

## EXTRACT FROM EARTH GUILD'S TAPESTRY CROCHET PATTERNS:

### General Information Color Changing a piece of Graph Paper

#### TWISTING, AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

*Not as trivial as it might seem.*

When the colors are switched, the two strands wind around each other. This *will* happen – it does not mean that you are doing something incorrectly. When the twist becomes annoyingly snarly, and in the way of the work, it needs to be undone.

There are many ways to do this. While the work is small and light, hold the two balls of yarn in either hand, a foot or so apart. Let it dangle, and it will spin, undoing the twist. When it gets heavy enough to pull stitches out when dangled, secure the last stitch to the work with a yarn needle and dangle as above. When it gets even bigger and heavier, it may be easier to pass one ball around and around the other, or flop the work over and over.

Notice that when one color is used much less, it will ride up and snarl more quickly. When the color use is more even, the twist will have fewer loose loops and take longer to become seriously annoying.

However you do it, don't put untwisting off for too long – it is not efficient or ultimately pleasant.

#### INCREASES

Increases (and decreases) are done just as in ordinary single crochet: to increase by one, work two stitches into one in the row or round below.

It takes six increases per round to make single crochet in the round lie flat. A tapestry crochet stitch is slightly taller than an ordinary single crochet one, because of the hidden core yarn. This makes the difference in length from round to round greater, so it takes more increases in each round to make a piece lie flat: in fact, eight

If the increases are evenly spaced, stacked in the same place each round, the piece will be octagonal. If they are not stacked, but reasonably evenly distributed, the piece will be more circular.

To make a square, the eight increases are made in pairs, at four even intervals. Work three stitches into one, a double-increase (D-INC). If the double-increase happens in the *middle* stitch of the increase below, they will make fairly straight diagonal lines. If it happens in the *last* stitch, they will make a swirly line, and the square will be softer-cornered.

#### TIPS & NOTES

Crochet in a chair with arms that comfortably support your elbows, or at least that of your primary arm. This will ease your shoulder, though it won't do anything much for your wrist.

When adding a new color, or a new strand of the same color, set it in as a second core yarn about six stitches before it becomes the working strand. Do the same thing when you end a strand; carry it for about six stitches as an additional core before you cut it off. Leave a tail about half an inch long. Use your hook to pull tails to the front, a couple of rows back into the web, so they won't get snagged as you work. Hanging there these ends can make it harder to see mistakes, or even how the design is building up, so trim them or return them to the back when you're a few rows further along. I prefer not to cut ends off flush until the piece is washed and dried, in case they pull in a little, and pop out to the front.

The core yarn makes the finished fabric denser and less elastic than ordinary single crochet, especially along the rows (horizontally). In that direction the fabric has only the stretch of a straight length of yarn. At a right angles to the rows (vertically) it has the stretch of the web, like non-tapestry single crochet.

#### FIXING MISTAKES

The best approach is to try hard not to make any. Count stitches carefully. If something seems not right, check it right away, don't wait until fixing an error means ripping out several mistake-free rounds. If you have somehow gained or lost a stitch in a run of stitches all the same color, it is possible to discreetly decrease or increase in the next row to get back to the correct count. But you'll probably be happier in the long run if you undo back to before the error and rework from there. It is especially easy to accidentally make an extra stitch when changing colors.

#### FELTING TAPESTRY CROCHET

Felted tapestry crochet will not shrink the same amount row-wise and stitch-wise. The core strand stops the rows from shrinking down, so the stitches are proportionately taller than pre-felted. A cylinder will be skinnier; a spiral piece will need more increases, enough to make it slightly wavy before felting, in order to lay flat when felted. Some wools and most other fibers just don't felt.

#### A FEW ESPECIALLY NICE THINGS ABOUT TAPESTRY CROCHET

No loops or skips on the back. Minimal finishing – just clipping; the ends get worked in and secured as you go along. The fabric is sturdy and stable. Most of all, unlimited design possibilities.

## TAPESTRY CROCHET BASICS: Changing Colors *for right-handed crocheters*

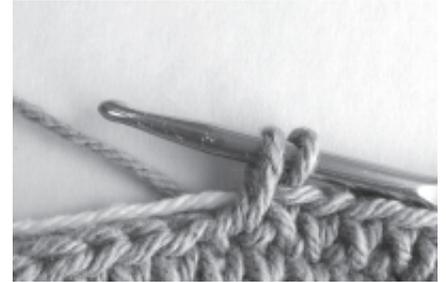
Tapestry crochet is single crochet with a twist. It is worked with two (or more) contrasting strands. One strand is visible, single-crocheted around the other, which lies along the top of the previous row, and is completely covered. Change colors by switching out the strands, and working the second color around the first. The change to the second color starts when there are two loops of the first color on the hook. Pick up the second, which is lying along the top of the previous row, and pull it through. The single loop now on your hook will be part of the next stitch, in the second color. In the pictures below, the darker strand is the first color, the lighter the second. *Left-handed crocheters, see next page.*



❶ Working in the darker color. A stitch has just been completed, and there is one loop on the hook.



❷ Insert the hook under both strands of the stitch you're working into, and under the carried (lighter) strand. Wrap the darker yarn around hook.



❸ Pull through. Two loops are on the hook.



❹ Wrap yarn, and pull through both loops, completing another stitch. When this is done, you should be back to ❶, with one more stitch completed.

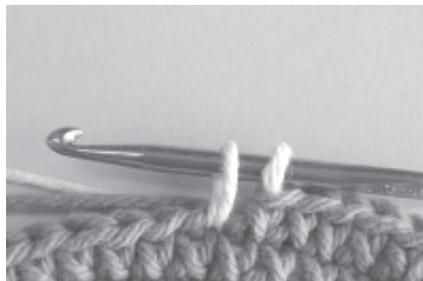
*when you are ready  
to change colors,  
from background to pattern,  
or pattern to background,  
or from background to  
a different background color*



❺ Start when there are two loops of the first color on the hook. This time wrap with the second color.



❻ Pull through. There is one loop of the second color on the hook.



❼ Insert hook as before (*with colors reversed*) and pull through. Two loops of the second color are on the hook.



❽ Pick up the new working color and pull through both loops. The stitch is completed: one loop is on hook and the next stitch is started in the same color. And see "Twisting", at the top of page 4

# TAPESTRY CROCHET BASICS: CHANGING COLORS

## *for left-handed crocheters*

Tapestry crochet is single crochet with a twist. It is worked with two (or more) contrasting strands. One strand is visible, single-crocheted around the other, which lies along the top of the previous row, and is completely covered. Change colors by switching out the strands, and working the second color around the first. The change to the second color starts when there are two loops of the first color on the hook. Pick up the second, which is lying along the top of the previous row, and pull it through. The single loop now on your hook will be part of the next stitch, in the second color. In the pictures below, the darker strand is the first color, the lighter the second. *Right-handed crocheters, see previous page.*



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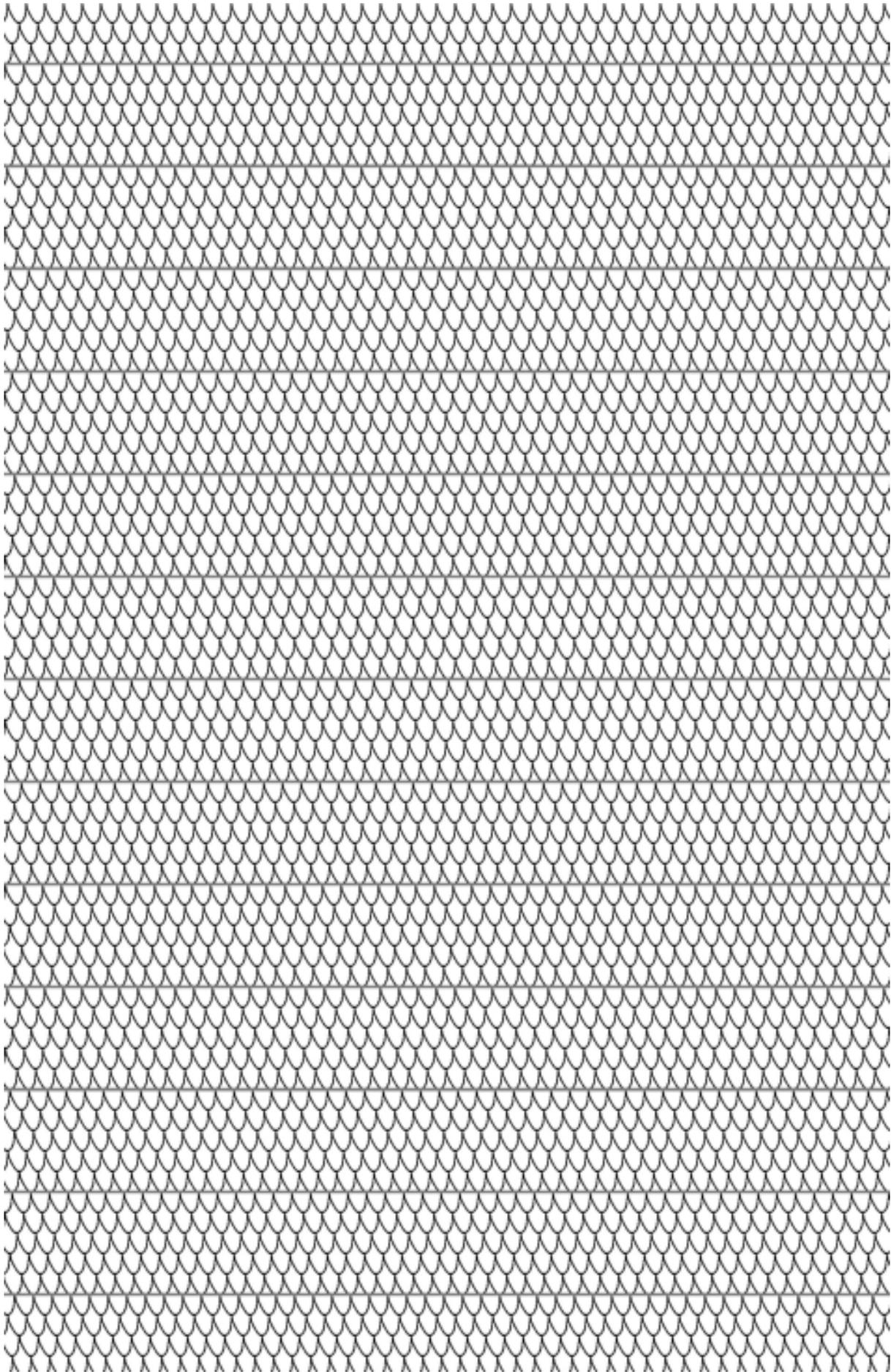
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GRAPH PAPER FOR RIGHT-HANDED TAPESTRY CROCHET • COPY BEFORE USING TO KEEP A BLANK  
Horizontal lines every five rows are there to make it easier to read, copy or make your own graphs  
For left-handed use, scan and flip, ignore the slight difference, or email me at [esther@earthguild.com](mailto:esther@earthguild.com)