Cactus pincushion in a pot

US terms



Finished size
About 3¼ × 5½ in (8 × 14 cm)
About 5½ in (14 cm) tall to the top of the flower and 4 in (10 cm) wide across the arms, in a pot about 3¼ in (8 cm) across its rim and 2¼ in (5.5 cm) tall, for pins and needles up to 1½ in (4 cm) long in its body

Skill
Easy
It is single crochet in unjoined rounds, with front post stitches for the ribs and a few small parts sewn on.

Yarn
Light (3), 5 colors

Hook
3.25 mm (US D-3)

Gauge
22 stitches and 24 rounds to 4 in (10 cm)
In single crochet.

You will need

Yarn A: terracotta, the pot	**about 45 yd (41 m), an estimate**
Yarn B: cactus green, the cactus	**about 65 yd (59 m), an estimate**
Yarn C: brown, the soil	**about 15 yd (14 m), an estimate**
Yarn D: pink, the petals	**about 5 yd (5 m), an estimate**
Yarn E: cream, the spines and the middle of the flower	**about 10 yd (9 m), an estimate**

Fiber: cotton

Hook: 3.25 mm (US D-3), or the size that gives you the gauge. Also: a handful and a half of toy stuffing, a weight for the base: about 3 oz (85 g) of clean small pebbles, with a piece of thin fabric 8 in (20.5 cm) square to tie them in, a disc of thin stiff plastic 2¼ in (5.5 cm) across, cut from the lid of a food tub, pins with round heads, to stick into it, 3 stitch markers, a yarn needle and scissors.

To find how many balls: divide by the length on your yarn's label and round up. Buy them from one dye lot. The estimate is from the stitches of this size at this gauge, with 30 percent added.

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Abbreviations

Written in US terms. Where the UK name differs it is given beside the US one.

sl st	slip stitch (UK ss, slip stitch)
sc	single crochet (UK dc, double crochet)
tr	treble crochet (UK dtr, double treble)
FPhdc	front post half double crochet (UK front post half treble)
BLO	back loop only
FLO	front loop only
MR	magic ring
st	stitch
rnd	round
RS	right side

Gauge

22 stitches and 24 rounds to 4 in (10 cm) in single crochet.

The ribbed rounds of the cactus are as tall as plain ones: a front post stitch begins lower than the stitches beside it.

Check your gauge on the piece. Begin the pattern and measure the piece itself as you go. The gauge is checked on the piece itself: after round 6 the base should measure about 2 in (5 cm) across, laid flat and not stretched. If the piece measures more than that, begin again with a smaller hook; if it measures less, with a larger hook.

Before you start

- Begin with a magic ring: wind the yarn once round two fingers, put the hook through the ring, draw up a loop and chain 1 to hold it, which does not count as a stitch. Work round 1 into the ring, then pull the tail to draw the ring closed.
- The rounds are not joined: work in a spiral, and move a marker up to the first stitch of each round.
- All parts are worked with the right side, the outside, facing you.
- FPhdc, front post half double crochet (UK front post half treble): yarn over, put the hook in from the front, behind the post of the stitch below and out to the front again, and work a half double crochet round that post instead of into the top of the stitch. The top of that stitch stays unworked behind it.
- Where the pattern says BLO or FLO, put the hook under the back loop or the front loop only. In the first round of the wall this makes a sharp edge round the base; in the first round of the rim it leaves the back loops free inside, for the soil.
- To change color, draw the new yarn through as the last yarn over of the stitch before. Cut the old yarn, leaving a tail of 6 in (15 cm). That is for the flower; every other part is one color.
- Whip stitch: put the needle through both edges from back to front, one stitch for each stitch or row, and draw the yarn snug.
- Colors. Pot: A. Soil: C. Cactus body and arms: B. Flower: round 1 and round 2 E, round 3 D.

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Instructions

Square brackets [ ] hold a repeat: work what is inside as many times as it says. The count in round brackets at the end of a line is what that line leaves. Tick the box when a round is done. In UK terms sl st is slip stitch, sc is double crochet, tr is double treble and FPhdc is front post half treble.

Pot

Yarn A, terracotta.

☐ **Foundation**	Make a magic ring.	
☐ **Rnd 1 (RS)**	6 sc in MR	**(6 sc)**
☐ **Rnd 2**	2 sc in each st around	**(12 sc)**
☐ **Rnd 3**	**[**2 sc in next st, sc in next st**] 6 times**	**(18 sc)**
☐ **Rnd 4**	**[**Sc in next 2 sts, 2 sc in next st**] 6 times**	**(24 sc)**
☐ **Rnd 5**	Sc in next st, 2 sc in next st, **[**sc in next 3 sts, 2 sc in next st**] 5 times**, sc in next 2 sts	**(30 sc)**
☐ **Rnd 6**	**[**Sc in next 4 sts, 2 sc in next st**] 6 times**	**(36 sc)**

Stop and measure now, after round 6. The base should measure about 2 in (5 cm) across.

☐ **Rnd 7**	Sc in next 2 sts, 2 sc in next st, **[**sc in next 5 sts, 2 sc in next st**] 5 times**, sc in next 3 sts	**(42 sc)**

Wall

☐ **Rnd 8**	Sc in BLO of each st around	**(42 sc)**
☐ **Rnds 9 to 10**	Sc in each st around	**(42 sc)**

A box for each round, 9 to 10: tick them off as you go.

☐ 9 ☐ 10

☐ **Rnd 11**	Sc in next 3 sts, 2 sc in next st, **[**sc in next 6 sts, 2 sc in next st**] 5 times**, sc in next 3 sts	**(48 sc)**
☐ **Rnds 12 to 17**	Sc in each st around	**(48 sc)**

A box for each round, 12 to 17: tick them off as you go.

☐ 12 ☐ 13 ☐ 14 ☐ 15 ☐ 16 ☐ 17

Rim

☐ **Rnd 18**	**[**Sc in FLO of next 7 sts, 2 sc in FLO of next st**] 6 times**	**(54 sc)**
☐ **Rnds 19 to 21**	Sc in each st around	**(54 sc)**

A box for each round, 19 to 21: tick them off as you go.

☐ 19 ☐ 20 ☐ 21

☐ **End**	Slip stitch in the next stitch to level the edge. Fasten off, leaving a tail of 6 in (15 cm).	

Soil

Yarn C, brown.

☐ **Foundation**	Make a magic ring.	
☐ **Rnd 1 (RS)**	6 sc in MR	**(6 sc)**

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☐ **Rnd 2**	2 sc in each st around	**(12 sc)**
☐ **Rnd 3**	**[**2 sc in next st, sc in next st**] 6 times**	**(18 sc)**
☐ **Rnd 4**	**[**Sc in next 2 sts, 2 sc in next st**] 6 times**	**(24 sc)**
☐ **Rnd 5**	Sc in next st, 2 sc in next st, **[**sc in next 3 sts, 2 sc in next st**] 5 times**, sc in next 2 sts	**(30 sc)**
☐ **Rnd 6**	**[**Sc in next 4 sts, 2 sc in next st**] 6 times**	**(36 sc)**
☐ **Rnd 7**	Sc in next 2 sts, 2 sc in next st, **[**sc in next 5 sts, 2 sc in next st**] 5 times**, sc in next 3 sts	**(42 sc)**
☐ **Rnd 8**	**[**Sc in next 6 sts, 2 sc in next st**] 6 times**	**(48 sc)**
☐ **End**	Slip stitch in the next stitch. Fasten off, leaving a tail of 30 in (76 cm). Draw the tail of the ring tight and weave it in now, on the wrong side of the soil.	

Cactus body

Yarn B, cactus green.

Work it from the top down. Each of the 8 front post stitches of a round goes round the front post stitch below it, so that 8 ribs run down the cactus. In round 3 they go round single crochet of round 2.

☐ **Foundation**	Make a magic ring.	
☐ **Rnd 1 (RS)**	8 sc in MR	**(8 sc)**
☐ **Rnd 2**	2 sc in each st around	**(16 sc)**
☐ **Rnd 3**	**[**FPhdc around next st, 2 sc in next st**] 8 times**	**(8 FPhdc, 16 sc)**
☐ **Rnd 4**	**[**FPhdc around next st, sc in next st, 2 sc in next st**] 8 times**	**(8 FPhdc, 24 sc)**
☐ **Rnds 5 to 22**	**[**FPhdc around next st, sc in next 3 sts**] 8 times**	**(8 FPhdc, 24 sc)**

A box for each round, 5 to 22: tick them off as you go.

☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐ 11 ☐ 12 ☐ 13 ☐ 14 ☐ 15 ☐ 16 ☐ 17 ☐ 18 ☐ 19 ☐ 20 ☐ 21 ☐ 22

☐ **End**	Slip stitch in the next stitch to level the edge. Fasten off, leaving a tail of 24 in (61 cm). Draw the tail of the ring tight and weave it in on the inside. Fill the body very firmly with stuffing, right up to the open edge.	

Long arm

Yarn B, cactus green.

☐ **Foundation**	Make a magic ring.	
☐ **Rnd 1 (RS)**	6 sc in MR	**(6 sc)**
☐ **Rnd 2**	2 sc in each st around	**(12 sc)**
☐ **Rnds 3 to 16**	**[**FPhdc around next st, sc in next 2 sts**] 4 times**	**(4 FPhdc, 8 sc)**

A box for each round, 3 to 16: tick them off as you go.

☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐ 11 ☐ 12 ☐ 13 ☐ 14 ☐ 15 ☐ 16

☐ **End**	Slip stitch in the next stitch to level the edge. Fasten off, leaving a tail of 18 in (46 cm). Weave the tail of the ring in on the inside. Fill the arm: rounds 1 to 8 firmly, the rest only a little, so that it can bend.	

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Short arm

Yarn B, cactus green.

☐ **Foundation**	Make a magic ring.	
☐ **Rnd 1 (RS)**	6 sc in MR	**(6 sc)**
☐ **Rnd 2**	2 sc in each st around	**(12 sc)**
☐ **Rnds 3 to 13**	**[**FPhdc around next st, sc in next 2 sts**] 4 times**	**(4 FPhdc, 8 sc)**

A box for each round, 3 to 13: tick them off as you go.

☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐ 11 ☐ 12 ☐ 13

☐ **End**	Slip stitch in the next stitch to level the edge. Fasten off, leaving a tail of 18 in (46 cm). Weave the tail of the ring in on the inside. Fill the arm: rounds 1 to 5 firmly, the rest only a little, so that it can bend.	

Flower

Yarns in order of use: E, cream; D, pink.

Round 3 makes five petals of 5 treble crochet (UK double treble) each, with a slip stitch between them that is not counted.

☐ **Foundation**	Make a magic ring.	
☐ **Rnd 1 (RS)**	5 sc in MR	**(5 sc)**
☐ **Rnd 2**	2 sc in each st around	**(10 sc)**
☐ **Rnd 3**	With D, **[**5 tr in next st, sl st in next st**] 5 times**	**(25 tr)**
☐ **End**	Fasten off, leaving a tail of 6 in (15 cm).	

Assembly

1. The front. Stand the body with its open edge down and choose one rib: this is the front of the cactus. Counting it as the first rib and going round from it to your right, put a marker in the third rib, which is at your right hand side, and one in the seventh, which is at your left hand side. Rounds are counted from the top of the cactus down.

2. The long arm goes at the left. Hold it level, its closed end pointing away from the body, the middle of its open end on the seventh rib at round 16 of the body, and turn it so that one of its four ribs is uppermost. With its long tail whip stitch it to the body, its right side out: 12 stitches in a circle, each through both loops of a stitch of its last round and a small stitch of the body. Do not cut the tail.

3. The bend. Now look at the rib of the arm that is uppermost: it runs level from the seam out to the closed end of the arm. With the long tail bring the needle out on this rib 1 round from the seam. Follow the rib outward, away from the body and toward the closed end of the arm, and take a small stitch across it 7 rounds from the seam. Draw the two places together, so that the top of the arm folds in on itself and the arm bends upward, until its closed end points up and it stands beside the body, about ¼ in (0.5 cm) from it. Do this twice more through the same two places. Fasten off and draw the end inside.

4. The short arm goes at the right: the middle of its open end on the third rib at round 12 of the body, 4 rounds higher up than the long arm, its right side out. Hold it level with one rib uppermost, sew it with its own long tail and bend it as in steps 2 and 3, through the same places: on the uppermost rib, 1 round and 7 rounds from the seam.

5. The spines, with E, are pairs of straight stitches. Straight stitch: bring the needle up at one point and down at another, so that one line of yarn lies on the fabric. A pair is a V: both stitches start at the same point in the middle of a rib. One goes up one round and out half a stitch to the left, the other up one round and out half a stitch to the right. On the body

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sew a pair on every rib, its point on round 6, 9, 12, 15 and 18; but on the third rib leave out round 12, and on the seventh rib leave out rounds 15 and 18, where the arms are. On each arm sew a pair with its point on rounds 4, 7 and 10, counted from its tip, on the three ribs that do not face the body, the open side of the V toward the tip. Use a length of E about 36 in (91 cm) long, and a new one when it is used up. Begin and end each with a knot that is drawn inside, and take the yarn from one pair to the next through the stuffing.

6. Weave in all the tails of the flower on its wrong side. Lay the flower right side up on the top of the body, its middle on the middle of round 1. Cut a length of E 12 in (30 cm) long, fasten it in the body under the flower, and sew the flower down through its cream middle, with one small stitch over each of the 10 single crochet of round 2. For each stitch bring the needle up out of the body and through the flower at the foot of the single crochet, on the line between rounds 1 and 2; then put it down at the top of the same single crochet, close to the petals, through the flower and on into the body, and bring it out again at the foot of the next. The petals are not sewn and stand free. Fasten off and draw the end inside.

7. Set the cactus in the middle of the soil, the right side of the soil up, so that the open edge of the cactus lies between rounds 5 and 6 of the soil. Push in more stuffing until the body is hard. With its long tail whip stitch the 32 stitches of its last round to the soil in a circle, with their right side out, one whip stitch for each of them, each through a stitch of round 5 of the soil. Round 5 has 30 stitches: twice, at opposite sides, work two whip stitches through the same stitch of the soil. Fasten off on the wrong side of the soil and cut the end short: it is hidden in the pot.

8. Weave in the two tails of the pot on the inside. Put the plastic disc on the bottom of the pot. Lay the pebbles in the middle of the fabric, gather the edges of the fabric up over them and tie them with a length of A about 12 in (30 cm) long, wound three times round and knotted, so that the bundle is flat and about 2 in (5 cm) across. Cut off the fabric ½ in (1.5 cm) beyond the knot. Lay the bundle on the disc, its knot up. Fill the pot round and over the bundle very firmly, up to the last round before the rim.

9. Put the soil into the pot, inside the rim, right side up. Round 17 of the pot has 48 free back loops: they are inside, at the foot of the rim. With the long tail of the soil whip stitch it to them, 48 stitches to 48 loops, each through both loops of a stitch of the soil and one loop of the pot. Before the last 12 stitches push in as much stuffing as goes in, so that the soil is rounded. Fasten off and draw the end inside. The rim stands free above the soil.

Finishing

- Every tail is woven in or hidden by now. Stick pins and needles into the body only, downward at a slant and toward the middle of the body, so that their points stay in the stuffing. The arms are too thin for them.

In all: 6 pieces; 2,094 stitches (846 in the pot, 216 in the soil, 656 in the cactus body, 186 in the long arm, 150 in the short arm, 40 in the flower).

Found a mistake in this pattern? Tell us at flossfield.com, under Make a request.

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