Cat-Cube Amigurumi

By Brenda K. B. Anderson

This super simple amigurumi project is perfect for those who are learning to crochet but will also be loved by anyone looking for a project to make them smile!

Finished Measurements

Cat-Cube's measurements vary; they depend on the yarn weight and gauge of the pieces made. Samples shown measure between 3-4" [7.5-10cm].

Materials

- About 80-110 yds [73-101m] of yarn. You can choose any yarn you like for this project. For the white Cat-Cube, I used a yarn that is exceptional for beginners learning how to crochet. It is smooth and easy to see your stitches, doesn't snag or split, and is a good thickness. I used the white yarn in this 3-pack here. The grey sample uses a chenille yarn, which makes very cuddle-y plushies, but can be a bit tricky to work with. I would NOT recommend this yarn to someone learning to crochet.
- Approximately 1 yd [1m] of a smooth dark brown or black yarn or embroidery floss for nose/whiskers embroidery
- Hook appropriate for the yarn weight chosen. Try using an F/5 [3.75mm] hook for worsted weight, G/6 [4.00mm] or H/8 [5.00mm] for heavy worsted or chunky, I/9 [5.5mm] for super bulky. US I/9 [5.5mm] crochet hook or size needed to obtain a firm gauge
- 8 Locking stitch markers
- Yarn Needle
- Embroidery needle (if using embroidery floss for the features)
- A few handfuls of polyester fiberfill for stuffing
- One pair of black safety eyes in desired size. I used 10mm in the Grey Cat, and 8mm in the White version

Abbreviations

Ch = chain
SC = single crochet
St(s) = stitch(es)
YO = yarn over

Yarn Used for Grey Cat-Cube Sample Shown

Premier Parfait Chunky (super bulky weight, 100% Polyester; 131 yards [120m]/ 3.5 oz [100 grams]: Cloudy Day #1150-50; 1 partial skein.

Yarn Used for White Cat-Cube Sample Shown

Joytag, Yarn for Beginner (heavy worsted weight, 68% cotton, 32% nylon; 87.5 yards [80m], 50g [1.75oz]: White, 1 skein was used with only a few yds leftover.
I used the white yarn in this 3-pack here.

The gold and pink Cat cubes were made by my kids from un-labeled, leftover, acrylic, worsted weight yarn (probably Red Heart Super Saver).

Gauge

Gauge is not important for this project; it is more important to achieve a dense fabric that will not show holes between your stitches. If you see holes between your stitches, go down one or more hook sizes to achieve a tighter gauge.

Notes

This Cat-Cube is made from two rectangles and two small squares. Each piece is worked in turned rows, and turning chains do not count as a stitch. This means that just before working the next row, you will make a chain stitch, and that this chain stitch is not taking the place of the first stitch of the row. You will never work into the turning chains in this pattern.

Use locking stitch markers or safety pins to note the first and last stitches of each row to help you maintain your stitch count.

If you need extra help understanding how to read a crochet pattern, please watch this video:

Stitches used

Single Crochet (SC): Insert hook into indicated stitch, YO and pull up loop, YO and pull through 2 loops.

Instructions

Body/Rectangles (make 2):

Chain about 11 stitches. This will be about the width of your Cat-Cube. Would you like a bigger Cat-Cube? Add more chains. Would you like a smaller project? Unravel a couple stitches. Remember – adding more chains to make a wider Cat-Cube means you may need extra yarn to complete your project.

Row 1: Beginning with the second chain from the hook, SC into each stitch across. Your stitch count will be one less than the number of chains you started with. If you chained 11, then your stitch count is 10 stitches. "Stitch count" means the number of stitches across the row you just worked. When we crochet, we keep track of this number to make sure we aren't adding or subtracting stitches accidentally.

Rows 2: Chain 1, turn your work like turning a page in a book, SC into each stitch across.

Repeat Row 2 for 32 more rows, or until your rectangle measure 3 times as long as the width of the rectangle. For example, if your piece measures 2.5" [6.5cm] wide, then you would continue adding rows until the rectangle measure 2.5 x 3 = 7.5" [19cm] long.
Fasten off leaving long tail for sewing.
Repeat this process for a second rectangle that is the same size.

Ears/Squares (make 2):

What was your stitch count from the rectangles? Take your stitch count, then divide it in half and add 1. This is the number of chains that you should start with to begin the ear. For example, if your stitch count was 10, you would divide that number by 2 and then add 1. OR (10÷2) +1 = 5 +1 = 6. You would start with 6 chains.

Row 1: Beginning with the second chain from the hook, SC into each stitch across. Your stitch count will be one less than the number of chains you started with. If you chained 6, then your stitch count for the ear is 5 stitches.

Rows 2: Chain 1, turn your work like turning a page in a book, SC into each stitch across.
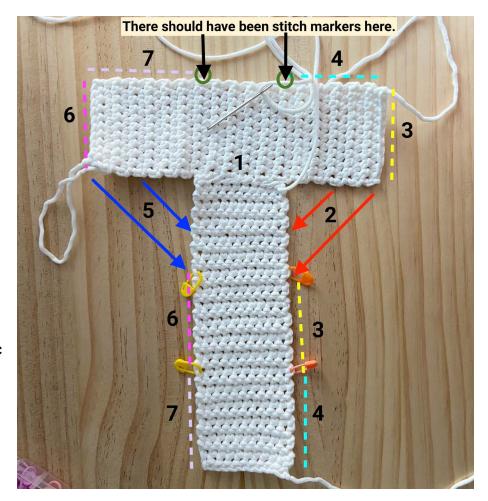
Repeat Row 2 until your piece is as long as it is wide (likely the same number of rows as the stitch count).

Fasten off leaving long tail for sewing.

Assembling the Cat-Cube

Use stitch markers to divide each of the long sides of the rectangles into 3 equal sections. Arrange the rectangles in a "T" shape. Using yarn tail and yarn needle, sew short side to center of long side of second rectangle as shown. Use a whip-stitch or seam of choice.

Using the Schematic as a reference, continue seaming the edges together, following the numbered order in the photo. Leave the last seam (the un-labeled seam) open. Turn work inside out. The side that is now on the outside is the right side (public side). Pick the side that you like best to be the face, and place the safety eyes through the fabric. These can be placed wherever you like, different placements will affect the look and personality of your Cat Cube. When you are happy with placement, add the backings to lock in place. Stuff cube full of fiberfill, sculpting the shape with your hands as the fiberfill is added. Sew last seam between pieces. Weave in ends.

There should have been stitch markers here.

Ear Assembly

Fold one of the small squares in half, diagonally to create a triangular piece. Use a yarn tail to whip stitch the edges together - all along the open sides of the triangle. Curve the bottom of the ear (the folded edge) into a "c" shape and use a stitch marker to " pin it" to the top of the cube. Ears should sit side by side, near the front of the Top side of cube.

Repeat for remaining ear. Using yarn tails and yarn needle, sew bottom edge of ear to top of Cube.

Embroidery

Use Smooth black or dark brown yarn to embroider the nose: make a loose horizontal stitch between the eyes, then make a small vertical stitch from the center of the first stitch, downward. This will bring the loose stitch into a "v" shape. You can also add an upside "V" at the bottom of the horizontal line for a grumpy mouth if desired (the grey Cat-Cube has this detail). Make a couple horizontal lines, on each side of face for whiskers.

Weave in all ends.

10 Tips for Teaching Kids to Crochet

1. Keep in mind, above everything else, that this is supposed to be fun! If your kid wants to learn to crochet but loses interest quickly, turn up the fun level! Play their favorite music, make sure they have a snack (because hungry people aren't known for their patience), and give them plenty of inspiration! Show them pictures of what you can create with crochet. And if they get frustrated, don't push the subject—take a break, or try again after some time has passed.

2. Use a large hook and thick yarn. Make sure that the yarn is smooth and a solid color (or it has slow color changes) so it is easy to see your stitches. Acrylic or wool are great choices for a beginner, as well as this type of "tube" [structured yarn, specifically made for beginners](#). It's great if you let your kid pick out the color they will be using!

3. Consider teaching your kid how to "finger crochet" first, especially for those who are a bit younger. It can be tricky to hold the hook and the yarn and manipulate the stitches at the same time.

4. Begin with an easy, very small project. It's important to feel a sense of accomplishment! This could be a crochet chain bracelet, a tiny single crochet dishcloth, or a granny square. I developed the "Cat Cube" pattern specifically for the purpose of getting kids excited about crochet! It's made from 2 rectangles and 2 squares, so it's very manageable for a first project. Plus, what kid doesn't want to make themselves a toy?

5. Choose a project where the gauge doesn't matter at all. The concept of gauge and why it matters will make more sense later, after they learn how to create the fabric.

6. When you demonstrate how to crochet, have your kid sit as close to you as possible so that they can see from the same angle as they would if using their own hands. If it's comfortable for everyone involved, have your kid sit in your lap and reach your arms around in front of them when you demonstrate the stitches. Later, as they are beginning to make the stitches themselves, you can hold the yarn for them with the proper amount of tension, if they are having trouble.

7. Try to be receptive to how much patience your kid has. Maybe the goal is just to learn how to make a chain. And that's it for now. They can chain and chain and chain, and get really good at that before moving on to learning how to single crochet. And that's great! If your kid is very project-oriented and is very excited to begin making things (and is getting very frustrated while trying to work across that foundation chain), it's okay to help them across that first row or two, just until it is big enough to hold onto! Then they can take over from there. It's important to be flexible when teaching a child something that requires both a lot of coordination, and know-how.

8. Don't point out the flaws, even if you are just trying to help them learn. Remember, when your kid is just learning the basics, it doesn't matter if it looks wonky or messy, it's about making something with your hands and being creative! Instead, say something like, "When I have trouble with my yarn getting too tight, I always try and make this loop a bit taller when I pull it through, and that seems to help me." Focus on helpful tips to make things easier rather than pointing out how things could look better.

9. Make sure you tell them what a great job they are doing! Even if it seems like a bit of a disaster to you, you can still say something like, "Wow! Aunt so-and-so is going to be so impressed that you are learning how to do this! A lot of adults don't even know how to crochet!" Kids just love being better at things than adults! Take pictures of your kid with the result of their new skill and share with loved ones! They will get so much praise and encouragement that it will fuel their love for learning more about this new skill!

10. Just like crocheting itself, there is no "right way" to teach someone to crochet. Sometimes you will have to try out some different methods to see what works best for each kid. Your kid may not be able to hold the hook in the same way you do or hold the yarn in the same way, but with a little trial and error, you will be able to help them figure it out!

My Notes

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