Open back mermaid tail for adults

Adult · US terms



Finished size

About 43½ in (110 cm) around at the hips and waist with the edges of the opening together, 17½ in (44 cm) around at the ankles, 46¾ in (119 cm) long without the fin; opening about 18½ in (47 cm) long; fin about 11¾ in (30 cm) long and 28 in (71 cm) along its scalloped edge

To fit a height of 5 ft 3 in (160 cm) to 5 ft 8 in (173 cm)

Skill

Intermediate

Tall stitches in shells, post stitches in the fin and color changes

Yarn

Medium (4), 2 colors

Hook

5.5 mm (US I-9)

Gauge

13 stitches and 10 rows to 4 in (10 cm)

In medium scales.

What you need

Yarn A: deep lagoon, main color — **about 850 yd (777 m), an estimate**

Yarn B: pale sea glass, stripes of the tail, part of the fin and the cord — **about 610 yd (558 m), an estimate**

By weight: about 730 g in all, an estimate, where 100 g is 200 yd (183 m).

Hook: 5.5 mm (US I-9), or the size that gives you the gauge. Also: a yarn needle, scissors, a tape measure and a stitch marker.

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.

Sizes

Size	Fits	Finished size, about	Yarn, an estimate
Adult (this file)	**a height of 5 ft 3 in (160 cm) to 5 ft 8 in (173 cm)**	**43½ in (110 cm) around, 17½ in (44 cm) around at the ankles, 46¾ in (119 cm) long without the fin**	**about 1,460 yd (1,335 m)**
Tall adult	a height of 5 ft 9 in (175 cm) to 6 ft 2 in (188 cm)	49½ in (126 cm) around, 20 in (51 cm) around at the ankles, 52¼ in (133 cm) long without the fin	about 1,850 yd (1,692 m)

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Gauge

13 stitches and 10 rows to 4 in (10 cm) in medium scales.

13 stitches to 4 in (10 cm) in single crochet, and 10 rows to 4 in (10 cm) in the medium scales, where a shell of 5 dc and the sc beside it are 6 stitches. Check it on the tail itself when row 2 is done, laid flat: in Adult the 57 stitches are about 17½ in (44 cm) wide, and for Tall adult the 65 stitches are about 20 in (51 cm). Check it again when the first 10 rows of medium scales are done: in Adult the row is about 26¼ in (67 cm) wide, in Tall adult about 29¾ in (76 cm), and the 10 rows are about 4 in (10 cm) tall. If they measure more, start again with a smaller hook; if they measure less, with a larger one.

Notes

- For sitting or lying in while awake, with a grown-up near a child. It holds both legs: it is not for sleep, for walking or for stairs.
- The tail is one flat piece, worked from the ankles up to the waist. Odd rows are right side rows and even rows are wrong side rows. The scales point up as you work; the two long edges meet at the back, where the lower part is sewn and the upper part is closed with cords.
- Rows 1 to 3 are in A. From row 4 up to the waistband every color is worked for two rows: a wrong side row of stitches of several heights, which fills the valleys between the shells, and a right side row of shells. Both yarns stay at the same edge, so neither is cut. The waistband is all in A.
- The ch 1 at the start of a row, and in the fin the ch 2 too, does not count as a stitch: the first stitch of the row goes into the st it rises from.
- In the tail the ch 2, 3, 4 or 5 at the start of a row counts as the st named in the row and stands on the first st. Where the row goes on with stitches "in same st", they go into that first st too; where it does not, the next stitch goes into the second st. What the next row has to work "in top of turning ch" at its end goes into the top of that chain.
- Where several stitches are named with one place, all of them are worked into that one place.
- To change yarn, work the last yarn over of the last stitch of the row before with the new yarn. If the old yarn is needed again after only 2 or 4 rows of another yarn, leave it hanging at the edge and bring it loosely up the side when you need it. Otherwise cut it, leaving a tail of about 6 in (15 cm), and leave a tail of the same length on the new yarn.
- Leave a tail of about 6 in (15 cm) when you begin and when you fasten off, unless another length is given. The ends that are not sewn with are woven in.
- When a ball runs out, join the next at the end of a row: work the last yarn over of the last stitch with the new yarn, and leave a tail of about 6 in (15 cm) on both.
- Whip stitch: with the yarn on a yarn needle, pass the needle under both loops of a stitch on one edge and under both loops of the stitch that lies against it on the other edge, and pull the yarn through. Do the same in the next stitch of each edge. On a foundation chain edge, pass the needle under the lower strands of each chain that holds a stitch of row 1. On a side edge there are no loops: pass the needle through the end stitch of the row on one side and the end stitch of the row that lies against it on the other. Fasten a length where the sewing begins and where it ends: sew 2 or 3 times into the same place.

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- To lengthen the leg: at the end of the medium scales four rows are worked once more than the pattern says, which adds about 1½ in (4 cm): in Adult, when row 42 is done, work rows 39 to 42 once more; they take about 20 yd (19 m) of A and 20 yd (19 m) of B; in Tall adult, when row 48 is done, work rows 45 to 48 once more; they take about 20 yd (19 m) of A and 20 yd (19 m) of B. You may do it two or three times. Each time the number of every later row grows by four, also those named in Assembly: the marker of the back seam and the rows of the cords. The back seam grows by four pairs of row ends and the opening stays as long as it is; cut each length for the seam 4 in (10 cm) longer.
- Buy whole balls from one dye lot.

Instructions

Adult. US terms.

ch chain, **sl st** slip stitch, **sc** single crochet (UK double crochet), **hdc** half double crochet (UK half treble), **dc** double crochet (UK treble), **tr** treble crochet (UK double treble), **st** stitch.
FPdc round the stitch below, from the front, **BPdc** round the stitch below, from the back, **sk** skip, **yo** yarn over the hook, **RS** right side, the one that shows.
3 hdc in next st: all in one stitch. **sc in next 3 sts**: one in each.
[ ] 14 times: work what is inside 14 times in all.
(57 sc): the stitches you have when the row is done. **How to read a pattern**.

Special stitches

dtr (Double treble crochet): Yo 3 times, insert hook in the place named, yo, pull up a loop, [yo, pull through 2 loops] 4 times. In UK terms: ttr, triple treble.

Tail

Yarns in order of use: A, deep lagoon; B, pale sea glass.

☐ **Foundation**	With A, ch 58.	
☐ **Row 1 (RS)**	Sc in 2nd ch from hook and in each ch across	(57 sc)
☐ **Row 2**	Ch 1, turn; sc in each st across	(57 sc)

Small scales: shells of 3 hdc

☐ **Row 3**	Ch 1, turn; sc in first st, **[**sk next st, 3 hdc in next st, sk next st, sc in next st**] 14 times**	(15 sc, 42 hdc)
☐ **Row 4**	With B, ch 2 (counts as hdc), turn; **[**sc in next 3 sts, hdc in next st**] 14 times**	(15 hdc, 42 sc)
☐ **Row 5**	Ch 2 (counts as hdc), turn; hdc in same st, **[**sk next st, sc in next st, sk next st, 3 hdc in next st**] 13 times**, sk next st, sc in next st, sk next st, 2 hdc in top of turning ch	(43 hdc, 14 sc)
☐ **Row 6**	With A, ch 1, turn; **[**sc in next 2 sts, hdc in next st, sc in next st**] 14 times**, sc in top of turning ch	(43 sc, 14 hdc)
☐ **Rows 7 to 10**	Repeat rows 3 to 6 in order, over and over. The last row, row 10, is worked as row 6.	

7 8 9 10

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Medium scales: shells of 5 dc

☐ **Row 11** — Ch 1, turn; sc in first st, **[**sk next st, 5 dc in next st, sk next st, sc in next st**] 14 times**
(15 sc, 70 dc)

☐ **Row 12** — With B, ch 3 (counts as dc), turn;
[hdc in next st, sc in next 3 sts, hdc in next st, dc in next st**] 14 times** (15 dc, 28 hdc, 42 sc)

☐ **Row 13** — Ch 3 (counts as dc), turn; 2 dc in same st,
[sk next 2 sts, sc in next st, sk next 2 sts, 5 dc in next st**] 13 times**, sk next 2 sts,
sc in next st, sk next 2 sts, 3 dc in top of turning ch (71 dc, 14 sc)

☐ **Row 14** — With A, ch 1, turn;
[sc in next 2 sts, hdc in next st, dc in next st, hdc in next st, sc in next st**] 14 times**,
sc in top of turning ch (43 sc, 28 hdc, 14 dc)

☐ **Row 15** — Ch 1, turn; sc in first st, **[**sk next 2 sts, 5 dc in next st, sk next 2 sts, sc in next st**] 14 times**
(15 sc, 70 dc)

☐ **Rows 16 to 42** — Repeat rows 12 to 15 in order, over and over. The last row, row 42, is worked as row 14.

16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42

Large scales: shells of 7 tr

☐ **Row 43** — Ch 1, turn; sc in first st, **[**sk next 2 sts, 7 tr in next st, sk next 2 sts, sc in next st**] 14 times**
(15 sc, 98 tr)

☐ **Row 44** — With B, ch 4 (counts as tr), turn;
[dc in next st, hdc in next st, sc in next 3 sts, hdc in next st, dc in next st,
tr in next st**] 14 times** (15 tr, 28 dc, 28 hdc, 42 sc)

☐ **Row 45** — Ch 4 (counts as tr), turn; 3 tr in same st,
[sk next 3 sts, sc in next st, sk next 3 sts, 7 tr in next st**] 13 times**, sk next 3 sts,
sc in next st, sk next 3 sts, 4 tr in top of turning ch (99 tr, 14 sc)

☐ **Row 46** — With A, ch 1, turn;
[sc in next 2 sts, hdc in next st, dc in next st, tr in next st, dc in next st,
hdc in next st, sc in next st**] 14 times**,
sc in top of turning ch (43 sc, 28 hdc, 28 dc, 14 tr)

☐ **Row 47** — Ch 1, turn; sc in first st, **[**sk next 3 sts, 7 tr in next st, sk next 3 sts, sc in next st**] 14 times**
(15 sc, 98 tr)

☐ **Rows 48 to 70** — Repeat rows 44 to 47 in order, over and over. The last row, row 70, is worked as row 46.

48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70

Largest scales: shells of 9 dtr

☐ **Row 71** — Ch 1, turn; sc in first st, **[**sk next 3 sts, 9 dtr in next st, sk next 3 sts, sc in next st**] 14 times**
(15 sc, 126 dtr)

☐ **Row 72** — With B, ch 5 (counts as dtr), turn;
[tr in next st, dc in next st, hdc in next st, sc in next 3 sts, hdc in next st,
dc in next st, tr in next st, dtr in next st**] 14 times** (15 dtr, 28 tr, 28 dc, 28 hdc, 42 sc)

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☐ **Row 73**	Ch 5 (counts as dtr), turn; 4 dtr in same st, **[**sk next 4 sts, sc in next st, sk next 4 sts, 9 dtr in next st**] 13 times**, sk next 4 sts, sc in next st, sk next 4 sts, 5 dtr in top of turning ch	(127 dtr, 14 sc)
☐ **Row 74**	With A, ch 1, turn; **[**sc in next 2 sts, hdc in next st, dc in next st, tr in next st, dtr in next st, tr in next st, dc in next st, hdc in next st, sc in next st**] 14 times**, sc in top of turning ch	(43 sc, 28 hdc, 28 dc, 28 tr, 14 dtr)
☐ **Row 75**	Ch 1, turn; sc in first st, **[**sk next 4 sts, 9 dtr in next st, sk next 4 sts, sc in next st**] 14 times**	(15 sc, 126 dtr)
☐ **Rows 76 to 91**	Repeat rows 72 to 75 in order, over and over. The last row, row 91, is worked as row 75.	

76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91

Waistband

☐ **Row 92**	Ch 5 (counts as dtr), turn; **[**tr in next st, dc in next st, hdc in next st, sc in next 3 sts, hdc in next st, dc in next st, tr in next st, dtr in next st**] 14 times**	(15 dtr, 28 tr, 28 dc, 28 hdc, 42 sc)
☐ **Row 93**	Ch 1, turn; sc in next 140 sts, sc in top of turning ch	(141 sc)
☐ **Rows 94 to 100**	Ch 1, turn; sc in each st across	(141 sc)

94 95 96 97 98 99 100

☐ **End**	Fasten off.	

Fin

Yarns in order of use: A, deep lagoon; B, pale sea glass.

☐ **Foundation**	With A, ch 29.	
☐ **Row 1 (RS)**	Sc in 2nd ch from hook and in each ch across	(28 sc)
☐ **Row 2**	Ch 2, turn; dc in next 27 sts, 2 dc in last st	(29 dc)
☐ **Row 3**	Ch 2, turn; **[**2 dc in next st, dc in next 3 sts, FPdc around next st**] 5 times**, 2 dc in next st, dc in next 3 sts	(30 dc, 5 FPdc)
☐ **Row 4**	Ch 2, turn; **[**dc in next 5 sts, BPdc around next st**] 5 times**, dc in next 5 sts	(30 dc, 5 BPdc)
☐ **Row 5**	Ch 2, turn; **[**2 dc in next st, dc in next 4 sts, FPdc around next st**] 5 times**, 2 dc in next st, dc in next 4 sts	(36 dc, 5 FPdc)
☐ **Row 6**	Ch 2, turn; **[**dc in next 6 sts, BPdc around next st**] 5 times**, dc in next 6 sts	(36 dc, 5 BPdc)
☐ **Row 7**	Ch 2, turn; **[**2 dc in next st, dc in next 5 sts, FPdc around next st**] 5 times**, 2 dc in next st, dc in next 5 sts	(42 dc, 5 FPdc)
☐ **Row 8**	Ch 2, turn; **[**dc in next 7 sts, BPdc around next st**] 5 times**, dc in next 7 sts	(42 dc, 5 BPdc)
☐ **Row 9**	Ch 2, turn; **[**2 dc in next st, dc in next 6 sts, FPdc around next st**] 5 times**, 2 dc in next st, dc in next 6 sts	(48 dc, 5 FPdc)
☐ **Row 10**	Ch 2, turn; **[**dc in next 8 sts, BPdc around next st**] 5 times**, dc in next 8 sts	(48 dc, 5 BPdc)

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☐ **Row 11**	Ch 2, turn; **[**2 dc in next st, dc in next 7 sts, FPdc around next st**] 5 times**, 2 dc in next st, dc in next 7 sts	(54 dc, 5 FPdc)
☐ **Row 12**	Ch 2, turn; **[**dc in next 9 sts, BPdc around next st**] 5 times**, dc in next 9 sts	(54 dc, 5 BPdc)
☐ **Row 13**	Ch 2, turn; **[**2 dc in next st, dc in next 8 sts, FPdc around next st**] 5 times**, 2 dc in next st, dc in next 8 sts	(60 dc, 5 FPdc)
☐ **Row 14**	Ch 2, turn; **[**dc in next 10 sts, BPdc around next st**] 5 times**, dc in next 10 sts	(60 dc, 5 BPdc)
☐ **Row 15**	Ch 2, turn; **[**2 dc in next st, dc in next 9 sts, FPdc around next st**] 5 times**, 2 dc in next st, dc in next 9 sts	(66 dc, 5 FPdc)
☐ **Row 16**	Ch 2, turn; **[**dc in next 11 sts, BPdc around next st**] 5 times**, dc in next 11 sts	(66 dc, 5 BPdc)
☐ **Row 17**	Ch 2, turn; **[**2 dc in next st, dc in next 10 sts, FPdc around next st**] 5 times**, 2 dc in next st, dc in next 10 sts	(72 dc, 5 FPdc)
☐ **Row 18**	Ch 2, turn; **[**dc in next 12 sts, BPdc around next st**] 5 times**, dc in next 12 sts	(72 dc, 5 BPdc)
☐ **Row 19**	Ch 2, turn; **[**2 dc in next st, dc in next 11 sts, FPdc around next st**] 5 times**, 2 dc in next st, dc in next 11 sts	(78 dc, 5 FPdc)
☐ **Row 20**	Ch 2, turn; **[**dc in next 13 sts, BPdc around next st**] 5 times**, dc in next 13 sts	(78 dc, 5 BPdc)
☐ **Row 21**	Ch 2, turn; **[**2 dc in next st, dc in next 12 sts, FPdc around next st**] 5 times**, 2 dc in next st, dc in next 12 sts	(84 dc, 5 FPdc)

Scalloped edge

☐ **Row 22**	With B, ch 1, turn; 2 sc in first st, sc in next 87 sts, 2 sc in last st	(91 sc)
☐ **Row 23**	Ch 1, turn; sc in first st, **[**sk next 2 sts, 7 dc in next st, sk next 2 sts, sc in next st**] 15 times**	(16 sc, 105 dc)
☐ **End**	Fasten off.	

Cord: make 6

Yarn B, pale sea glass.

☐ **Foundation**	With B, ch 71.	
☐ **Row 1 (RS)**	Sl st in 2nd ch from hook and in each ch across	(70 sl sts)
☐ **End**	Fasten off, leaving a tail of about 12 in (30 cm).	

Assembly

1. Weave in the ends of the tail and of the fin. Fold the tail in half lengthwise with the wrong side out, so that its two long edges, the ends of the rows, meet. Put a marker through both edges at the end of row 65. Back seam: cut two lengths of A, each about 60 in (152 cm) long. With the first, begin at the foundation chain and whip stitch the two edges to each other, the end of every row to the end of the same row, up to about half of the way; go on with the second to the marker, through row 65: 65 pairs of row ends. How many stitches go into the end of a row depends on

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how tall it is there: one where the row has an sc or an hdc at the edge, two where it has a dc and three where it has a tr. A turning chain at the edge takes as many stitches as the st it counts as: one for a ch 2, two for a ch 3 and three for a ch 4. Above the marker, for about 18½ in (47 cm), the edges stay open. Take out the marker and turn the tail right side out.

2. Foot and fin: lay the tail with the seam in the middle of the side that faces you, and flatten the ankle end, so that the foundation chain is doubled: its 57 chains that hold a stitch are counted from the seam, round the front and back to the seam. Chains 15 to 42 lie in front, underneath; chains 14 to 1 and 57 to 44 lie on them, 28 pairs; chain 43, at a fold, is left over. Turn the tail over, so that the seam is underneath. Lay the fin below it, right side up, its foundation chain along the foot: 28 chains against 28 pairs. Cut a length of A, about 36 in (91 cm), and whip stitch from fold to fold, each stitch through a chain of the fin and through both chains of the pair that lies against it: 28 stitches. This closes the foot and joins the fin.

3. Cords: both tails of a cord hang at one end of it; weave in the short one, from the beginning. Turn the tail so that the open back faces you. Sew one cord to each edge of the opening, three on the left and three on the right, at the ends of rows 96, 83 and 73, with the long tail of the cord: lay the end of the cord with the long tail ½ in (1 cm) over the edge on the wrong side and make 6 stitches through it and the edge, then fasten off. Tie the two cords of every pair in a bow across the opening; draw the upper ones together as far as suits the waist.

Finishing

- Weave in what is left of the ends with the yarn needle.
- Use the tail for sitting and resting, with the legs inside. Do not walk in it.

In all: 8 pieces.

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

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