



Demelza Blanket

By Catherine Bligh

Part 7

US

Joining



The stitches and abbreviations are as follows:

sl st = slip stitch

ch = chain

sc = single crochet

hdc = half-double crochet

dc = double crochet

tr = treble crochet

bpsc = back post single crochet

bphdc = back post half-double crochet

bpdcc = back post double crochet

fphdc = front post half-double crochet

fpdc = front post double crochet

fptr = front post treble crochet

tc2tog = work treble crochet decrease across two stitches

fphdc2tog = work front post half-double crochet decrease across two stitches

fpdc2tog = work front post double crochet decrease across two stitches

fptr2tog = work front post treble crochet decrease across two stitches

fptr3tog = work front post treble crochet decrease across three stitches *or as specified*.

V stitch = (dc, ch2, dc) in same stitch

Narrow V stitch = (dc, ch1, dc) in same stitch

Cluster = worked with three dc stitches throughout pattern.

Shell stitch = (dc, ch1, dc, ch1, dc, ch1, dc) in same stitch.

Construction

All the seams on this blanket are worked in single crochet, fronts facing and worked in back loops only. I love the way this gives each square a defined look, and it's a lot easier to do than sewing squares together! You don't have to join with single crochet – a slip stitch also works well, but make sure you keep it from getting too tight. Or, if you prefer, you can just as easily sew the squares together.

All the joins are worked in *stone*, except for the 'internal' joins on the small squares, which are worked in *copper*.

Begin with the small squares. With copper, begin with a slip knot on your hook. Put two squares together, one of combination A and one of combination B, front side together, and begin in the stitch *after* the corner hdc (i.e., leave the corner hdc unworked on the outside edge). Work along the edge of the squares in the back loops only (the ‘outside’ loop of the squares when you look down on it).



Leave the outside corner stitch unworked.

When you get to the end of the squares, work a sc through back loops of the corner hdc. Then line up the next two squares (one of combination B and one of combination A) and work the next sc through the back loops of the corner hdc of the second squares.



Work along the edge of the squares to the end. Leave the corner hdc unworked. Break off yarn. You should now have four squares attached to each other along a ‘horizontal’.

Turn the squares and work the ‘vertical’ join in the same way. When you get to the centre point (where the corners of all four squares meet), work the two corner stitches of the squares as above, ‘leaping over’ the horizontal join.



You should end up with four larger squares, each composed of four little squares. Don’t sew the ends in yet; leave that until later.



It may look a little wonky at this point. Don't worry, it will look fine by the end.

Now you'll be joining everything together. At this stage, I like to lay my blankets out and pin them together with safety pins (either regular straight safety pins, or the curved kind that quilters use). You don't need to do this, but I find it helpful to keep it straight in my head which square comes next in my joining.

I always work the 'horizontal' joins first, then the 'vertical' joins. Remember that when you reach a corner join, work the corner stitch of the squares, but don't work the corner stitch at the beginning and end of each *end* of the join.

When you get to a place where the middle of the four small squares meets the middle of a larger square, you need to work a sc into each corner hdc stitch, plus a sc2tog across both corner hdc stitches from the small squares. So you'll work a section of back loop sc as usual, up to the corner hdc from the small square. Then work sc2tog through the two corner hdc stitches from the small squares, but in the *same stitch* of the larger square. Then work a sc into the second corner hdc from the small squares, and continue to the end of the edge as usual.



When you are working into the sides of the rectangle sections, work one sc for every row of sc, and two sc for every row of dc for *nine* of the colour stripes. Work one sc for every row of sc *and* every row of dc for *four* of the colour stripes (the first and last, and the middle three). The general rule is to space them evenly so the copper stripe is in the middle of that section of join, and the rectangle section is stretched awkwardly anywhere. There are, obviously, no back loops to work into along the sides of the rectangle sections. Just try to work *through* the sc and dc stitches, rather than around them.

Don't worry if occasionally you find you've made a mistake with stitch counts and need to 'fudge' it and work two stitches from one square into one stitch of another. Crochet is extremely forgiving! Work the extra stitch in the corner if you need to, not in the middle of the row. But do double-check that you've started your join in the right place and included or skipped over corner stitches as appropriate.

When you've finished all the joins, don't sew in the ends. Leave that until after the border is done; it'll be easier then.