Octopus for preemies in cotton

US terms



Finished size
About 2¾ in (7 cm) tall as it stands on its curled arms; the head alone 2½ in (6.3 cm) tall and 2 3/8 in (6 cm) across; each arm about 4½ in (11.5 cm) long pulled straight

Skill
Easy
Nine pieces worked in rounds and rows and sewn together.

Yarn
Light (3), 4 colors

Hook
2.5 mm

Gauge
26 stitches and 28.6 rounds to 4 in (10 cm)
In single crochet, in a spiral.

What you need

Yarn A: seafoam, head and seafoam arm	**about 80 yd (73 m), an estimate**
Yarn B: cream, head and cream arm	**about 40 yd (37 m), an estimate**
Yarn C: deep teal, the details	**about 5 yd (5 m), an estimate**
Yarn D: peach, the details	**about 5 yd (5 m), an estimate**

By weight: about 50 g in all, an estimate, where 100 g is 250 yd (229 m).

Hook: 2.5 mm, or the size that gives you the gauge. Also: washable toy stuffing, a yarn needle, a stitch marker, pins, scissors and a ruler.

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.

The pieces



Head **Seafoam arm x 4** **Cream arm x 4**

Gauge

26 stitches and 28.6 rounds to 4 in (10 cm) in single crochet, in a spiral.

To check it, work a flat circle: 6 sc in a magic ring, then 6 more sc in each round (12, 18, 24, 30, 36). After round 6 it should measure about 1¾ in (4.4 cm) across. The stitches should be tight enough that the stuffing does not show.

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Use any hook that gives you this. If you count more stitches than this in 4 in (10 cm), change to a larger hook; if you count fewer, to a smaller one.

Notes

- Every piece that has rounds is worked in a continuous spiral with the right side facing you: do not join and do not turn. Put the marker in the first stitch of each round and move it up. Square brackets hold a repeat; work it as many times as the line says. The number in parentheses is the count at the end of the round.
- For a hospital: every unit that takes octopuses has its own rules for the yarn, the size, the stuffing, the sewing and the washing, and many take none. Ask the unit first, and where its rules differ from these lines, follow its rules.
- Work tightly, so that no stuffing shows and no stitch can be pulled open. Add nothing that is not listed here: no plastic eyes, no buttons, no bells, no loops, no ribbon.
- Magic ring: wrap the yarn round two fingers, work round 1 into the loop and pull the tail to close it. Or chain 2 and work round 1 into the first chain.
- Color change: where a line begins "With B," (or another letter), work the last pull-through of the round before it in B. Cut the old yarn and knot the ends on the wrong side.
- Center line: places on a piece are given by round and by stitches from a center line. It is half way round from where the rounds begin. Mark it with a pin or a scrap of yarn as listed here, run it straight from round 1 to the last round by eye, and count out from it along the round, in stitches and half stitches.
- Head: the center line runs between stitches 24 and 25 of round 10 (48 sts). It faces the front, round 1 at the top.
- Right and left are as you look at the front of the toy. Rounds are counted from the start of each piece.
- In every step of putting it together: where a piece meets or overlaps another, sew through both. Where no tail is left or a tail is too short, sew with a new length of the yarn of the piece you are putting on.
- To work sc2tog, put the hook under the front loop only of each of the next 2 stitches, yarn over, pull through both loops, yarn over, pull through 2 loops.
- No plastic eyes are used: every detail is worked in yarn.
- One size, at the gauge above: 2¾ in (7 cm) tall as it stands on its curled arms; the head alone 2½ in (6.3 cm) tall and 2 3/8 in (6 cm) across; each arm about 4½ in (11.5 cm) long pulled straight. A thinner or a thicker yarn with a hook to suit makes it smaller or larger; every length then changes with it.

Instructions

US terms.

ch chain, **sc** single crochet (UK double crochet), **MR** magic ring, **Rnd** round, **st** stitch.
sc2tog 2 sc made into one, **yo** yarn over the hook, **RS** right side, the one that shows.
2 sc in next st: both in one stitch. **sc in next 2 sts**: one in each.
[ ] 6 times: work what is inside 6 times in all.
(6 sc): the stitches you have when the round is done. **How to read a pattern**.

Head

Yarns in order of use: A, seafoam; B, cream.

☐ **Foundation**	Make a magic ring.	
☐ **Rnd 1 (RS)**	6 sc in MR. Pull the tail to close the ring.	(6 sc)
☐ **Rnd 2**	2 sc in each st around	(12 sc)

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☐ **Rnd 3**	**[**sc in next st, 2 sc in next st**] 6 times**	(18 sc)
☐ **Rnd 4**	**[**2 sc in next st, sc in next 2 sts**] 6 times**	(24 sc)
☐ **Rnd 5**	**[**sc in next 3 sts, 2 sc in next st**] 6 times**	(30 sc)
☐ **Rnd 6**	**[**sc in next 2 sts, 2 sc in next st, sc in next 2 sts**] 6 times**	(36 sc)
☐ **Rnd 7**	Sc in each st around	(36 sc)
☐ **Rnd 8**	**[**2 sc in next st, sc in next 5 sts**] 6 times**	(42 sc)
☐ **Rnd 9**	Sc in each st around	(42 sc)
☐ **Rnd 10**	**[**sc in next 6 sts, 2 sc in next st**] 6 times**	(48 sc)

Mark the center line now: a pin or a scrap of yarn between stitches 24 and 25 of round 10. It faces the front, round 1 at the top.

☐ **Rnds 11 to 19**	Sc in each st around	(48 sc)

11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19

☐ **Rnd 20**	**[**sc in next 3 sts, sc2tog, sc in next 3 sts**] 6 times**	(42 sc)
☐ **Rnd 21**	Sc in each st around	(42 sc)
☐ **Rnd 22**	**[**sc2tog, sc in next 5 sts**] 6 times**	(36 sc)
☐ **Rnd 23**	Sc in each st around	(36 sc)
☐ **Rnd 24**	With B, **[**sc in next 4 sts, sc2tog**] 6 times**	(30 sc)
☐ **Rnd 25**	**[**sc in next st, sc2tog, sc in next 2 sts**] 6 times**	(24 sc)

Stuff firmly now, and keep adding stuffing until the last round.

☐ **Rnd 26**	**[**sc2tog, sc in next 2 sts**] 6 times**	(18 sc)
☐ **Rnd 27**	**[**sc in next st, sc2tog**] 6 times**	(12 sc)
☐ **Rnd 28**	**[**sc2tog**] 6 times**	(6 sc)
☐ **End**	Fasten off, leaving an 8 in (20 cm) tail. Thread the tail through the front loop of each of the last 6 stitches, pull it tight to close the hole and bury the end inside.	

Seafoam arm: make 4

Yarn A, seafoam.

Worked flat, to and fro in rows, 30 stitches wide at the start. The ch 1 at the start of a row does not count as a stitch.

Leave a 10 in (25 cm) tail before the slip knot: it sews the arm to the head.

☐ **Foundation**	With A, ch 31.	
☐ **Row 1 (RS)**	Sc in second ch from hook and in each ch across	(30 sc)

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☐ **Row 2**	Ch 1, turn, 3 sc in each of next 30 sts	(90 sc)
☐ **End**	Fasten off. Weave this end in along the foundation chain, forward and back again, and trim it. This end of the arm is its tip; the end with the long tail is sewn to the head. The 3 sc in each stitch make the strip wind itself into a corkscrew with the foundation chain in the middle. Help it round with your fingers until it winds evenly from end to end, about eight turns; which way it winds does not matter. Lay the arm along a ruler and pull it straight: it measures about 4½ in (11.5 cm). Pulled hard it must never reach 8½ in (22 cm). If it does, work the arms again on a smaller hook.	

Cream arm: make 4

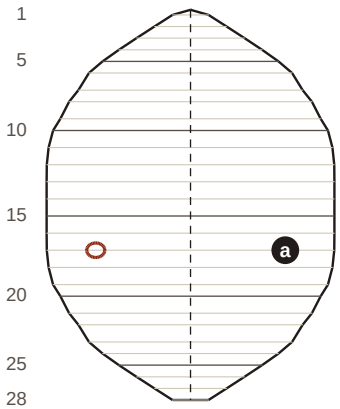
Yarn B, cream.

Worked flat, to and fro in rows, 30 stitches wide at the start. The ch 1 at the start of a row does not count as a stitch.

Leave a 10 in (25 cm) tail before the slip knot: it sews the arm to the head.

☐ **Foundation**	With B, ch 31.	
☐ **Row 1 (RS)**	Sc in second ch from hook and in each ch across	(30 sc)
☐ **Row 2**	Ch 1, turn, 3 sc in each of next 30 sts	(90 sc)
☐ **End**	Fasten off. Weave this end in along the foundation chain, forward and back again, and trim it. This end of the arm is its tip; the end with the long tail is sewn to the head. The 3 sc in each stitch make the strip wind itself into a corkscrew with the foundation chain in the middle. Help it round with your fingers until it winds evenly from end to end, about eight turns; which way it winds does not matter. Lay the arm along a ruler and pull it straight: it measures about 4½ in (11.5 cm). Pulled hard it must never reach 8½ in (22 cm). If it does, work the arms again on a smaller hook.	

Assembly



Head: a cheeks

A number is the step below that puts it on; a letter is put on under Finishing. Each line is a round, counted as the rounds are worked. The upright broken line is the center line. A place with a broken edge is on the far side.

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1. Turn the head upside down. Pin the ends of the four seafoam arms and the four cream arms to the cream base, by turns: the foundation chain of each points straight out from the closed hole, and the end of the arm (the two row ends at its long tail, side by side along the round) lies on round 25 of the head (24 sts). The first two, a seafoam arm to the right of the center line as you look at the face and a cream arm to the left of it, have their middles 1½ stitches from it (3 stitches apart). Go on round both sides to the back, the middle of each arm 3 stitches from the one before, so that there are four on each side, 1½, 4½, 7½ and 10½ stitches from the center line. With its long tail sew each arm down through both row ends and through the first stitch of its foundation chain, go over the same stitches a second time, and bury the end inside the head. Pull hard at each arm: it must not move.

Finishing

- Embroider with one strand of yarn and the yarn needle when the pieces round the place are sewn on; begin and end each strand on the wrong side of a flat piece, inside a stuffed one. Satin stitch is straight stitches side by side until the shape is filled. Backstitch is a line of short stitches end to end: bring the needle up one stitch ahead, put it down at the end of the stitch before, and repeat.
- Sleeping eyes: with C (deep teal), in backstitch, a closed eye on each side, one curve about 5/16 in (8 mm) wide that dips 1/8 in (3 mm) below its ends. Both ends of each curve are on round 14 of the head, 3 and 5 stitches from the center line.
- Cheeks: with D (peach), in satin stitch, an oval about 3/16 in (5 mm) wide and 1/8 in (3 mm) tall, its middle on the head on round 17, one to each side, 5½ stitches from the center line (11 stitches apart).
- Mouth: with C (deep teal), in backstitch, a smile, one curve about ¼ in (6 mm) wide that dips 1/8 in (3 mm) below its ends. Its two ends are on the head on round 16, one to each side of the center line.
- Weave every tail through the toy and trim it. For a toy that will be played with, go round each seam a second time with a new length of yarn. Check the seams and small parts from time to time.

In all: 9 pieces; 1,932 stitches (972 in the head, 120 in each seafoam arm, 120 in each cream arm).

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

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