

Beginner's Guide to the Chain Stitch & Chain Space in Crochet

Beginner's Guide to the Chain Stitch & Chain Space in Crochet

The **chain stitch** (abbreviated as CH) is the first stitch every crocheter learns, it's the foundation of nearly every crochet project. Building upon that, the **chain space** (abbreviated as CH-SP) is the open gap created by chains within your fabric. Together, these two techniques give crochet its structure, drape, and decorative openness.

Whether you're just starting out or improving your skills, this guide covers everything from making your first chain to mastering chain spaces in patterns ,complete with step-by-step instructions, examples, common mistakes, and beginner-friendly practice exercises.

The **chain stitch** (US: CH / UK: CH) is the foundation of crochet, it creates the base row where all other stitches are worked. Once you master it, you can build any crochet project, from simple scarves to detailed lacework.

The **chain space**, written in patterns as CH-SP, is an evolution of this same technique. It's the intentional gap between stitches that adds airiness and decorative design to your fabric. Understanding both is essential to crocheting confidently and reading patterns correctly.

Abbreviation

Step by Step

How to Crochet the Chain Stitch (CH)

Step-by-Step Instructions

1. Make a slip knot and place it on your hook.
2. Yarn over ,wrap the yarn from back to front over your hook.
3. Pull through the loop on your hook.
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 until you reach the number of chains your pattern requires.

Tip: Keep each chain loop smooth and even , not too tight or loose. Consistent tension ensures straight rows and easier stitch insertion.

UK Equivalent

The chain stitch is the same in both US and UK crochet terminology: CH.

Common Uses for the Chain Stitch

- The foundation chain for most crochet projects.
- Turning chains that bring height to a new row.
- Creating decorative loops or spaces in patterns like granny squares, filet crochet, and lace.
- Building chain spaces (ch-sps) between stitch groups.

Beginner Tips for the Chain Stitch

- Practice long chains (30–40 ch) to learn consistent tension.



- If your chain curls, loosen your grip slightly.
- Count chains carefully, missing even one can throw off your stitch alignment.
- Use a slightly larger hook while practicing for smoother motion.

Common Chain Stitch Mistakes

Chains too tight

- Why it Happens : Gripping yarn or hook too firmly
- How to Fix It : Relax tension; loosen your grip slightly

Uneven loops

- Why it Happens : Inconsistent yarn feed
- How to Fix It : Keep yarn moving smoothly with even tension

Twisted chain

- Why it Happens : Turning the chain as you stitch
- How to Fix It : Keep your chain flat and stitches facing you

Losing count

- Why it Happens : Not tracking stitches
- How to Fix It : Count aloud or mark every 10th chain with a stitch marker

Practice Exercise : Chain Stitch Swatch

1. Make a slip knot.
2. Chain 20 using scrap yarn.
3. Lay the chain flat, ensure all loops face the same way.
4. Repeat with different hook sizes to see how tension and spacing change.

Tip: Try chaining 30 and measuring it. Then re-chain 30 more loosely, notice how much longer it becomes!

Understanding the Crochet Chain Space (CH-SP)

Once you've mastered the chain stitch, you can use it to form chain spaces, the open gaps between stitches that add texture and design to your work.

What Is a Chain Space?

A chain space (ch-sp) is the open gap created when you make one or more chains, skip a number of stitches, and anchor your next stitch afterward.

Example: `Ch 2, skip 2 sts, dc in next st`

creates a ch-2 space between two double crochets.

Chain spaces are essential in:

- Granny squares (corners and between clusters)
- Filet crochet
- Mesh and lace fabric
- Shells, arches, and picots



How to Read Chain Space Instructions

ch-sp often appears with a number: *ch-1 sp*, *ch-2 sp*, etc.

The number shows how many chains form that space.

When you see (dc, ch 2, dc) in ch-2 sp, you'll work all stitches into the space (not into the chains themselves).

Step-by-Step: Make a Basic ch-2 Space

1. Work the first stitch (e.g., dc).
2. Chain 2 (relaxed tension).
3. Skip the number of stitches shown in the pattern.
4. Work the next stitch to anchor the space.

Example: `Dc, ch 2, skip 2, dc in next; rep from ` creates a mesh pattern.

Common Uses for Chain Spaces

- Granny Squares : (ch-2 or ch-3) - Creates corner openings.
- Filet Crochet : (ch-1 or ch-2) - Forms mesh grid
- Shell Patterns : (ch-1 or ch-2) - Separates shell groups
- Lacework : (ch-2+) - Adds decorative gaps
- Picots : (ch-3) - Forms loops or tiny points |

Mini Practice Patterns

1. Simple Mesh Swatch

- Chain 31.
- Row 1: Dc in 4th ch from hook, ch 1, skip 1, dc in next; repeat.
- Row 2: Ch 3, turn. Dc in ch-1 sp, ch 1, dc in next ch-1 sp; repeat.
- → Creates open mesh using ch-1 spaces.

2. Classic Granny Square Center

- Make a magic ring (or ch 4, join).
- Rnd 1: (3 dc, ch 2) six times, join.
- Rnd 2: (3 dc in next ch-2 sp, ch 1) around.
- → Chain spaces form the classic square corners.

Tension & Sizing

- More chains = larger gaps.
- A ch-1 sp gives a small hole; ch-3 sp makes it more open.
- Use larger hooks for airy lace or smaller hooks for tighter mesh.
- Keep consistent tension, uneven chain tension creates irregular spacing.

Anchoring Chains Correctly (Keep Edges Straight)

- Work into the turning chain only if the pattern instructs it.
- When repeating patterns like [dc, ch 1], make sure the final stitch is placed correctly, this prevents scalloped edges.
- For clean borders, work slip stitches evenly into both stitches and chain spaces.



- Clusters and shells: Work multiple stitches into a ch-sp (e.g., [dc, ch 2, dc]).
- Bridging: Use ch-sps to join distant points in motifs.
- Overlay crochet: Create color contrast using open ch-sps.
- Blocking: Lightly block lace to even out all chain spaces for a polished finish.

Practice Swatches for Chain Spaces

A. Mesh

- Learn even ch-1 sps
- Ch 20, dc in 4th ch from hook, ch 1, skip 1, dc in next

B. Filet

- Alternate solid and open blocks
- Ch 30, [dc, ch 1, skip 1, dc] rows

C. Shell Arches

- Work groups into spaces
 - Ch 36, [3 dc, ch 2, 3 dc] in ch-2 sp |
-

About Stouto Creative Crochet

Stouto Creative Crochet is created and run by an independent crochet designer who shares **original crochet patterns**, **stitch tutorials**, and **crochet blanket projects** for makers around the world. If you enjoyed this crochet guide, one of the best ways to support my work is by purchasing one of my premium crochet patterns. Your support helps me continue designing new projects and sharing tutorials with the crochet community.

Stay inspired, creative, and connected with the **Stouto Creative Crochet** community. Whether you're here for relaxing blanket patterns, unique stitch ideas, or exclusive subscriber perks — you're in the right place.

Join the Stouto Crochet Mailing List

- Free crochet patterns delivered to your inbox
- Early access to new pattern releases
- Exclusive discounts on printable PDF patterns
- Tips, tutorials, and crochet inspiration
- Subscriber-only giveaways and seasonal surprises

[Join the Stouto Crochet Mailing List](#)

Explore While You're Here

Not ready to subscribe yet? Take a look around, If you love projects like temperature blankets, granny squares, and cozy throws, find crochet patterns made for you.

- [Browse Free Crochet Patterns](#)
- [Learn About Stouto Creative Crochet](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

Popular Crochet Projects

- [Temperature Blanket Patterns](#)
- [Granny Square Blankets](#)
- [Browse Free Crochet Patterns](#) Scarves & Wearables



- [Easy Crochet blankets for beginners](#)

Stay Connected

Want more news and updates? Follow my Facebook Page. I do try my best to run promotions at least once a month on new patterns, free patterns, and discounted items, so don't miss out!

When you make this project, share it on social media and tag me [@stoutocreativecrochet](#) or [@stoutostuff](#), whichever is easiest for you. I would love to see what you make!

Save this free pattern to your Pinterest boards so that you can come back to it later.

Want to Purchase the Pattern?

PDF versions of my crochet patterns are available on the following platforms:

- [Directly from this website](#)
- [Shopify Store](#)
- [Etsy](#)
- [Etsy Pattern Store](#)
- [Ravelry](#)
- [LoveCrafts](#)
- [Ribblr](#)

All patterns are provided in easy-to-follow PDF format at affordable pricing. Selling crochet patterns is my main source of income, and I rely on ongoing support to continue designing and publishing new patterns.

Thank you for your support.

[Join the Stouto Creative Crochet Community →](#)

Crochet is even more fun when shared with others. If you enjoy the patterns and tutorials on this website, you are warmly invited to join the Stouto Creative Crochet Community on Facebook.

Inside the group you can:

- Share finished projects made using Stouto Creative Crochet patterns
- Ask questions and get help with patterns
- Connect with other crochet makers
- See new pattern releases and updates
- Take part in community crochet projects

Click the link below to join the community:

I would love to see you there and share your crochet creations with the community!

Save The Pattern Website Page For Later

If you enjoyed this crochet pattern or tutorial, be sure to save it so you can easily find it again later.

[Beginner's Guide to the Chain Stitch & Chain Space in Crochet](#)

Pattern Permissions & Copyright

All crochet patterns, tutorials, charts, and images published on Stouto Creative Crochet are protected by copyright.

Please do not publish or share any of my patterns as your own. You may make items to sell using my patterns, but please include a link back to the original pattern post on this website.

You may share a link to my free pattern on your blog or website, but please do not repost the pattern itself. Instead, write a short description and link back to the original pattern page on my website.

Please do **not** use my photos, charts, or diagrams as your own. If you would like to use images for promotions or features, please [contact me](#). I am always happy and willing to collaborate when proper credit and links are included.



Explore More Popular Crochet Patterns You'll Love

If you enjoyed this pattern, be sure to explore some of our other most-loved crochet designs.

From textured granny squares and patchwork flower motifs to beginner-friendly blankets and statement afghans, each pattern is created with clear instructions, step-by-step guidance, and practical yarn details to help you crochet with confidence.

Whether you're building a full blanket collection, creating a thoughtful handmade gift, or simply looking for your next relaxing project, you'll find plenty of inspiration across our popular pattern pages.

Take a look around and discover your next favourite crochet project.

You will find the full list of crochet patterns on the [Crochet pattern collection page](#).



[Spring Daisies Flower Granny Square Blanket](#)

If you're searching for the perfect springtime crochet flower granny square blanket pattern, the Spring Daisies Flower Granny Square Blanket is just what you need. This delightful design combines classic crochet charm with fresh, floral beauty.

The Spring Daisies Flower Granny Square Blanket puts a fresh spin on a classic crochet flower squares. Each square begins with a bold 3D daisy flower motif, radiating outward into a soft, elegant square frame.

