

How to crochet clothes that will fit

To figure out how much you need to subtract from your measurements, you first have to determine how many minimum or maximum stretch factors are in play.

MATERIALS

Try and test a stitch/yarn/hook combination:

Step 1:

Crochet 10 cm in width, 10 cm in height – how many stitches/rows is that?

Step 2:

Stretch it gently – how much does it measure now?

Step 3:

Stretch it as much as you can – how much does it measure now?

CROCHET TENSION

Get to know your crochet tension:

Do you have a more loose or tight crochet tension?

If you crochet tightly you might not need to subtract that much. If you have a loose crochet tension you can subtract more from your measurements, as your garment then have a tendency to stretch more out of size.

THE ACTUAL CROCHETING

Let's assume that you are making a regular top and you are constructing it out of 2 panels of horizontal rows that you are putting together at the end.

Step 1:

Make the first row – make sure that it measures your bust (subtracted by 5-25 cm – depending on how many max stretch factors are in play) – divided by 2 (because you have 2 panels).

- If you are still unsure about how many cm to subtract, try and stretch your first row and see how far it stretches – then multiply by 2 (2 panels) and see if it fits your measurement.

Step 2:

Finish the garment. Measure the width/circumference, height, sleeve length etc.

- write it down. Also write down what materials you used and the measurement of your body.

Step 3:

Wear, wash and dry the garment.

Step 4:

After a few days/a week of wearing it, measure the garment and your body again.

Has anything changed?

How much has the garment stretched in size?

This will help you in the future, when you have to make another garment with the same kind of stitch/hook/yarn, you know what to expect and how the garment will stretch.

AN EXAMPLE OF SUBTRACTING 25 CM:

- You are using a big hook, stretchy yarn, big stitches and have a loose tension
 - The garment is supposed to fit tightly so it will be stretched to the max.
- The garment will be tied on the back and therefore also be stretched everytime you put in on
 - You want it to be able to keep fitting tightly over time

IN THE BEGINNING THAT MIGHT MEAN THAT:

- The garment feels very tight and too small (don't worry, it will give)
- The garment will be see-through because it's so tight-fitted and stretched

AN EXAMPLE OF SUBTRACTING 5 CM:

- The yarn has little stretch, your hook is small, your tension is tight, the stitches are small and/ or textured
- The garment is supposed to fit loosely (so if it stretches a little out of size, it won't be a problem)
 - The garment will *not* be tied on the back and therefore only be stretched slightly (for instance when you put it on)
- The design/fit won't change just because it might give a little in size (an example could be a sweater)

IN THE BEGINNING THAT MIGHT MEAN THAT:

- The garment feels very compact
- It might even feel stiff to begin with but will most likely soften over time

MEASURE & STRETCH

Once you have a garment that fits you go ahead and measure it + measure your body.

The difference in your measurement vs the garment's measurement will help you when you go up or down in size. Just add/subtract the same measurements when you are using other measurements.

- If the garment measures 100 cm (after it has stretched) and you measure 90 cm in circumference, the garment has to be 10 cm bigger than the measurement, no matter what size you're making. So if your customer measures 70 cm in circumference the garment needs to measure $70 + 10 = 80$ cm in circumference.
- If you subtracted 5 cm from a particular design to make it fit your measurements, you *always* subtract 5 cm, no matter what size you are making in that particular design.
- How much you subtract from the measurement will vary from design to design – sometimes the same stitches will stretch differently maybe because you're crochet tension has changed.
- Your body is your guide! If you are making the design for a customer in a bigger size, you know it *has* to fit looser on you. If you are making it in a smaller size, it *has* to fit tighter on you. If it fits you then you know it will fit too loose/tightly on the customer.
- If you are using the size guide (where we have 4 cm circumference difference from each size), just count how many stitches/rows you have for every 4 cm in circumference (and 1-2 cm in height). This will tell you how many stitches/row you have to make for each size going up/down.
- If a customer is a size 80 cm in circumference (and you're 90 cm), you can just measure 10 cm on your garment, and count how many stitches/rows that is on that particular garment. Then subtract those stitches/rows from the original design.
- If your design has a particular stitch pattern that means that you can't just subtract/add any number of stitches/rows, just choose the number closest to.
Don't worry if you are a few cm off, or if between size L and XL there is 7 cm difference and between XS and S there is 3.
It's gonna be okay! You are doing the best you can, it's not supposed to be perfect and there is no "right way" to do it. Do it your way – that's enough.

And if all of this is too confusing for you - just make sure that all your crochet clothes is made 1 size smaller in measurement. So if you are making a design for size small, use the measurements for size xs, this way the garment have room to give and fit one size bigger.

I hope you found this little course helpful and inspiring and I wish you all the best in your crochet and designing journey :-)