



All Thumbs (Crochet)

Two stories... very different from each other, but both have fingers and thumbs involved.

Mom taught us from an early age to hold our long-sleeved shirts with our fingers before pulling on a sweater or a coat. This is a necessity if you don't want your sleeves to end up all bunched up around your elbows. As Mom's disease progressed, this is a skill that never left her. She would instinctively grasp the cuff of her shirt before we helped her pull on her coat. I always loved this... such a smart lady. In the photo with Scott and our dog Cooper, Mom is wearing a green coat, but she actually has another coat underneath. I know she used her cuff holding method to keep the first coat from scooting up her arms.



The other story is told by my husband, Mike. He met Mom shortly after our blind date... he was just 17 years old, so he knew and loved her all of his adult life.



Communication was never an issue between me and Alice. When I was dating Diane and I was in high school, she always made me feel a part of her family. As part of the family I sometimes received the laugh when I said something she thought was funny, however I also received the look she would give to someone who said something that she didn't think was appropriate. As her illness progressed her ability to speak deteriorated and eventually she stopped talking... but this didn't stop her from being able to communicate. She still had her smile, and with me she had her thumbs. I don't know how it happened, but when visiting with her one day I just held her hand and we smiled at each other.... there was communication there for sure. But at some time she started to move her thumb around and the next thing I knew we were thumb wrestling. For the last part of her life Alice and I may not have communicated in the traditional sense, but we did it in a way I will never forget... by thumb wrestling. It is a special memory that I have of Alice and I feel lucky to have had this little one on one activity with my dear mother-in-law.



Alice's Embrace is devoted to providing hand-knit and hand-crocheted prayer shawls and lap blankets to those suffering from Alzheimer's disease. We seek volunteers to knit and crochet the patterns that we have created. Through the loving hands of many generous and talented people, this endeavor will help ease the anxiety that is often present in those suffering from the disease.

All Thumbs (Crochet) Lap Blanket



Skill Level: 

Size: Approximately 30" x 40"

Materials: 1200 yards worsted weight yarn

Hook: US G-6 (4mm)

Notions: Right side marker, tapestry needle

Gauge: 13 stitches and 11 rows = 4" in pattern stitch

Abbreviations:

Ch = Chain

Dc = Double crochet

Slst = Slip stitch

St = Stitch

WS = Wrong side

RS = Right side

Notes:

You will hold the yarn single stranded while crocheting this lap blanket.

- The texture of this pattern is created from the wrong side; in other words, the wrong side should always face you when working the slst, dc pattern (Row 1). The all dc row (Row 2) is crocheted with the right side (textured side) facing you.
- Do not pull the slip stitches too tight – you will crochet into them in the next row.
- When crocheting the double crochet row (Row 2), make sure you crochet into *each* slip stitch and *each* double crochet. The slip stitches are smaller than the double crochet stitches, and can more easily be missed. Missed stitches will throw the pattern off, and the raised bumps on the right side will not line up properly.

The Pattern:

Ch 99

If you need to adjust for gauge, the pattern is any odd number of chains, plus 2 for the starting chain.

Set up row (RS): Working into the back bump of the chain (back horizontal bar of the chain), dc in third chain from hook and in each st (bump) across the row; turn. (Place marker on this row to denote right side of lap blanket.)

Row1 (WS): Ch 1, slst in first dc, dc in second dc. Repeat the pattern (slst, dc) across the row, ending with a slst in last stitch; turn.

Row 2 (RS): Ch 3, dc in each slst and each dc across the row; turn.

Repeat rows 1-2 until prayer shawl measures 40", ending the blanket on a Row 2 (all dc row) repeat. Cut yarn. Finish off.

Finishing:

Weave in ends.