

HOW TO MAKE A SIMPLE SHELL CROCHETED EDGE ON A SINGLE-LAYER FLEECE BLANKET

Select and prepare your fabric. Use a colorful piece of fleece that is slightly larger than the size you want your finished blanket to be. Most fleece is 60" wide. A good size for a child's blanket is about 42" x 60", so to make one you would cut your fleece to about 44" long. Aim for a finished size of around 30" x 36" for baby blankets and about 60" x 72" for teens and pre-teens.

Square up your fleece before you do anything else. (Or rectangle it up, to be more precise.) Using a rotary cutter with a ruler and cutting mat, remove all selvages (the binding on both sides of a piece of fabric). Make sure the sides are straight and the corners are 90 degrees. Then round off the corners slightly, using either a drinking glass or coffee mug as a template or as a cutting guideline for a rotary cutter blade.

Make holes along the edge of the fabric. Once the edges are straight, line up your ruler about 3/4" from the edge of the fleece. Using a "skip stitch" or "crochet edge" blade in a rotary cutter, make a line of holes about 3/4" from the edge of the fleece all the way around. (Helpful hint: If you put a big flower pin in the last hole that you cut when you have to stop and move the fleece on your cutting mat, it helps you find your starting point when you continue.)

1st row. Start in a corner. Using a Size H crochet hook and worsted weight yarn, make one single crochet in the corner hole, chain one, and single crochet again in the same hole. Chain one, then *single crochet in the next hole, chain one* and continue from * to * all the way to the next corner. In each corner hole do a second "single crochet, chain one" so that you can make the turn, then continue on as before. When you get back to the starting point, join with a slip stitch to the first single crochet. (Note: Let the edge of the fleece fold to the back as you single crochet around it. This makes a nice finished edge on the fleece.)

2nd row. Make 6 double-crochet (dc) in the "chain one" between the two single crochets in the starting corner. Slip stitch in the next 2 "chain ones" from the previous row. *Work 3 dc in the next chain-one, then slip stitch in the next 2 chain-ones*. Repeat from * to * across to the next corner. (You may have to adjust by adding or skipping a slip-stitch in order to end up exactly in the next corner hole.) WORK 6 DC IN THE CORNER, then slip-stitch in the next 2 chain-ones, and continue on around, working 6 dc in each corner. Tie off and weave in ends.

