Seashell bra top that laces up behind

M, cup C · US terms



Finished size

About 30¼ in (77 cm) at the lower edge from one back end to other and about 5 in (12.5 cm) at the shell from the ring to the rim

Skill

Intermediate

Post stitches, rows shaped at the edges, sewing, a lining

Yarn

Fine (2), 2 colors

Hook

4 mm (US G-6)

Gauge

18 stitches and 21 rows to 4 in (10 cm)

In single crochet (UK double crochet).

What you need

Yarn A: blush, main color — **about 160 yd (146 m), an estimate**

Yarn B: shell pink, contrast — **about 80 yd (73 m), an estimate**

By weight: about 70 g in all, an estimate, where 100 g is 350 yd (320 m).

Hook: 4 mm (US G-6), or the size that gives you the gauge. Also: yarn needle, scissors, tape measure, about ½ yd (0.5 m) of stretch swimsuit lining at least 56 in (142 cm) wide (enough for every size), sewing thread and a sewing needle and pins.

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.

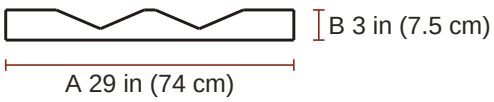
Sizes

Size	Lower edge from one back end to other	Shell from the ring to the rim	Shell around its rim	Between the rings of the two shells	Back ends high	Yarn, an estimate
XS, cup A or B	24½ in (62 cm)	3 in (7.5 cm)	7¼ in (18.5 cm)	6½ in (16.5 cm)	2¼ in (5.5 cm)	about 160 yd (146 m)
XS, cup C	24½ in (62 cm)	3¾ in (9.5 cm)	9 in (23 cm)	8¼ in (21 cm)	2¾ in (7 cm)	about 180 yd (165 m)
XS, cup D or E	24½ in (62 cm)	4¾ in (12 cm)	12¼ in (31 cm)	10 in (25.5 cm)	3 in (7.5 cm)	about 215 yd (197 m)
S, cup A or B	27¼ in (69 cm)	3¼ in (8.5 cm)	9 in (23 cm)	7¼ in (18.5 cm)	2½ in (6.5 cm)	about 175 yd (160 m)
S, cup C	27¼ in (69 cm)	4¼ in (11 cm)	11 in (28 cm)	9 in (23 cm)	2¾ in (7 cm)	about 200 yd (183 m)

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S, cup D or E	27¼ in (69 cm)	5 in (12.5 cm)	14¼ in (36 cm)	10 in (25.5 cm)	3 in (7.5 cm)	about 235 yd (215 m)
M, cup A or B	30¼ in (77 cm)	4¼ in (11 cm)	11 in (28 cm)	9 in (23 cm)	2¾ in (7 cm)	about 210 yd (192 m)
M, cup C (this file)	**30¼ in (77 cm)**	**5 in (12.5 cm)**	**12¾ in (32.5 cm)**	**10 in (25.5 cm)**	**3 in (7.5 cm)**	**about 240 yd (219 m)**
M, cup D or E	30¼ in (77 cm)	6 in (15 cm)	16¼ in (41.5 cm)	11¾ in (30 cm)	3½ in (9 cm)	about 280 yd (256 m)
L, cup A or B	34¼ in (87 cm)	4¾ in (12 cm)	11 in (28 cm)	10 in (25.5 cm)	3 in (7.5 cm)	about 245 yd (224 m)
L, cup C	34¼ in (87 cm)	5½ in (14 cm)	14¼ in (36 cm)	11 in (28 cm)	3¼ in (8.5 cm)	about 290 yd (265 m)
L, cup D or E	34¼ in (87 cm)	6¼ in (16 cm)	16¼ in (41.5 cm)	12¾ in (32.5 cm)	3½ in (9 cm)	about 320 yd (293 m)
1X, cup A or B	38¼ in (97 cm)	5½ in (14 cm)	14¼ in (36 cm)	11 in (28 cm)	3¼ in (8.5 cm)	about 320 yd (293 m)
1X, cup C	38¼ in (97 cm)	6¼ in (16 cm)	16¼ in (41.5 cm)	12¾ in (32.5 cm)	3½ in (9 cm)	about 345 yd (315 m)
1X, cup D or E	38¼ in (97 cm)	7¼ in (18.5 cm)	20¼ in (51.5 cm)	14½ in (37 cm)	4 in (10 cm)	about 400 yd (366 m)
2X, cup A or B	42¼ in (107.5 cm)	6 in (15 cm)	14½ in (37 cm)	11¾ in (30 cm)	3½ in (9 cm)	about 340 yd (311 m)
2X, cup C	42¼ in (107.5 cm)	6¾ in (17 cm)	18¼ in (46.5 cm)	13½ in (34.5 cm)	3¾ in (9.5 cm)	about 385 yd (352 m)
2X, cup D or E	42¼ in (107.5 cm)	7½ in (19 cm)	20¼ in (51.5 cm)	15¼ in (38.5 cm)	4¼ in (11 cm)	about 410 yd (375 m)

Schematic



Underband, wings and middle
A the whole width
B the back ends high

Gauge

18 stitches and 21 rows to 4 in (10 cm) in single crochet.

> **The swatch.** A test piece to measure and pull out. It is not the start of the pattern. Ch 28; begin in the 2nd ch from the hook and work 32 rows of single crochet on 27 sts, about 6 in (15 cm) wide and 6 in (15 cm) high, and measure 4 in (10 cm) in the middle. Use a larger hook if your swatch is small, a smaller one if it is large. Shells: double crochet (UK: treble), 18 sts and 9.5 rows to 4 in (10 cm); the post stitches draw the ribs together a little, which makes the shell stand up. Underband, wings, edgings and straps: the gauge of single crochet above.

Notes

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- Women's sizes, by the ribs and the cup. Measure around the ribs just under the bust, and around the fullest part of the bust. The difference gives the cup: less than 2½ in (6.5 cm) more than the ribs is A or B, from 2½ in (6.5 cm) to less than 3½ in (9 cm) is C, from 3½ in (9 cm) to 5 in (12.5 cm) is D or E. If your ribs lie between two sizes, take the nearer one; the lacing takes up the difference.
- The lower edge, with the edgings, is from 3 in (7.5 cm) to 3¼ in (8.5 cm) shorter than the ribs, by the size, and the lacing closes the rest. No fit is promised beyond the measurements given.
- The turning chain (ch 1 for single crochet, ch 2 for double crochet) never counts as a stitch. Work the first stitch of every row into the first stitch, at the base of the turning chain.
- The ch that is skipped at the start of row 1 is never counted, and nothing is worked into it later.
- A decrease counts as one stitch.
- Ribs: in right side rows a rib is a fpdc around the rib st below, in wrong side rows a bpdc, so that all the ribs stand out on the right side. The dc between the ribs grow by one in every second row.
- The left wing, the middle and the right wing go on from the underband, one after the other. Left and right are those of the person who wears the top.
- Whip stitch: put the needle in through both edges from the back to the front, take the yarn over the edge, and do the same again a short step farther on.
- Lining of the shells: lay a shell with the wrong side up on stretch swimsuit lining, smooth it as flat as it will lie, and cut the lining ½ in (1.5 cm) larger all around than the shell without its scallops. Turn ½ in (1.5 cm) of it under, toward the crochet, and pin it to the wrong side, so that the fold lies along the straight edges and along the last row before the scallops; lay small folds at the ring, as many as it needs to lie smooth in the hollow. Sew the fold down with small slanting stitches of sewing thread that do not show on the right side.
- Lining of the top: lay the underband with its wings and middle flat, wrong side up, on the lining, the greater stretch of the lining from end to end, and cut it ½ in (1.5 cm) larger all around than the part without the edgings of the back ends. Turn ½ in (1.5 cm) of it under, toward the crochet, so that the fold lies along row 1 of the edgings at the back ends and along all the other edges; snip it at the foot of each notch. Sew it down in the same way. The eyelets and the straps are not lined.
- A top that is worn without straps must sit close: draw the lacing firm.
- Color changes in rows: work the last yarn over of the last stitch of the row before with the new yarn. Cut the old yarn, leaving an end of about 6 in (15 cm), or, if it is needed again at the same edge within 6 rows and that edge is straight, carry it loosely up the edge.
- To fit ribs 33½ in (85 cm), just under the bust, cup C.
- Shell around its rim, without the scallops 12¾ in (32.5 cm).

Instructions

M, cup C. US terms.

ch chain, **sl st** slip stitch, **sc** single crochet (UK double crochet), **dc** double crochet (UK treble), **st** stitch, **sp** space.
RS right side, the one that shows.
2 dc in next st: both in one stitch. **dc in each of next 8 sts**: one in each. **ch-1 sp**: the gap under the one chain; the hook goes in the gap.
[ ] 8 times: work what is inside 8 times in all.
(9 dc): the stitches you have when the row is done. **How to read a pattern**.

Special stitches

sc2tog (single crochet 2 stitches together (UK double crochet 2 together)): Insert the hook in the next stitch and pull up a loop, insert the hook in the following stitch and pull up a loop (3 loops on the hook); yarn over and pull through all 3 loops.

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fpdc (front post double crochet (UK front post treble)): Yarn over, insert the hook from the front to the back and to the front again around the post of the stitch named, pull up a loop, [yarn over and pull through 2 loops] twice. The front is the side that faces you. A post stitch takes the place of the stitch it is worked around: do not work into the top of that stitch as well.

bpdc (back post double crochet (UK back post treble)): As fpdc, but insert the hook from the back to the front and to the back again around the post.

Shell: make 2

Yarn A, blush.

☐ **Foundation**	With yarn A, ch 4; join with sl st in first ch to form a ring. Colors: rows 1 to 3 yarn A; row 4 yarn B; rows 5 to 7 yarn A; row 8 yarn B; rows 9 to 11 yarn A; rows 12 and 13 yarn B.	
☐ **Row 1 (RS)**	Ch 2; 9 dc in ring	(9 dc)
☐ **Row 2**	Ch 2, turn; 2 dc in each of next 8 sts, dc in last st	(17 dc)
☐ **Row 3**	Ch 2, turn; fpdc around next st, **[**dc in next st, fpdc around next st**] 8 times**	(9 fpdcs, 8 dc)
☐ **Row 4**	Ch 2, turn; bpdc around next st, **[**2 dc in next st, bpdc around next st**] 8 times**	(9 bpdcs, 16 dc)
☐ **Row 5**	Ch 2, turn; fpdc around next st, **[**dc in next 2 sts, fpdc around next st**] 8 times**	(9 fpdcs, 16 dc)
☐ **Row 6**	Ch 2, turn; bpdc around next st, **[**2 dc in next st, dc in next st, bpdc around next st**] 8 times**	(9 bpdcs, 24 dc)
☐ **Row 7**	Ch 2, turn; fpdc around next st, **[**dc in next 3 sts, fpdc around next st**] 8 times**	(9 fpdcs, 24 dc)
☐ **Row 8**	Ch 2, turn; bpdc around next st, **[**dc in next st, 2 dc in next st, dc in next st, bpdc around next st**] 8 times**	(9 bpdcs, 32 dc)
☐ **Row 9**	Ch 2, turn; fpdc around next st, **[**dc in next 4 sts, fpdc around next st**] 8 times**	(9 fpdcs, 32 dc)
☐ **Row 10**	Ch 2, turn; bpdc around next st, **[**dc in next st, 2 dc in next st, dc in next 2 sts, bpdc around next st**] 8 times**	(9 bpdcs, 40 dc)
☐ **Row 11**	Ch 2, turn; fpdc around next st, **[**dc in next 5 sts, fpdc around next st**] 8 times**	(9 fpdcs, 40 dc)
☐ **Row 12**	Ch 2, turn; bpdc around next st, **[**dc in next 2 sts, 2 dc in next st, dc in next 2 sts, bpdc around next st**] 8 times**	(9 bpdcs, 48 dc)
☐ **Row 13 (RS)**	Ch 1, turn; sc in first st, **[**skip next 2 sts, 3 dc in each of next 2 sts, skip next 2 sts, sc in next st**] 8 times**	(9 sc, 48 dc)
☐ **End**	Fasten off. The shell has 9 ribs. Its two straight edges are the ends of rows 1 to 12, each about 5 in (12.5 cm) long; the scallops are its rim.5 cm) wide and 6 in (15 cm) long, measured at its widest and at its longest.	

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Underband

Yarn B, shell pink.

☐ **Foundation**	With yarn B, ch 132. Colors: rows 1 and 2 yarn B; rows 3 to 6 yarn A.	
☐ **Row 1 (RS)**	Sc in 2nd ch from hook and in each ch across	(131 sc)
☐ **Rows 2 to 6**	Ch 1, turn; sc in each st across	(131 sc)
	2 3 4 5 6	
☐ **End**	Do not fasten off.	

Left wing, as worn

Yarn A, blush.

☐ **Foundation**	Go on from row 6 of the underband. The left wing is worked at its right-hand end, as you look at the right side.	
☐ **Row 7 (RS)**	Ch 1, turn; sc in next 39 sts, sc2tog twice, leave the last 88 sts unworked	(41 sc)
☐ **Row 8**	Ch 1, turn; sc2tog twice, sc in each st across	(39 sc)
☐ **Row 9**	Ch 1, turn; sc in each st across to last 4 sts, sc2tog twice	(37 sc)
☐ **Rows 10 to 15**	Repeat Rows 8 and 9, 3 more times (33, 29, 25 sc at the ends of the repeats)	(25 sc)
	10 11 12 13 14 15	
☐ **Row 16**	Ch 1, turn; sc2tog twice, sc in each st across	(23 sc)
☐ **End**	Fasten off. The slanted edge is the edge where two decreases are worked in every row; the straight edge is the left back end.	

Middle

Yarn A, blush.

☐ **Foundation**	Go back to row 6 of the underband with the right side facing. Join yarn A in the next unworked st of row 6, beside the left wing. The middle is worked in rows on that st and the next 44 sts (45 sts); the last 43 sts of row 6 stay unworked for the right wing.	
☐ **Row 7 (RS)**	Ch 1; sc2tog twice, sc in each st across to last 4 sts, sc2tog twice	(41 sc)
☐ **Rows 8 to 16**	Ch 1, turn; sc2tog twice, sc in each st across to last 4 sts, sc2tog twice	(5 sc)
	8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16	
☐ **End**	Fasten off. The 5 sts of row 16 are the top of the middle.	

Right wing, as worn

Yarn A, blush.

☐ **Foundation**	Go back to row 6 of the underband with the right side facing. Join yarn A in the next unworked st of row 6, beside the middle. The right wing is worked in rows on that st and the next 42 sts, to the end of row 6 (43 sts).	
☐ **Row 7 (RS)**	Ch 1; sc2tog twice, sc in each st across	(41 sc)
☐ **Row 8**	Ch 1, turn; sc in each st across to last 4 sts, sc2tog twice	(39 sc)

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☐ **Row 9**	Ch 1, turn; sc2tog twice, sc in each st across	(37 sc)
☐ **Rows 10 to 15**	Repeat Rows 8 and 9, 3 more times (33, 29, 25 sc at the ends of the repeats)	(25 sc)
	10 11 12 13 14 15	
☐ **Row 16**	Ch 1, turn; sc in each st across to last 4 sts, sc2tog twice	(23 sc)
☐ **End**	Fasten off. The slanted edge is the edge where two decreases are worked in every row; the straight edge is the right back end.	

Edging of the left back end, as worn

Yarn A, blush.

☐ **Foundation**	Hold the top with the right side facing and its left back end, as worn, uppermost, so that the foundation chain is at your right. Join yarn A in the end of row 1 of the underband; ch 1, then in order: along rows 1 to 6 of the underband, sc in the end of each of the next 2 rows, skip the end of the next row, sc in the end of each of the next 3 rows (5 sc); along rows 7 to 16 of the left wing, sc in the end of each of the next 4 rows, skip the end of the next row, sc in the end of each of the next 5 rows (9 sc). There are 14 sc in all. This is row 1, a right side row.	
☐ **Row 2**	Ch 1, turn; sc in next 2 sts, **[**ch 1, skip next st, sc in next 2 sts**] 4 times**	(10 sc, 4 ch-1 sps)
☐ **Row 3**	Ch 1, turn; sc in next 2 sts, **[**sc in next ch-1 sp, sc in next 2 sts**] 4 times**	(14 sc)
☐ **End**	Fasten off. The 4 ch-1 spaces of row 2 are the eyelets.	

Edging of the right back end, as worn

Yarn A, blush.

☐ **Foundation**	Hold the top with the right side facing and its right back end, as worn, uppermost, so that the foundation chain is at your left. Join yarn A in the end of row 16 of the right wing; ch 1, then in order: along rows 7 to 16 of the right wing, met from the last of them, sc in the end of each of the next 5 rows, skip the end of the next row, sc in the end of each of the next 4 rows (9 sc); along rows 1 to 6 of the underband, met from the last of them, sc in the end of each of the next 3 rows, skip the end of the next row, sc in the end of each of the next 2 rows (5 sc). There are 14 sc in all. This is row 1, a right side row.	
☐ **Row 2**	Ch 1, turn; sc in next 2 sts, **[**ch 1, skip next st, sc in next 2 sts**] 4 times**	(10 sc, 4 ch-1 sps)
☐ **Row 3**	Ch 1, turn; sc in next 2 sts, **[**sc in next ch-1 sp, sc in next 2 sts**] 4 times**	(14 sc)
☐ **End**	Fasten off. The 4 ch-1 spaces of row 2 are the eyelets. Hide the ends and line the top now (see NOTES), before the shells are sewn in: the lining as it is cut is about 30 in (76 cm) wide and 4 in (10 cm) long, measured at its widest and at its longest.	

Strap: make 2, if you want straps

Yarn A, blush.

☐ **Foundation**	With yarn A, ch 75.	
☐ **Row 1 (RS)**	Sc in 2nd ch from hook and in each ch across	(74 sc)

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☐ **Rows 2 to 3** 2 3	Ch 1, turn; sc in each st across	(74 sc)
☐ **End**	Each strap is about 16½ in (42 cm) long and 5/8 in (1.6 cm) wide. Fasten off, leaving an end of about 8 in (20 cm) for sewing.	

Lacing cord

Yarn B, shell pink.

☐ **Foundation**	With yarn B, ch 311.	
☐ **Row 1**	Sl st in 2nd ch from hook and in each ch across	(310 sl sts)
☐ **End**	The lacing cord is about 60 in (152.5 cm) long (the slip stitches draw the chain in). Fasten off.	

Assembly

1. Shells: lay the top with the right side up and the underband at the bottom. Between each wing and the middle there is a notch whose foot is at row 6 of the underband. Lay a shell into each notch, right side up, its ring at the foot of the notch and its scallops up. Pin one straight edge of the shell, the ends of rows 1 to 12, to the slanted edge of the wing, the ends of rows 7 to 16, and its other straight edge in the same way to the slanted edge of the middle: first the ring to the foot of the notch, then the end of row 12 to the top of the slanted edge, then the halves between them. The edges are about 5 in (12.5 cm) and 4¾ in (12 cm) long, and the shell stands out from them like a cup. With a new length of yarn A of about 16 in (40 cm) for each edge, sew them together with whip stitch. Row 13, the scallops, stands free.

2. Middle: the 5 sts of row 16 of the middle lie between the two shells. Bring the inner ends of the two rows of scallops together over them, and with a new length of yarn B of about 8 in (20 cm) sew these two ends to each other and to the 5 sts.

3. Straps, if you want them: sew one short end of a strap, its 3 row ends, to the wrong side of each shell, behind the sc of the last row over the third rib, counted from the edge beside the wing, with the end of the strap. Cross the straps or lead them straight over the shoulders, pin their other ends behind the last row of the wings, the middle of each end behind the 11th st from the back end, try the top on, and sew them there with a new length of yarn A of about 8 in (20 cm) each. For a strapless top leave them out: work everything but the straps and this step.

4. Lacing: lay the two back ends side by side with the right side up; each has 4 eyelets. From the wrong side bring one end of the lacing cord out through the lowest eyelet of the left end and the other end out through the lowest eyelet of the right end, and pull them even. Cross the two ends; take each under the other edge and out through the next eyelet above, and go on in this way to the highest eyelets. Knot the ends of the cord. Put the top on, draw the lacing close from below upward and tie the ends in a bow.

Finishing

- Weave in all the ends. Wash by hand, press the water out in a towel, shape the shells and lay the top flat to the measurements to dry.

In all: 5 pieces.

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

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