

~ Christmas Tree Tea Cosy ~

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This crocodile stitch tea cosy will fit a standard two-cup teapot, and is 21cm (8") wide and 21cm (8") tall when laid flat. Whilst the pattern includes written instructions for crocodile stitch, I'd recommend looking at the relevant photo-tutorial on my website if you've never crocheted this stitch before:-

<https://thetwistedyarn.com/2015/09/10/easy-crochet-crocodile-stitch-tutorial/>

Materials

- One 100g ball of Stylecraft Special DK.* I used the colourway 1116 ('Green'), but there are softer, or darker, or lighter, greens in the range that you may wish to consider.
- Oddments of other yarn and sparkly things for the decorations.
- 4mm (G/6 in US terminology) crochet hook.
- (Optional) Smaller (e.g. 2.5mm) crochet hook for making decorations.
- Thin, sharp, darning needle.
- Christmas carols playing in background.

Abbreviations

ch = chain

dc = double crochet (that's a US double crochet, OK?)

sc = single crochet

ss = slip stitch

sk = skip

st(s) = stitch(es)

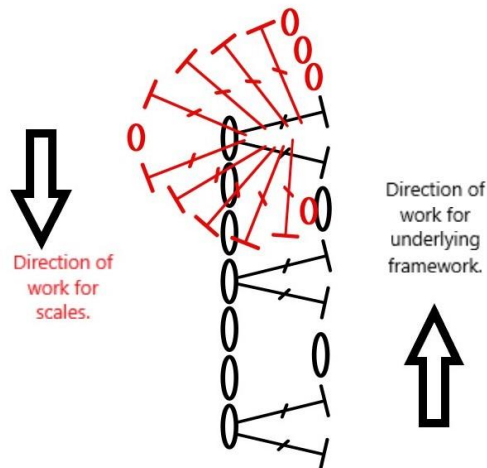
Instructions

Please note, US crochet terms are used throughout.

In the pattern, I've referred to the 'scales' that you create in crocodile stitch, even though this is perhaps not the best term for describing a Christmas tree! You'll be working from the base upwards, initially in the round, then splitting into two panels that are each worked back-and-forth, then joining in the round again and decreasing towards the peak. So here goes...

1. In green, ch90, then join the two ends of your ch using a ss to create a round.

2. Ch3 (counts as first dc). Dc into the base of the ch3, sk 2 sts of foundation chain, *work 2dc into the next ch, ch1, sk2 sts of initial chain,** repeat *→** to end of round. Join to top of initial ch3 using a ss. This step creates the first 'framework round', onto which you'll add scales.



3. Turn work clockwise through 90° so that you've got a vertical ladder. (See diagram on left.) Ch3 (counts as first dc). You'll now work from right to left, creating 4dc around the uppermost post of the nearest pair of dc from your foundation chain. Ch1. Turn work through 180° and work right to left to create 5dc around the second of the posts in the pair. Ch1. You've now made your first scale. If this doesn't make sense, have a look at my photo-tutorial. (See web address above.)

4. Rotate your work 180°. Sk next pair of dc posts, and work 5dc (right→left) into the top post of the following pair of dc sts. Ch1. Turn and work 5dc back the other way up the other dc in the pair. Repeat this step all the way around. Your work will look messy because the scales are as yet untethered: don't worry, we're going to sort that out in a minute. When you get to the very last scale, instead of finishing off with a ch1, work a ss into the third ch of the ch3 with which you began the first scale. You should have 15 scales. (Steps 3-4 count as your first 'scale round'.)

5. You are now going to work back-and-forth to create one of the side panels. First, ch3, and ss into the centre gap of the scale to the left. Ch3 (counts as first dc), dc into the same centre gap of the scale. *Ch1, 2dc into the next gap between framework posts WHILST AT THE SAME TIME capturing the ch between the two scales that meet here. Thus, you've fixed the scale tips to the framework behind. Ch1, 2dc into centre gap of next scale.** Repeat *→** a further 5 times to complete the row. You should have 13 pairs of posts.

6. So: right now you're sitting at the top of a pair of dc posts. Ignore this pair, and work 5dc into the first dc of the *next* pair of posts. Ch1, turn and work 5dc up the other post, ch1. Continue working across until you have made 6 scales. They'll be offset from the scales below, with their edges at the centre point of the scales underneath. Instead of the very last ch1, work a ss into the top of the very last pair of dc posts.

7. Turning to work back in the opposite direction, make another framework row over the 6 scales.

8. Work another set of scales. This time, begin the row with ch3, then work 4dc down the first dc of the first pair of posts. Ch1, then work 5dc up the other dc post. Carry on creating scales as usual: there will be 7 on this row, the final one centring on the final pair of posts. Instead of the final ch1 of the last scale, work a ss into the top of the mid-scale gap.

9. Repeat rows 5-8 an additional 3 times. You should now have a total of nine rows of scales (including the initial round). Cut yarn and pull through.

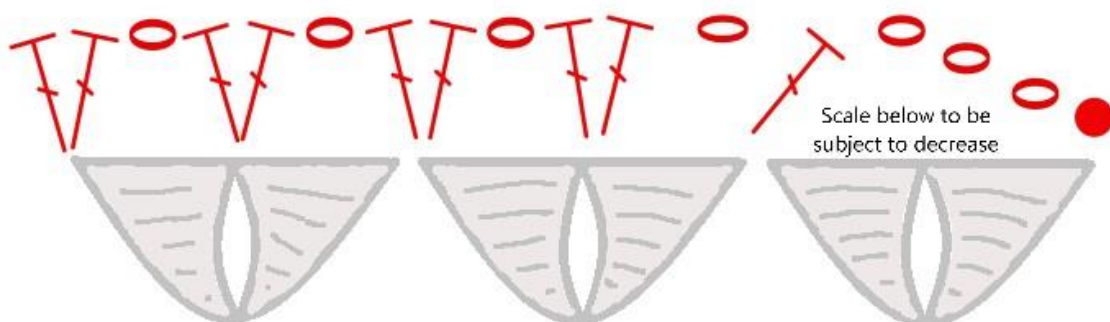
10. Look back down at the left of the original row 5. The final pair of dcs of row 5 was worked into the middle of a scale in the bottom round. The left side of that scale and all scales continuing to the left of it are as yet untethered to the framework. Rejoin your yarn to work a sc that pins the top left edge of that first untethered scale on the bottom row to the framework behind. Working towards the left, ss twice into the first half of the top of the next scale, then work a sc into the middle of this scale.

11. Now you're in the right position to start building the other side panel. You'll work rows 5-9 four times, to match the opposite side, but don't cut your yarn at the end, this time! (You'll end up with a slightly wider gap between the two panels on one side of the cosy than at the other. This is deliberate, because the spout of the teapot is likely to be wider than the handle.) Still with me? Phew! Onwards...

12. You're now going to return to working in the round. But first, you need to make a new section of framework across the teapot handle gap. Ch11, then ss into the top of the mid-scale gap of the first scale on the opposite side. Ch3, dc into the mid-scale gap, *ch1, sk2 links of your ch11, then work 2dc into the next link of the ch.** Repeat *→** an additional two times. Sk remainder of underlying ch, ch1, then work 2dc into the mid-scale gap of the first scale of the other panel. Carry on in the same direction, creating more framework. When you get to the end of the panel, work a ch3 instead of the second dc of the final pair of dcs. Ss into the centre of this last scale. Ch11 to reach across the gap to get to the other panel, sc into the first mid-scale gap on the other side. Cut yarn and pull through. Rejoin yarn to top of gap between last two posts on the right side of the gap, *ch1, sk2 links of your ch11 and then work 2dc into the next ch.** Repeat *→** twice more. Ch1, then continue working new framework stitches across the second panel before joining into the round with a ss.

13. Work a complete round of 16 scales, offset from the scales below as usual.

14. It's time to begin decreasing. Are you excited? I'm excited. With every round of scales, you're going to decrease one scale above the spout hole *and* one scale above the handle hole. Start by taking a look at the scales above each hole: see how there's a scale *roughly* above the middle of the hole? That's the one you're going to wipe out via your decrease, every time. The work of the decrease occurs in the framework round, like this:-



To get you started on this round, begin with a ch3 (counts as a dc) then work the other dc of this pair into the gap at the far left of the first scale. You'll thus wipe out the scale between these posts. Then work subsequent pairs of dc posts as usual, but set up for a decrease again over the spout-hole too. Finish this round and join with a ss. If you started making scales right here, they wouldn't be offset from the row below, so instead, ss to the left until you are in the mid-scale gap of the scale to the

left of the one you're removing. Now make a scale round. Because of the two decreases in the framework, your scale round will have 14 scales. Keep working upwards, using every framework round to set up for a decrease above each hole. The number of scales will next decrease to 12, then 10, 8, 6, 4, and finally to 2. Stop there: you've suffered enough. Tidy it all up, cut the yarn and pull through. Weave in ends.

Decoration

How you decorate the tree is up to you of course. If you're in a rush, sew or even glue on some beads as baubles, and weave metallic pipe cleaners round as tinsel. But here's what I did:-

1. Lights

Just as you would with a real Christmas tree, begin with the lights, so that the other decorations conceal those ugly wires. Ideally, use a smaller hook (2.5 or 3mm) so that your stitches are tight. Chain the wire in a neutral shade, tethering it to the underside of a scale every 8 sts or so. Then add lights in cream yarn. To create each light, work a ss into the ch, then ch4. Turn your work, sk the first ch, ss in second ch, half dc in third ch, then use a sc around the fourth ch to make a narrow neck at the top. Cut yarn, pull through, and tidy up your work by weaving in ends strategically. Repeat every inch or so along the wire. For added sparkle, smear white glitter-glue on the lights afterwards.

2. Tinsel

I had some sparklesome 'King Cole Tinsel' yarn lying around after making a rather extravagant cushion. I've used a length of red as tinsel on the tree anchoring it to the scales every inch or two using a sc. I used some of the same yarn in gold for the star on top.

3. Baubles



Baubles are fun, and whilst you *could* make them in a neat and organized arrangement of stitches, I made mine during a power cut, so I opted for using a small hook to sc like crazy to create a tight ball of yarn. Then I evened it up by weaving in ends strategically. I embroidered spots or zigzags on each bauble, then hung it from the tree using fine gold thread. I should probably get a life.

And that's it! Make a pot of the most delicious tea you own (mine's a jasmine green tea, please), then keep your pot warm and cosy with this little Christmas tree.

* In case you need to substitute for another yarn, the ball band details for this yarn are: 100g = 295m, recommended needle/hook = 4mm, knit gauge = 22 sts/ 30 rows to a 10x10cm square.