

Hybrid Terracotta Crochet-Base Cave

A photo-matched crochet cat cave with a stable floor, removable washable comfort layer and measurement-based fit checks.



A terracotta crochet basket base and doorway rim paired with a cream removable cushion and a sewn terracotta fabric dome.

Publishing status

Prototype-ready draft. Crochet, wash and fit-test one physical sample before calling this pattern tested.

Project plan

Construction	Double crochet basket base; detachable fabric hood; crochet doorway binding; removable cushion.
Starting gauge	Crochet prototype gauge: 9 sc x 9 rounds = 10 cm. The sewn dome is fitted from the completed basket measurement rather than stitch gauge.
Photo-style target	Starting target: 46-50 cm floor, 32-36 cm dome height, 28-32 cm opening.
Wash plan	The crochet basket, cushion cover and fabric dome separate so each material can be washed by its own care label.

Materials

- Bulky washable terracotta yarn
- 7-9 mm hook
- washable medium-weight fabric
- matching thread
- fabric clips
- removable cushion
- optional soft sew-in washable interfacing.

Also have: scissors, yarn needle, locking stitch markers, measuring tape and the intended washable cushion materials. Keep pins, needles and small tools away from the cat.

Abbreviations

ch = chain; sc = single crochet; sl st = slip stitch; BLO = back loop only; st(s) = stitch(es); rnd = round; sc2tog = single crochet two together.

Measure first

Complete the basket first. Fabric hood width = measured back-and-side attachment path plus 2 cm seam allowance; hood depth = basket depth plus 2 cm seam allowance.

Write the actual floor width, depth, entrance width and entrance height in the boxes below before crocheting. Do not rely on breed, age or a generic size label.

Floor width	Floor depth	Entrance width	Entrance height
_____ cm	_____ cm	_____ cm	_____ cm

Before the full project

- Crochet and wash a 15 cm swatch. Record stitch gauge, row gauge and any growth after drying.
- Make a paper floor template from the calculated dimensions and place it where the cave will live.
- Confirm the cat can turn on the template and that the intended doorway is wider than the shoulders.
- Choose smooth yarn with no large holes, shedding fibers or rough cut ends.

Construction steps

1. Crochet and join two oval floor panels, then work a low terracotta basket wall with a broad front gap.
2. Measure the finished attachment path around one side, the back and the opposite side. Draft a symmetrical fabric hood pattern from that measurement.
3. Sew two mirrored dome pieces with enclosed seams. If extra body is needed, use soft washable sew-in interfacing, never exposed wire or rigid rods.
4. Finish the fabric doorway edge, then hand-sew or clip the hood to the crochet basket through a removable washable binding.
5. Crochet a separate terracotta sc rim and stitch it flat around the visible doorway, making sure no needle or pin remains in the project.
6. Add the removable cushion and test disassembly, washing and reassembly before pet use.

Finishing checklist

- Weave each yarn tail through dense fabric in more than one direction, tug-test it, then trim.
- Press the floor on a hard surface. It must sit flat and return flat after the front edge is pressed.
- Run a hand over every inside seam and doorway edge. Correct any ridge, loop or rough point.
- Lift the cushion out without stretching the entrance and confirm every component is fully dry.

Fit check

The fabric dome must stand clear of Skyla's head and detach without leaving loops that can catch paws.

- Let the cat approach voluntarily; do not place or hold the cat inside.
- Watch one complete entry, turn, lie-down and exit sequence.
- The roof and entrance must stay clear of ears, whiskers and functioning breakaway-collar hardware.
- Stop use if the cat chews yarn, catches a claw, pants, freezes, struggles to turn or avoids the exit.

Care

Wash each component by its material label. Dry every layer fully before reconnecting the hood to the crochet base.

Safety

This is a hybrid crochet-and-sewn project, not an all-crochet cave. Count and remove every pin or needle before fit testing.

If a collar is worn, it must be a functioning breakaway collar. A bell or tag can snag, so test generous clearance or remove the collar during supervised cave use. Never hide wire, tubing or sharp stabilizers inside the shell.

Final sign-off

Sample crocheted: ____ Washed and fully dried: ____ Base stayed flat: ____ Entrance stayed open: ____ Cat entered and exited comfortably under supervision: ____ Pattern version/date: _____