

# PROJECTARIAN'S AMIGURUMI PRO TIPS



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## HOW TO DO A MAGIC RING

The magic ring is the tidiest way to begin your first row of an amigurumi piece, with no unsightly knots or bumps. Remember to weave in the loose end after a few rows, to keep the magic ring securely closed. To weave in the end, use a tapestry needle and sew the loose end through all the stitches in row 1. Then, working in the opposite direction around the ring, sew through a couple of stitches to lock it in place.

**Step 1:** Make a loop with your yarn.



**Step 2:** Insert your hook into the loop and draw up a loop (from the working yarn, not from the tail end).



**Step 3:** Chain 1. Pull this chain tight on your hook. Having a loose chain here will produce a noticeable bump in your first row.



**Step 4:** You are now all set to start crocheting. Work all stitches for the first row into the ring.



**Step 5:** When the row is complete, pull the tail end so that the ring closes tightly. You can now join the row with a slip stitch, then proceed to row 2, or continue working in the round.



## HOW TO WORK IN THE ROUND

Working in the round is sometimes also called “working in a spiral”.

Every time you finish a row by joining with a slip stitch, it produces a noticeable seam in your workpiece. Working in the round eliminates this seam, and any trace of where your rows begin and end.

**Step 1:** Complete row 1. Do not join with a slip stitch. Work the first stitch of row 2 directly into the first stitch of row 1. Simply insert your hook into the first stitch and work a single crochet into it.



**Step 2:** Complete row 2. Begin row 3 in the same manner, starting in the first stitch of row 2. Repeat for every row.





## HOW TO USE A RUNNING STITCH MARKER

When you work in the round, it's very easy to lose track of your rows and stitches, especially if you get interrupted.

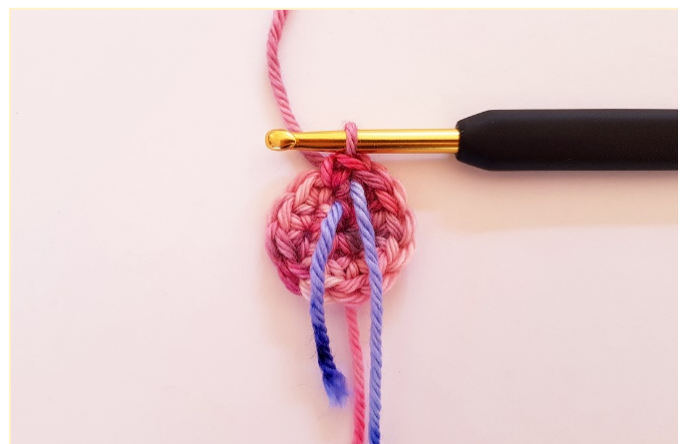
Stitch markers can help, and a running stitch marker is the best method for many reasons:

- you don't have to unclip and move your stitch marker (or use a new one) every time you start a new row
- it will mark the beginning of every row, not just the row you're currently on, so if you need to undo a few rows, it will keep track of where you are
- it's easy to remove when you're done
- it's basically free, and can't really get lost

**Step 1:** At the end of row 1, before joining the row, lay a thread of contrasting colour between the first and last stitch, then proceed with row 2.



**Step 2:** After the last stitch of row 2, flip the thread over to the front of your workpiece. Proceed with row 3.



**Step 3:** After the last stitch of row 3, flip the thread so it falls to the back of your workpiece. Proceed with row 4. Keep alternating in this manner at the end of every row. The thread now marks the beginning of every row. The last stitch of the previous row lies to the right of the marker, and the first stitch of the next row lies to the left of the marker.





**Step 4:** When your workpiece is complete, simply pull the marker thread out.

## HOW TO CHANGE COLOUR

This method produces the tidiest colour change and secures loose ends at the same time. A colour change usually happens at the end of a row. This example uses pink, changing to blue.

**Step 1:** Begin your colour change on the stitch before the one where the new colour should show. Start a single crochet like normal: Insert your hook into the next stitch, and draw up a loop.



**Step 2:** Drop the pink yarn from your hand and pick up the blue. Draw a loop of blue through both loops on your hook to complete the stitch. Tug the pink gently to keep your tension uniform. You now have blue yarn on your hook.



**Step 3:** Continue working with blue yarn. Tug the loose end of the blue gently after your first blue stitch, to keep your tension uniform. To secure the loose ends, work over them for a few stitches.



**Extra tip:** If you're changing colours in quick succession, work over the pink yarn to carry it along until it's time to change to pink again. That way, the pink will be right at the tip of your hook when you want to change colour. Conversely, if you're changing colours at the beginning of each alternate row, then only work 1 stitch over the pink to secure it in place. Finish the row with blue, and when you arrive at the end of the row, the pink will be at the tip of your hook, ready to start the next row in pink.



## HOW TO DO AN INVISIBLE DECREASE

A regular decrease produces unsightly holes that can ruin the look of your amigurumi project that you put so much hard work into. The invisible decrease is easy to do, and almost impossible to distinguish from a normal single crochet. This example is illustrated with contrasting colours for extra clarity.

**Step 1:** Working into the 2 stitches to be decreased, insert your hook into the front loop of the first stitch, and the front loop of the stitch next to it.



**Step 2:** Yarn over, draw through 2 loops on your hook. Yarn over, draw through the remaining 2 loops on your hook. Decrease complete.



## BLO (BACK LOOP ONLY)

Note that each stitch consists of 2 loops when viewed from the top. Now look at it from the side; the loop closest to you is the front loop, the loop behind it is the back loop. Insert your hook into the back loop and make a single crochet.



Working a row of BLO will create a ridge in that row.



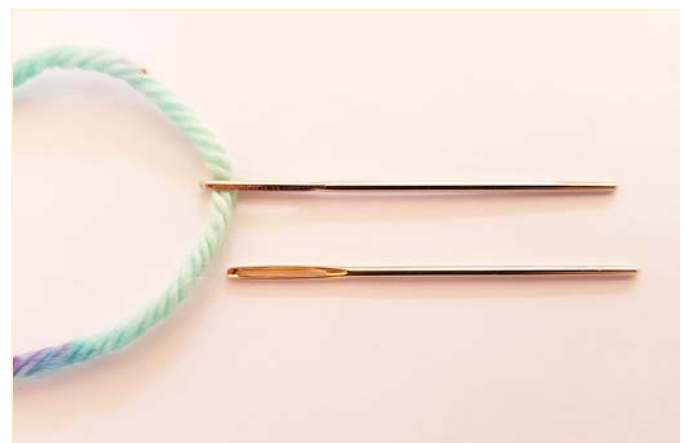
## HOW LONG TO CUT A THREAD FOR SEWING

Run a thread closely around the edge of the piece to be sewn. Cut a length 2.5 times this for sewing comfortably. In other words, the length of sewing thread should be able to go around the edge of the piece 2 and a half times.



## WHAT KIND OF NEEDLE TO USE

Use a metal yarn sewing needle with a round tip. Plastic tapestry needles are often not strong enough. A round tip will enable you to sew into stitches easily without splitting the fibres of the yarn, making it look almost like the pieces are crocheted together. The eye of the needle should be big enough to thread without great difficulty.





## WHIP STITCH: SEWING FLAT PIECES

In this example, a flat eye (piece A) is sewn onto a workpiece (piece B) in such a way that the stitches are not obviously visible, and the eye doesn't get distorted. (Pictured: un-sewn pieces)



**Step 1:** If piece B is stuffed, pin piece A in place first. Insert your needle through both loops of a stitch on piece A, and into a stitch directly beneath it on piece B (a stitch that is hidden by piece A when piece A is laid flat). Pull the thread tight, but not so tight as to deform either piece, simply to join them securely.



**Step 2:** Insert your needle into the next stitch on piece A and carry on sewing all the way around. This will produce a smooth join with no obvious sewing stitches. When you get to the end, tie a single knot and weave the end into the stitches on piece A to secure it. Make sure to change direction when weaving your ends in, to lock them in place. Trim off the excess.



## WHIP STITCH: SEWING 3D PIECES

Sometimes - like in the case of sewing an animal's leg to its body - you want to "blend" the pieces together so that there's no obvious line of sewing joining them. It is paramount to use a round-tipped needle to achieve a tidy, inconspicuous join.

In this example, we're joining a pink shape (piece A) to a green shape (piece B). (Pictured: un-sewn pieces)



**Step 1:** Pinning is very important. Stretch piece A as you pin it to piece B. To do this, insert the tip of a pin into a stitch on piece A, pull the stitch outwards, then stab the pin into piece B. Insert pins at an angle to hold piece A securely in place.



**Step 2:** (Sewn with white for clarity).

Insert your needle into a stitch near the edge of piece A, and then into a stitch next to piece A, on piece B. Do not work into the stitches directly beneath piece A, but rather, go across and pick up a stitch adjacent to piece A. Pull the thread tight (just tight enough to bring the two pieces together). This will result in the two pieces being stretched towards each other, producing an inconspicuous join.

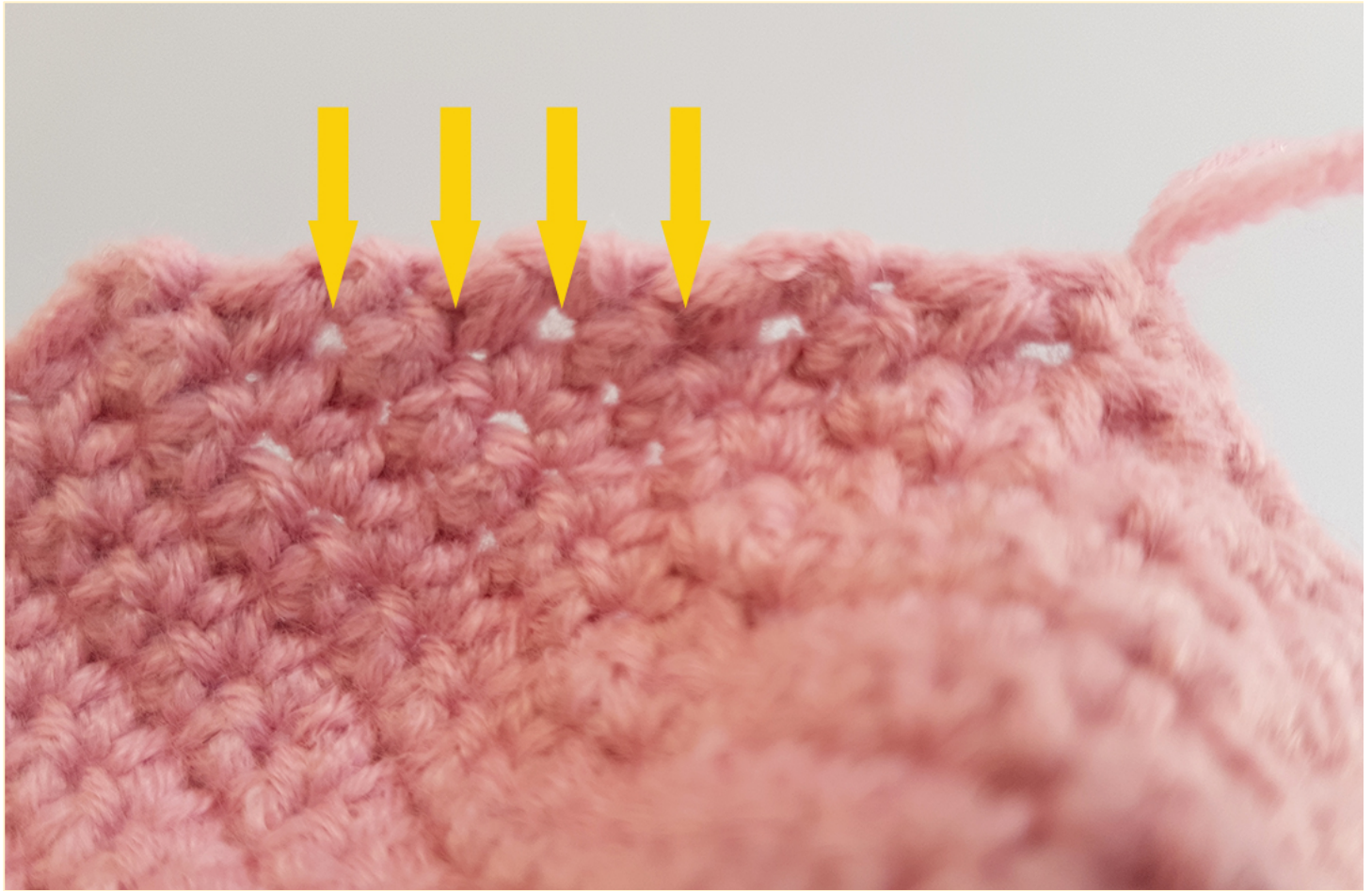




## WORKING INTO THE SIDES OF THE ROWS

Work into the sides of the stitches, along the edge of your workpiece, placing your stitches in the space between each row.

If you stretch your workpiece, the little holes will be more visible.



Example illustrated in contrasting colours



Example of different types of stitches worked into the sides of the rows





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As always – a special thank you to our test team