

Crochet a Sweater without a pattern

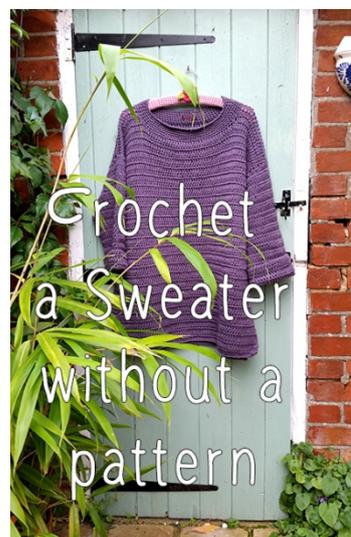
Making garments using basic squares and rectangles is how we first clothed ourselves, and crochet is particularly suited to being a bit experimental. With knitting, you have everything bunched up on the needles and have to wait till casting off to see exactly what is going on. With crochet however, you can stop at anytime to make decisions and adjustments.

I've made little garments for little people this way before, but this is the first time I've made something my size, and it worked well. (I'm wearing my sweater as I type!)

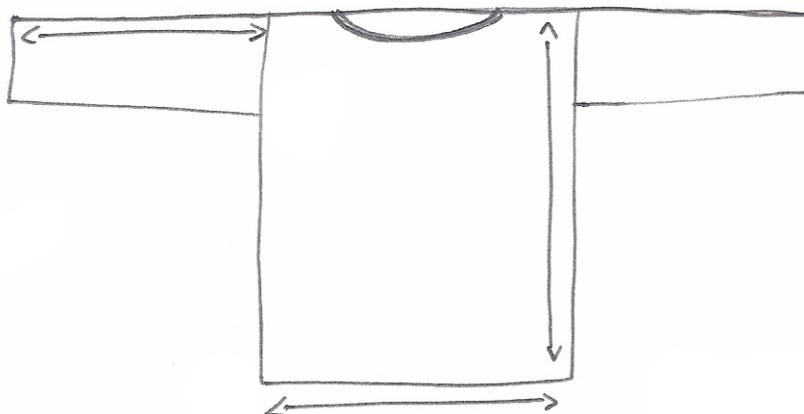
So this isn't a pattern, it's a crib sheet. I hope it sets you off experimenting with different yarns, and shapes and sizes. This particular sweater was made using Aran weight yarn, a 5.5mm hook using a treble crochet stitch (US double crochet) but as long as you stick to the basic rules with your tension square and some basic arithmetic you could use any yarn, any stitch for any size.

Be prepared to buy enough yarn to finish the project. I admit you have to guess, my version took 16 and a half balls. It all depends on the yarn. Be on the generous side and you can always make a matching hat!

It all hangs on the tension: match the yarn to the hook, choose your stitch and work a tension sample, not too small, about 30 stitches (*I know, I hate tension squares too but it must be done!*) The most important measurement is the width – the length is decided by the number of rows worked. From this you can see how many stitches there are per inch/cm.



Draw a plan. The garment is based on rectangles so draw a simple design as shown:-



Take some measurements: The simplest way is to use a garment you feel comfortable in around the hip and shoulders, lay it flat and measure this across its widest part; this will give you the width of the garment. *Don't forget, it's meant to be loose, casual and slouchy!* Write this on your plan.

Do a sum!: For example...If your sample shows you have 12 stitches per 4"/10cm and your required width is 24"/61cm then $24 \div 4 = 6$ and $6 \times 12\text{st} = 72\text{st}$.

Back: Make a chain of your number of stitches plus 2. Miss 2 ch and work in treble crochet (US double crochet) to end, turn.

Starting with 2ch on each row and working the last st into the top of the 2 ch continue to crochet until the back is your desire length. Fasten off.

Front: Work as back until 4 rows short. Work 22 tr, turn and work the last 3 rows on these stitches, decreasing at the neck edge twice. Rejoin the yarn on the other side and repeat. Fasten off.

Stitch together the front and back at the shoulders and slip over your head. *Ignore the comments about Clint Eastwood.*

Decide how deep you would like the armholes to be and mark with a pin. Remove the sweater, then stitch together from the armhole to the bottom edge, leaving a slit of a few rows if you like.

Sleeves: With right sides facing and starting at the under arm with 2ch, crochet round the armhole as before and join with a slip stitch. (with treble crochet it works out about 2 stitches in the side of each stitch) Turn for next and subsequent rows as this forms the texture to match the body of the sweater (working in rounds looks very different) Keep on working until the sleeve is the desired length (just keep trying it on till you are happy with it) work a bit more if you like a turn back cuff. If your armhole is quite deep as mine was, work a couple of decreases in alternate rows at the start just to narrow the sleeve slightly.

Then make the other sleeve just the same way.

Neck: Pick up and crochet a couple of rows round the neck edge and try on. You might like it wide and slouchy in which case 2 rows may be enough. I went for 6 rows and then finished with Crab Stitch. This is double crochet (US sc) worked from left to right rather than right to left. It's a little awkward to start with but not difficult. It's one of my favourite edging stitches. There's a useful You Tube video here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wE-ObvYb_Pk



I hope you enjoy being a bit experimental with your crochet...Have fun...!