CROCHET OCTOPUS: BEAUTIFUL NO-SEW TOY WITH 8 CURLY TENTACLES

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Free printable pattern

FINISHED SIZE

About 7 inches (18 cm) tall when laid flat, from the end of the tentacles to the top of the head, using bulky-weight (5) yarn and a 5.0 mm hook. Sizes are approximate and will vary a little with your yarn and tension.

SKILL LEVEL

Easy. You need a magic ring, single crochet, half double crochet, double crochet, increases, decreases, chain stitches and slip stitches. The whole octopus is worked in one piece, so there is no sewing at all.

TIME

The source pattern gives no exact time. This is a quick one-piece toy with 16 rounds and 8 tentacles: allow one relaxed evening, a little longer the first time.

MATERIALS

- Bulky-weight (5) yarn, King Cole Yummy, 100% polyester, 131 yards (120 m) per 100 g skein, about 43 yards (39 m) in Sugar Pink
- 5.0 mm crochet hook
- 25 mm safety eyes, 1 pair (the source sample uses Crescent Glitter Eyes)
- Polyester stuffing, a small amount
- Tapestry needle
- Stitch markers
- Scissors
- Scrap piece of yarn (optional, for marking the eye stitches and the back loops of Round 14)

ABBREVIATIONS (US terms)

MR: magic ring. ch: chain. sc: single crochet. hdc: half double crochet. dc: double crochet. inc: increase (2 sc in the same stitch). dec: invisible decrease (single crochet 2 stitches together, worked under the front loops only). sl st: slip stitch. st(s): stitch(es). Rnd: round. FLO: front loop only. BLO: back loop only. FO: fasten off.

NOTES

Work in continuous rounds. Do not join rounds and do not turn, unless the pattern says so. Place a stitch marker in the first stitch of each round and move it up as you finish the round. The number in brackets at the end of each round is the stitch count you should have, so count your stitches at the end of every increase and decrease round. This pattern uses US crochet terms throughout. If you are used to UK terms, remember that a US single crochet is a UK double crochet, so do not convert the stitches in this pattern. Use invisible decreases for a cleaner finish. Gauge is not vital for a toy, but it affects the finished size and how much yarn you need: rounds 1 to 4 measure 2.25 inches (5.7 cm) across. This pattern can also be worked in yarn under single crochet if you prefer it; it may change the amount of yarn used and the size of your toy. If you struggle with the magic ring, chain 2 and work all Round 1 stitches into the 2nd chain from the hook.

BODY

The body is worked from the top of the head down to the tentacles. Do not fasten off after Round 14: the tentacles start straight from there.

Rnd 1: 6 sc in MR (6)

Rnd 2: inc in each st around (12)

Rnd 3: [sc, inc] x 6 (18)

Rnd 4: sc, inc, [2 sc, inc] x 5, sc (24). Gauge check: the piece should measure 2.25 inches (5.7 cm) across the widest part at this point.

Rnd 5-8: sc in each st around (24), 4 rounds. Insert the safety eyes in Round 7 with 3 stitches between them. Mark the eye stitches with scrap yarn or stitch markers until you have crocheted past that point far enough to insert the eyes with the backings on.

Rnd 9: [dec, 6 sc] x 3 (21)

Rnd 10: sc in each st around (21)

Rnd 11: [5 sc, dec] x 3 (18)

Rnd 12: sc in each st around (18). Start stuffing now, and keep adding stuffing as you work. Stuff firmly.

Rnd 13: [dec, 7 sc] x 2 (16)

Rnd 14: sc in each st around (16). Do not fasten off. Continue onto the tentacles. If you have a hard time seeing the back loops of Round 14 when you work Round 16, weave a scrap piece of yarn in a contrasting colour through the back loops of Round 14 before starting Round 15.

TENTACLES

In this section, you will make a chain for each tentacle, then turn and work back down the chain toward the body. To secure each tentacle, you will work a stitch into the body before beginning the next one. Leave your stitch marker in the first stitch of Round 14 until you are ready to move on to Round 16.

Rnd 15: * Ch 15, turn to work back down the chain, sl st in the 2nd ch from the hook, inc 2, sc, hdc 6, dc 3, hdc, FLO dec over the 1st and 2nd sts of Round 14 of the body (first tentacle complete). Ch 15, turn to work back down the chain, sl st in the 2nd ch from the hook, inc 2, sc,

hdc 6, dc 3, hdc, FLO dec over the next 2 sts of Round 14 of the body, repeat from * 6 more times. (8 tentacles with 15 sts each)

Note: each tentacle works back over 14 chain positions (the chain of 15 minus the turning chain). The 15 stitches counted per tentacle are the stitches worked after the anchoring slip stitch: 2 increases make 4 single crochet, then 1 single crochet, 6 half double crochet, 3 double crochet and 1 half double crochet. Each tentacle uses 2 front loop stitches of Round 14 for its anchoring decrease, and 8 tentacles use all 16 front loop stitches.

Remove the hook from the working loop and insert it from back to front through the first st of Round 14. Place the loop back on your hook and pull the hook to the back of the fabric. Ch 1 to secure.

Add the stuffing to your toy now, before moving on. Stuff firmly.

Rnd 16: Working in the BLO of Round 14, dec x 8 (8)

FO, leaving a long yarn tail. Finish stuffing. Thread the yarn tail onto the tapestry needle and weave the yarn tail through the front loops of the last round and pull tight to close up the hole. Weave in the ends.

SAFETY NOTE

Safety eyes are not suitable for children under 3 years old, because small parts can come loose and be a choking hazard. For an octopus a small child will play with, embroider the eyes with black yarn instead: stitch two small vertical ovals in the same position, in Round 7 with 3 stitches between them. Check every part is secure before giving the octopus to a child, and do not add beads or buttons, which can also come loose.

TIPS FOR A NEAT OCTOPUS

- Count at the end of every increase and decrease round. The body grows by 6 stitches on its increase rounds and shrinks by 3 on its decrease rounds, except Round 13, which shrinks by 2. If your count is off by 3, you have missed or added one repeat; if it is off by 1 or 2, check the round you just worked before going on.
- Stuff in small pinches. Little bits at a time give a smooth, even shape with no lumps. Pull the stuffing apart into thin layers before you add it, and push it into the sides of the body rather than dropping in one big piece.
- Stuff firmly before the tentacle round. The head is stuffed from Round 12, and the last stuffing goes in before Round 16 closes the base. If the head is soft, the toy will not hold its round shape.
- Mark the back loops of Round 14. The front loops are used by the tentacle anchors in Round 15 and the back loops are used by Round 16, so it is easy to lose track of which loop is which. A scrap of contrasting yarn woven through the back loops before Round 15 saves a lot of counting.
- Keep the eyes level. Before you press the washers on, look at the face from the front and check both eyes sit at the same height, 3 stitches apart.
- Keep your tentacle tension even. Count the chain of 15 carefully for each tentacle and work the same stitches in the same order, so all eight curls match.

VARIATIONS

- Lilac octopus: work the body in lilac bulky yarn instead of Sugar Pink and keep everything else the same. The designer's second sample is lilac, and it looks just as lovely on a nursery shelf.
- A smaller octopus: use a smooth worsted weight (4) acrylic yarn with a 3.5 mm hook and follow the same rounds. The toy will come out a little smaller, so use 16 mm safety eyes to match.
- A gift set: make two or three octopuses in different colours and sit them together on a shelf. They work up in an evening each, so a small family of octopuses is a comfortable project for a gift or a craft fair table.

Pattern adapted from the free pattern by The Loopy Lamb: Easy No Sew Amigurumi Octopus, Ozzy the Octopus,
https://theloopylamb.com/easy-no-sew-amigurumi-octopus-free-crochet-pattern/

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