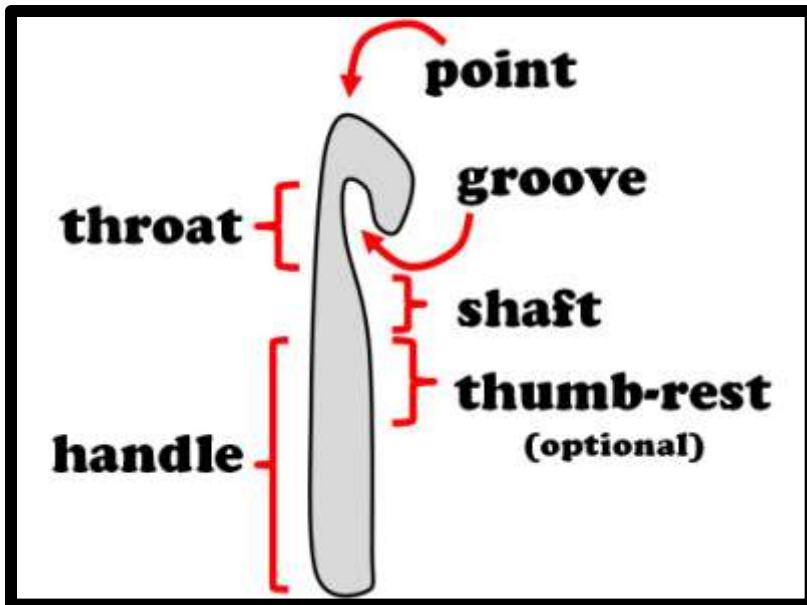
The only thing super-tight stitches will get you is sore hands & wrists. Who wants that?

What is true is that you can't get away with loosey-goosey stitches. So let me show you how to get pretty, even ones.



Step 1: Make sure your loop is on the shaft of the hook while you're crocheting.

You'll want your loop on the shaft when you're starting your piece, and when you're crocheting your stitches!



Here's what it looks like in action!



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The shaft is where the hook size is measured, so it's where you'll want to put your loops to get the appropriately-sized stitch.

If you pull your loop tight around the throat (the skinny part near the hook), you're going to get too-tight stitches... which just makes crocheting hard!

Step 2: Look for the teardrop-shape.

Take a look at your hook head-on. The loop should look like an upside-down teardrop that fits snugly around your hook.





Do you see it?

Why is the upside-down teardrop shape so important?

Because you'll need that point to slide the hook through while stitching.



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See how my hook is sliding through? If your loop is a perfect circle (strangling the poor hook!), then your hook is probably going to get caught on your loop as you try to pull the yarn through- making crocheting very frustrating!



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You also don't want your loop too loose, either! If you have a giant circle, you'll end up with sloppy-looking (too big) stitches.

So check for that teardrop, and it'll be just right!

Step 3: Check for the teardrop at every step.

You started out right... so don't get lazy! Check for the teardrop shape at every step. Before you know it, even stitches will be second nature!



Take a look at my loops, still in the teardrop shape!

Beginning crocheters tend to let their stitches get huge in the middle of the stitch, leading to very loose stitches.

Follow these three steps, and you'll get beautiful, even stitches every time! Rock on, teardrop!



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What if you're still having trouble?

It might be time to try a new hook! Hooks come in all different shapes, so it's worth taking the time to find one that suits your style.



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tip 2: start it out, right!

When you're crocheting amigurumi (which are always worked in the round), you want to avoid starting out with the standard slip knot.

You'll get a hole in the center.

No one wants a hole.



The traditional way to start amigurumi is with the magic ring... but quite frankly, I think it's a little complicated.

If you have it under your belt, great! But for those of us who don't... how about something a little easier?

I introduce to you two easy (invented by me!) ways of starting your amigurumi: the sloppy slip knot and the super-easy magic ring!



The sloppy slip knot

To do it, twist the yarn around the hook to begin (a), and crochet as directed in the pattern. Once you have completed your first round (b), pull on the tail, while holding the work you have created (c). The center hole will close right up!



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The super-easy magic ring


This one has a few more steps... but is fantastic for those who find the starting twist of the sloppy slip knot tricky!

Step one: make a slip knot

Make a slip knot with about 6 inches remaining at the tail, and insert the hook into the slip knot.



Step two: make a loop

With that 6 inches you left in in the tail, make a loop, like this. 



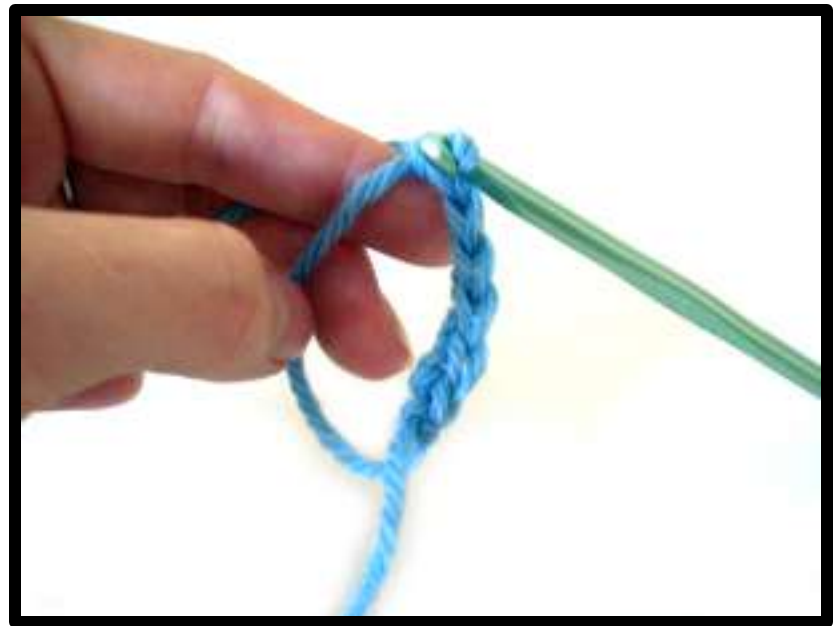
Step three: crochet into the loop

Pretend that GIANT loop is just one crochet stitch. Crochet into it six times (or do however many stitches called for in your pattern). (details continued on next page...)



To single crochet one stitch into the loop: insert your hook into the loop, wrap your yarn over the hook and pull through the loop, then wrap your yarn over your hook again and pull through the two loops on your hook!

Single crochet until you've finished all of your stitches! Your piece will look like this. →

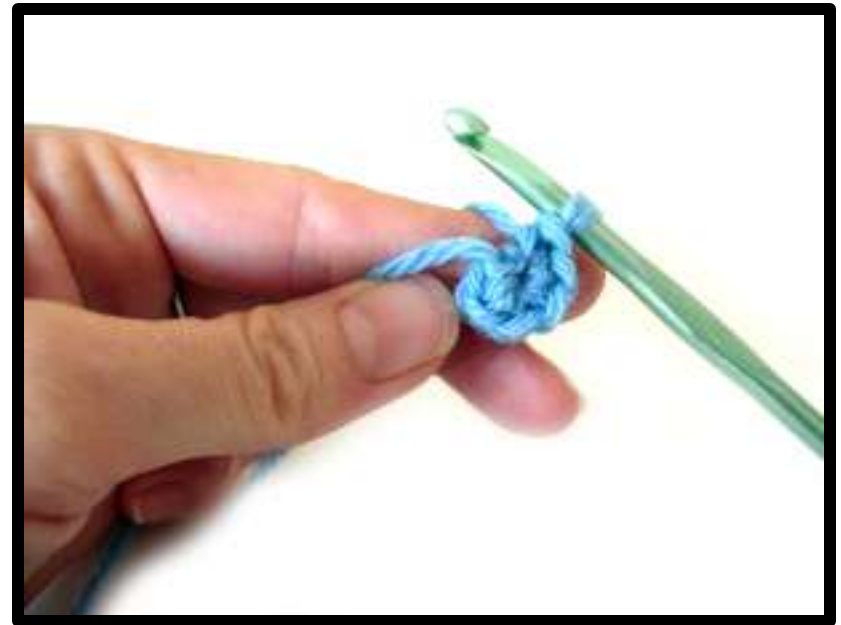


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Step four: pull, and you're done!

To close up the hole, pull on the tail!

And you're done!



No matter whether you prefer the sloppy slip knot or the super-easy magic ring, you'll get a lovely, non-holey start to your amigurumi! And easily!



tip 3: a locking stitch marker is your bff

The number one frustration I hear from crocheters is that they've lost count of their stitches.

It stinks.

Locking stitch markers
to the rescue!



A circle has no beginning and no end. Heard that before?

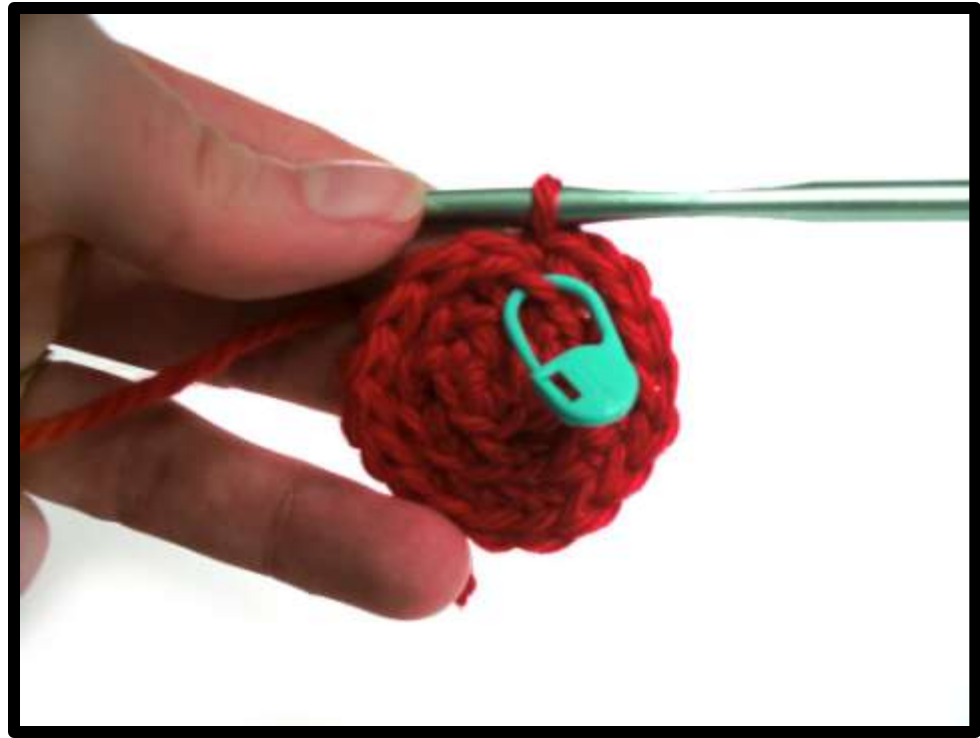
Well, since amigurumi are crocheted in the round, it can be very hard to know where the end of the round is!

Place a locking stitch marker on the last stitch of the round, and you'll never lose track, again!



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I know I'm finished with my next round when I'm just above the stitch marker, like I am here.



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tip 4: use stitches as your guide

When attaching, that is!

Another trouble spot when making amigurumi is attaching pieces (like limbs and features) evenly.

Wanna know a secret? Your amigurumi already has a magical even-ness device built in!

Know what it is?



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Your stitches! That's what's going to help you attach pieces evenly!

Let's say I'm trying to attach legs to my (rainbow) cow. Do you see all of those pretty lines (i.e. rounds of stitches)?

They're your ticket!



When I'm attaching pieces that need to be symmetrical (like 2 legs), I just keep track which round I'm attaching to. If I attach the bottom of one leg to round 9, then I want to do the same for the second leg!



Ta da! Now that's even!



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I have another trick that's going to help out, too.

Remember your best friends, the locking stitch markers? You can use them to plan where you'd like to place features before attaching them!



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You can even use the markers to hold your piece in its proposed place... to see if you like the look!

That'll save you from re-doing it (if it's in the wrong place) later!



tip 5: stuff that guy!



So you've done all of your crocheting and attaching... the final step is stuffing your animal!

The key to stuffing is to slightly overstuff, but not to **OVER** overstuff.



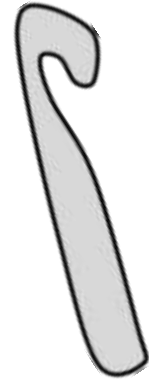
Stuffing compresses over time, so unless you want a squashed and droopy animal... you'll need to put in a little more stuffing than you think you need.

BUT if you **OVER** overstuff... the stuffing will show through your stitches. That's too much. Take a little bit out.

Stuff correctly, and you'll get a beautiful animal that will last a long time!



are you ready to get crocheting?



I hope you've found these tips super-helpful!

I want everyone to *enjoy* their crocheting... and I hope these tips will get you set on a trouble-free path!

Be sure to show me your adorable creations... I want to see them!

 Stacey

Feel free to email me anytime: stacey@freshstitches.com
or visit my site: www.freshstitches.com!

about freshstitches

The idea for FreshStitches began in 2008 when crochet designer, Stacey Trock, noticed a distinct lack of patterns for big and cuddly stuffed animals. A handful of adorable designs later- FreshStitches was born! Since then, FreshStitches patterns have become legendary for their cuteness, detailed instructions and step-by-step photos. Using the abundance of help and information in the patterns, numerous crocheters have crocheted a FreshStitches animal as their first crochet project!



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amigurumi. patterns. plushies.