CROCHET SNAIL: NO-SEW MINI SNAIL WITH A FLOWER

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Free printable pattern

FINISHED SIZE

About 8 cm (about 3 inches) long and about 5 cm (about 2 inches) tall, using worsted-weight (#4) yarn and a 3.5 mm hook. Sizes are approximate and will vary a little with your yarn and tension.

SKILL LEVEL

Beginner. You need a magic ring, single crochet, increases, decreases, chain stitches and slip stitches. Everything else is explained below.

TIME

About 45 minutes to 1 hour once you know the stitches, a little longer the first time.

MATERIALS

- Worsted-weight (#4) yarn in cream, about 20 g: body and antennae
- Worsted-weight (#4) yarn in sage green, about 15 g: shell
- Worsted-weight (#4) yarn in pink, a small amount: flower petals
- Worsted-weight (#4) yarn in yellow, a small amount: flower centre
- Worsted-weight (#4) yarn in black, a small amount: smile and antenna tips
- 3.5 mm crochet hook
- 6 mm black safety eyes, 1 pair
- Polyester stuffing, a small amount
- Yarn needle
- Stitch marker
- Scissors

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). sl st: slip stitch. st(s): stitch(es). Rnd: round.

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. No gauge is given for this pattern.

BODY (cream)

Work in continuous rounds, starting at the nose and working back toward the tail.

Rnd 1: 6 sc in MR (6)

Rnd 2: inc in each st around (12)

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

Rnd 4: [2 sc, inc] x 6 (24)

Rnd 5-8: sc in each st around (24), 4 rounds

Rnd 9: [2 sc, dec] x 6 (18)

Rnd 10-13: sc in each st around (18), 4 rounds

Rnd 14: [sc, dec] x 6 (12)

Rnd 15: sc in each st around (12)

Rnd 16: dec x 6 (6). Fasten off and close the tail by weaving the tail through the front loops of the last 6 stitches and pulling gently.

Insert the safety eyes between Rnd 4 and Rnd 5, about 6 stitches apart, before you stuff the body. Push the eyes through the stitches from the outside, then press the washers on firmly from the inside. Stuff the body firmly as you go, adding the stuffing a little at a time so the shape stays smooth. The head end (Rnds 1-8) should feel round and full; the tail end (Rnds 14-16) tapers to a soft point.

SHELL (sage green)

Work in continuous rounds. The shell starts as a flat spiral disc and cups into a shallow dome in Rnd 7. Do not fasten off after Rnd 7. Rnd 8 is the joining round, worked in the assembly step below.

Rnd 1: 6 sc in MR (6)

Rnd 2: inc in each st around (12)

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

Rnd 4: [2 sc, inc] x 6 (24)

Rnd 5: [3 sc, inc] x 6 (30)

Rnd 6: sc in each st around (30)

Rnd 7: [3 sc, dec] x 6 (24)

Rnd 8 (joining round): sc in each st around (24), worked through the body as described in Assembly step 3 below.

The spiral on the side of the shell comes from the rounds themselves: because the disc is worked in a continuous spiral, the rounds form a visible coil. Keep your tension even so the spiral stays neat and the dome holds its shape.

FLOWER (surface crochet on the shell, pink and yellow)

The flower is not a separate piece. It is worked directly on top of the shell, so there is nothing to sew on.

Petals (pink): Join the pink yarn with a sl st in the centre stitch on top of the shell (the centre of shell Rnd 1). *Ch 3, sl st in the next stitch out from the centre*, repeat from * to * 5 times, so you have 5 small chain loops fanning out from the centre. Then, in each ch-3 loop, work [sc, hdc, 2 dc, hdc, sc] (6 stitches per petal, 30 stitches in total). Sl st to the first petal, fasten off, and weave the end into the shell.

Centre (yellow): Join the yellow yarn with a sl st in the same centre stitch on top of the shell. Ch 1, work 5 sc into that centre stitch, sl st to the first sc, fasten off, and weave the end into the shell. The yellow centre sits in the middle of the five pink petals.

ANTENNAE (cream, worked directly into the head, make 2)

Join the cream yarn with a sl st in a stitch on top of the head, between Rnd 2 and Rnd 3. Ch 5, sl st in the 2nd ch from the hook and in each of the next 3 ch (4 sl st), then sl st back into the same head stitch. Fasten off and weave the end inside the head. Repeat in a stitch 2 stitches to the side for the second antenna, so the two antennae sit 2 stitches apart on top of the head. If you like, embroider a tiny black dot at the tip of each antenna with black yarn.

ASSEMBLY

No pieces are sewn together in this pattern. The shell is joined with crochet stitches, the flower and the antennae are crocheted directly onto the snail, and the eyes are safety eyes pushed through the stitches. The only needlework is weaving in yarn ends and the optional embroidered smile, which is surface stitching on the face, not a seam holding two pieces together.

1. Place the eyes. Insert the 6 mm safety eyes between Rnd 4 and Rnd 5 of the body, about 6 stitches apart, before you stuff the body. Check from the front that they sit level: the nose (Rnd 1) should be centred below and between them. Press the washers on firmly from the inside.

2. Stuff the body. Stuff the body firmly in small pieces, pushing the stuffing into the sides so the shape stays smooth. Stuff the head end a little more firmly than the tail so the face stays round. Close the tail after Rnd 16 as described above.

3. Join the shell. Place the shell dome on top of the body, centred over about Rnds 7-12, with the flat opening facing down onto the body. Stuff the shell very lightly first, just enough to hold the dome shape. Then work shell Rnd 8: for each of the 24 stitches, insert your hook through the next shell stitch and then through the nearest stitch on the top of the body, and work a sc through both layers. Work all the way around (24 stitches). The shell is now joined to the body with crochet stitches. Fasten off and weave the end inside the body.

4. Work the flower. Following the flower instructions above, work the five pink petals and the yellow centre directly on top of the shell, centred on the shell's middle stitch.

5. Work the antennae. Following the antennae instructions above, work two antennae on top of the head, 2 stitches apart, between Rnd 2 and Rnd 3.

6. Embroider the smile. With black yarn and a yarn needle, embroider a small curved smile 2 rounds below the eyes, centred between them, using 3 or 4 small stitches. Keep it small: a short curve suits the face better than a wide one.

7. Finish. Weave in all loose ends with the yarn needle, hiding them inside the body or the shell so they do not show. Hold the snail up and check the shell sits straight and the flower is centred on top.

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 a snail a small child will play with, embroider the eyes with black yarn instead: stitch two small vertical ovals in the same position, between Rnd 4 and Rnd 5, about 6 stitches apart. Check every part is secure before giving the snail to a child, and do not add beads or buttons, which can also come loose.

TIPS FOR A NEAT SNAIL

- Count at the end of the increase rounds. The body and shell both grow by 6 stitches on every increase round. If your count is off by 6, 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.
- Keep the shell centred. Before you work the joining round, set the shell on the body and look at the snail from the side. The shell should sit over the middle of the body with the head sticking out at the front and a short tail showing at the back.
- Join the shell evenly. Work one joining stitch at a time and pick up the nearest body stitch each time.
- Work the flower loosely. The chain loops for the petals should lie flat on the shell. If you pull them tight, the petals will pucker and the flower will sit crooked. Work the petal stitches loosely and shape each petal with your fingers when you finish.

VARIATIONS

- Terracotta shell: work the shell in terracotta instead of sage green and keep everything else the same. A yellow flower suits a terracotta shell, or try a white flower with a yellow centre.
- A bigger snail: use chunky yarn and a 5 mm hook and follow the same rounds. The snail will come out about 12 cm long. Use 8 mm safety eyes to match.
- A smaller snail: use DK yarn and a 3 mm hook. The snail will come out about 6 cm long. Use 5 mm safety eyes.
- A garden set: make two or three snails in different shell colours and sit them together on a shelf. They take about an hour each, so a set is a comfortable weekend project.
- Keychain snail: attach a keyring through a stitch at the top of the shell, beside the flower, and the snail becomes a bag charm.

Pattern adapted from the free pattern by Moee-Chan: Free Snail Amigurumi Pattern, No-Sew Mini Snail With a Flower, https://www.moee-chan.com/free-snail-amigurumi-pattern/

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