

How-to Information

Easy Tunisian crochet picture afghans are made using primarily Tunisian Simple Stitch. This is sometimes called "Afghan stitch" because it is the basic foundation stitch for Afghan, or Tunisian, crochet. If this stitch, or Tunisian, crochet in general, is new to you, I recommend crocheting a practice piece to become familiar with the stitch. While making picture afghans is not difficult, the technique is best suited to crocheters already familiar with this basic stitch.

While it is certainly possible and desirable to add various textured stitch variations to picture afghans, for the purposes of this book, all projects are worked with Tunisian Simple Stitch. This is by far the simplest and most popular method of making afghans from graphs. For your practice square, using the size M Easy Tunisian hook and medium (worsted) weight yarn, begin with about 20 chains and work about 20 rows, then bind off. You can also measure your gauge from this square.



Tunisian Simple Stitch (TSS)

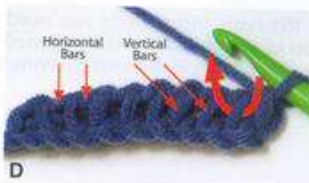
Row 1: Ch number indicated in pattern, insert hook in second ch from hook (see illustration A), yo, pull up lp, [insert hook in next ch, yo, pull up lp] across leaving all lps on hook. **Do not turn.**



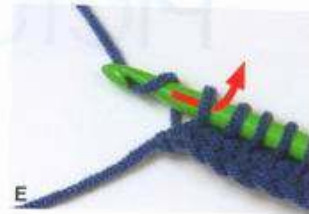
To complete row, work lps off hook as follows: yo, pull through one lp on hook (see illustration B), [yo, pull through 2 lps on hook] across until one lp rem on hook (see illustration C).



Row 2: Sk first vertical bar, insert hook under next vertical bar (see illustration D), yo, pull up lp, [insert hook under next vertical bar, yo, pull up lp] across. **Do not turn.**



To complete row, work lps off as follows: yo, pull through one lp on hook (see illustration E), [yo, pull through 2 lps on hook] across until one lp rem on hook.



Rep row 2 for pattern.

For last row, sk first vertical bar, [insert hook under next vertical bar, yo, pull through 2 lps on hook] across. Fasten off.

TIPS FOR BEAUTIFUL EASY TUNISIAN STITCHING

Beginning & Ending

Beginning chain, last row and borders are worked with hook one size smaller than hook used for remainder of design. If these important edge stitches are worked with the larger size hook, edges are often loose and rippled. Using the smaller hook allows you to achieve straight, square Easy Tunisian edges.

Taming the Curl

Tunisian stitch pieces tend to curl, but there are several things you can do to lessen the curl. When working first row, pick up loops by inserting hook through the **back bar** of each beginning chain (see illustration F).



To further counteract the curl, before assembling afghan parts or parts of a sweater, steam lightly. Lay piece on towel or other padded surface and steam by holding iron near stitches and allowing steam to penetrate. Do not allow iron to touch stitches. Flatten and smooth with fingers if needed. Allow piece to dry in this position. Curling is also lessened by working one or two rows of Tunisian Purl Stitch before beginning rows of Tunisian Simple Stitch. Adding a border is also effective.

Right Edge

If the stitches along right edge are too loose as you work; use this method to make a flawless, firm right edge.

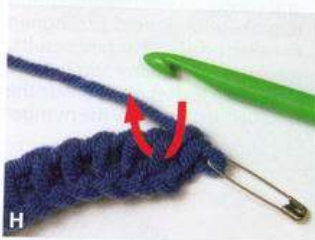
A. For rows of Tunisian Simple Stitch, purl stitch knit stitch and other similar stitches:

At beg of row, place the single lp on a large safety pin.

Pull up lps as indicated in pattern for rem of row (see illustration G).



Work off lps as indicated in pattern until you have one lp on hook. Remove hook from lp, place safety-pinned lp on hook. Place dropped lp on hook (see illustration H).



Remove pin. Work off these lps as indicated in pattern.

To **begin next row**, place rem lp on safety pin. Pull up lp in second vertical bar (see illustration I). Complete row.

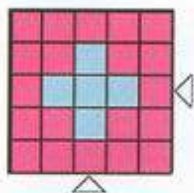


Work rem rows in same manner, beg each row by placing lp on hook onto safety pin.

B. For rows of Double Tunisian Stitch, Lace Stitch and other similar stitches, complete the action indicated in pattern before beg next st (usually ch 1). Place safety pin on resulting lp. □□

Converting Graphs to Written Words

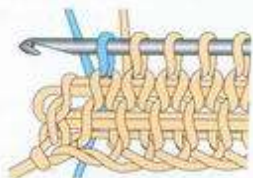
If you prefer to follow written instructions, graphs can easily be converted to text. To do this, write down how many stitches of each color are needed for each row. For example, the graph below would be written as follows:



Row 1: Ch 5 with pink, 5 pink.
Row 2: 2 pink, 1 blue, 2 pink.
Row 3: 1 pink, 3 blue, 1 pink.
Row 4: 2 pink, 1 blue, 2 pink.
Row 5: 5 pink.
Bind off.

How to Change Colors When Pulling Up Loops

Skip first vertical bar, pull up as many loops as needed with first color. Leaving end and tying new color onto first color if desired, pick up next loop with second color; pull up as many loops as needed with second color. Repeat to add colors across row as needed, dropping unused colors to back.



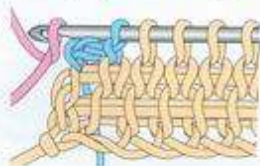
Second Half of Row, Working Loops Off

This portion of each row must be done correctly or holes may occur.

How to pick up new colors in this step is the most important step of making beautiful, smooth Easy Tunisian picture afghans.

To work loops off, yarn over, pull through 1 loop on hook. * [Yarn

over, pull through 2 loops on hook] until the next 2 loops on hook are two different colors. Reach UNDER the color of the loop on the left (*the color you are about to drop*), and pick up the color of the loop on the right (*the new color*).



Pull new color through next 2 loops on hook. Repeat from * across to complete row.

Work remaining rows in same manner, working your way up the graph from bottom to top. It is also possible to work a graph from top to bottom or even from side to side, but working from bottom to top is the most common method.

Taming the Tangles

Because it is necessary to pick up new colors from underneath colors in use, tangles are inevitable. If you have a low tolerance for tangles, you may prefer to straighten out your bobbins before beginning each new row. If you have a high tolerance for tangles, you will probably stop to untangle everything less often.

If your afghan has large sections of background color, you can use skeins instead of bobbins for those sections.

Instead of using bobbins, I often just let the strands hang down. I have a high tolerance for tangles, so I cut 5-yard lengths and only stop to pull all the strands free when it gets difficult to pull enough out to make more stitches.

Weaving in Ends

As you come to the end of each color section on your afghan, cut the yarn (*not on each row, but after an entire section of color over several rows is complete*) leaving a 6–8-inch end. To weave in ends, use

a blunt tapestry needle. Thread the needle with one end at a time and weave back and forth through matching strands.

Another handy tool for weaving in ends is the Yarn End Weaver by Susan Bates. It looks like a large needle threader. To use it, push the wire under a few strands making the wire loop protrude out the other side. Thread the end through this loop, then pull through. A latch hook can be used in the same way.

Reading the Graph

Beginning at the bottom right corner (*bottom left if you are left-handed*), follow each row of the graph from right to left. Each row on the graph represents both halves of a row of Tunisian crochet—pulling loops up and working them off.

The first loop on hook at the beginning of each row is not counted as one stitch on the graph. The first stitch is the first loop pulled up. The first row on the graph includes the beginning chain, and the last row includes the bind off.