

## **4-H CROCHETING GUIDELINES**

Following are suggestions and helpful guidelines for the crocheting project. They are not hard and fast rules, but rather some guidelines for providing learning experiences in crocheting.

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ALL MEMBERS**

- \* Clean hands and clean hooks must be constantly stressed.
- \* Learn how to combine hooks, yarn, thread, stitches and gauge.
- \* Learn how to select all materials needed and a pattern.
- \* At the county style revue and fair, the crocheter enters according to his/her age (Young 9-11 yrs.; Junior 12-14; Senior 15-19 yrs. old - age as of December 31 of the current project year.) From the judging sheets or during the judging, the judges will receive information on the age of the 4-H'er and number of years in the project. It should be assumed the project or 4-H'er will be considered on this individual basis. Only wearing apparel can be exhibited at the style revue, but non-wearing apparel crocheting project can be exhibited at the fair. Wash article early enough to allow for ample drying time. Do not exhibit damp article. No machine made articles.

### **EXPERIENCE GUIDELINES**

Listed below are guidelines for techniques that could be learned at the various levels of experience. It doesn't mean that the 4-H'er has to learn all of the techniques during that time period since it depends on the individual and how much they can handle. Each 4-H'er should have a new learning experience with each project. It is important not to let the 4-H'er get overwhelmed with their project. Crocheting skills, techniques or methods should be taught and advanced from year to year.

The new 4-H'er who has no crocheting experience will need to start at the beginning level and learn the basics, in order to build on those skills. Perhaps the older 4-H'er who has good coordination could combine more than one year into his/her project, or complete two stages in one year. This should be a determination to be made between the 4-H'er, leader and parent.

### **FIRST & SECOND YEAR**

Simplicity should be stressed in the first year of project. The member should have a good understanding of the basics.

Learn how to hold the hook so yarn can flow smoothly in order to make stitches of uniform size and tension.

Learn how to hold yarn and/or thread correctly.

Learn how to make a slip knot.

Learn how to do the chain stitch.

Learn the basic stitches - single crochet, double crochet & triple crochet.  
Learn the slipstitch.  
Learn how to increase and decrease.  
Make a sample circle and square for practice.  
Learn how to read crochet abbreviations and follow directions.  
Learn correct gauge.  
Learn how to turn work.  
Learn how to sew seams.

Some ideas for First Year project are: scarf, beret or hat.

Some ideas for Second Year project are vest, shell or shrink.

### **THIRD & FOURTH YEAR:**

Learn how to do double triple (treble) crochet and half-double crochet.  
Learn popular stitches - simple shell stitch, puff stitch, cluster stitch and mesh crochet.  
New skills should be learned each year.

Some ideas for projects are: sweaters or blouses.

### **FIFTH YEAR & ADVANCED**

Learn how to change colors.  
Learn how to do more complicated patterns.  
Learn how to use different hook sizes and yarns.  
Learn how to use more than one pattern in a project.

Some ideas for projects are: dresses, sweaters, coats or capes.

New skills should be learned each year.

### **GENERAL SUGGESTIONS FROM FAIR JUDGES:**

- \* When finishing off last of a round item, the row should be tapered by gradually reducing the size of stitches and finishing with at least two slip stitches.
- \* Seams can be back-stitched or crocheted or woven together.
- \* Granny squares should be woven together rather than overcast.
- \* A left-handed child can be taught to crochet more easily if the teacher sits opposite the child rather than beside the child.
- \* If child crochets too tightly or too loosely, use different size hook than pattern calls for, until correct gauge is obtained.
- \* The first appearance of the garment is important. (How the garment looks)
- \* Inside should look as neat as the outside.
- \* No knots showing. If there is a knot in the yarn, it should be cut off and worked in at the end of a row, or worked in the following manner: In a single crochet stitch when two loops of yard are left on hook, drop old yarn tail, pick up new yarn and pull through last two remaining loops. Be sure to leave long enough tails to thread up on a big needle and weave them into pattern.

- \* Tail ends must be woven in. They can be kept from popping out when item is stretched, if they are woven first in one direction for an inch or two, and then woven back in the opposite direction for about an inch. Be careful to let the pattern keep its stretch when using this method.
- \* Seams should be sewn together neatly and not too bulky or puckered.
- \* Stitches should be of uniform size and tension.
- \* More difficult patterns as crocheter gets older.
- \* Blocking: Crocheting doesn't always have to be blocked. However, if the pattern calls for it, do not iron too heavily. Over-blocking ruins the appearance and flattens the pattern.
- \* If garment has to be washed, be sure it is dry before bringing it to be judged. It will be marked down if it is still damp.
- \* Practice squares of the different stitches are helpful and they may be put in a scrapbook, but they will not be judged an exhibit.