

## **CROCHETED POUCHES FOR ORPHANED & INJURED MARSUPIALS**

These are used as outer pouches for a range of marsupials. They're just rectangles of crocheted fabric, folded in half and seamed together on the sides, leaving the top open. A sewn fabric liner will be inserted later by the rescue service, with extra fabric folded over the open top. Here's what the pouches look like finished, and in action..



**Sizes** can vary, as animals come in all shapes and sizes, from microbats to wombats! One service suggests the following 3 sizes for the finished dimensions of the pouch:

S – 16cm square

M – 24cm square

L – 30cm square

**Yarn** should be between 4-8ply and must be 100% pure wool. I would suggest superwash treated wool is best, since the pouches won't be getting handwashed. Some services are now also accepting 100% cotton pouches, particularly in the larger sizes. There must be no synthetic content at all – only pure wool or cotton can be accepted.

**Instructions** – Crochet a rectangle of fabric which is twice as high as it is wide. You can use the size guide above for the suggested widths, but don't stress if your size is a bit different. Use the suggested hook size for your yarn, or a hook which will give you a firm gauge. It's important to use a closed crochet stitch and a fairly firm gauge to keep the animal warm. Double Crochet (dc) stitch has been recommended, although that can be quite stiff. Alternatively, try dc in the Back Loop Only (BLO) or Linen Stitch (dc, ch1, sk1) for a more flexible but closed fabric. *These are UK terms – the US equivalent to dc stitch is sc (Single Crochet).*

Once you have your rectangle, fold it in half to make a square and then seam the two sides closed using whatever method you prefer. Weave in the ends. If you like, you can crochet a cord and thread it through stitches about 1cm below the opening, to make a drawstring, but this is entirely optional.

*There is also a pattern for making crocheted nests at:*

<https://www.wires.org.au/wildlife-info/wildlife-factsheets/making-wildlife-nests>

### **SOME SAMPLE CROCHET POUCH PATTERNS (UK Terms)**

The following are some example patterns, suitable for beginner crocheters. You can make pouches in other sizes, using different closed stitches, different weights of yarn, different hook sizes or even using colourwork techniques. Just please remember to use a closed crochet stitch, and not to use an open stitch like trebles (known as double crochet in US terms).

#### **POUCH 1 – DOUBLE CROCHET – Small (15cm)**

- 1 x 50g (approx. 134m total) 5ply pure wool yarn
- 3.5mm hook
- Darning needle
- Scissors

Row 1: Chain 38, then turn.

Row 2: Ch1 (for the turning chain), dc 38, working into the back bumps of the foundation chain stitches. Turn.

Row 3: Ch1 (for the turning chain), dc 38. Turn

Row 4 onwards: Repeat Row 3 until your piece is twice as high as it is wide. Fasten off.

Fold your piece in half so that it becomes a square. Seam both sides, leaving the top open. Try seaming with a crochet dc stitch worked through the front loop of the edge nearest you and the back loop of the edge farthest away.

Fasten off and weave in all the ends.



## **POUCH 2 – LINEN STITCH – Medium (24cm)**

- 2 x 50g (Approx 160m total) 8ply pure wool yarn
- 4mm hook
- Darning needle
- Scissors

Row 1: Chain 49, then turn.

Row 2: Ch1 (turning chain), 49dc, working stitches into back bumps of the foundation chain.

Row 3: Ch1 (turning chain), then (dc1, ch1, sk 1) to last stitch, dc1.

Row 4: Ch1 (turning chain), then dc1 in the first stitch. Work (dc1, ch1, sk 1) - working the dc stitches into the ch1 spaces of the row below - to the last ch1 space. Work 2dc. Turn.

Row 5 onwards: Repeat last two rows - working the dc stitches into the ch1 spaces below, except for the first and last stitch of every row, which will always be dc stitches worked into dc stitches - until piece is almost 48cm high. (About 72 rows of linen stitch)

Last Row: Work one row of straight dc.

Seam the sides using a crochet dc seam (as per Pouch 1). Fasten off and weave in the ends.

Note: Makes a stretchy, drapey fabric which is still solid. Plus, you can use all those lovely variegated, stripey and speckled yarns! In the sample, I used a variegated yarn for one side, and a plain yarn for the other, by simply changing yarns halfway through.



### POUCH 3 – DOUBLE CROCHET (BACK LOOP ONLY) – Large (29cm)

- 3 x 50g (Approx 240m total) 8ply pure wool yarn
- 4.5mm hook
- Darning needle
- Scissors

**Special Stitch:** dcBLO = double crochet, working the dc into the back loop only of the stitch below, (instead of both loops as you normally would).

Row 1: Chain 55, then turn.

Row 2: Ch1 (for the turning chain), dc 55, working into the back bumps of the foundation chain stitches. Turn.

Row 3: Ch1 (for the turning chain), dcBLO 55. Turn

Row 4 onwards: Repeat Row 3 until your piece is twice as high as it is wide. Fasten off.

Seam the sides using a crochet dc seam (as per Pouch 1). Fasten off and weave in the ends.

Note: This stitch gives a lot of vertical stretch. You could wet block it to increase the size, but the fabric won't be as stretchy and warm afterwards.

In the sample, I almost ran out of the purple yarn, so I worked an optional decorative border at both ends to make up the difference.

Optional Border: I worked 3 rows of linen stitch (dc, sk1, ch1), placing a dc stitch at the beginning and end of each row. For the 3 rows of linen stitch, I alternated between rows of aqua, red, and aqua again. I worked a row of plain dc in aqua across the last row.

