

Midnight Paw-Print Stocking



Original pattern draft inspired by the supplied image. Gauge, yardage, dimensions and hanging capacity have not been physically tested. This is a decorative gift holder, not a wearable stocking or pet toy.

Project	Written version
Skill	Intermediate colorwork
Body count / laid-flat width	48 sts around / approximately 13.3 cm (5.2 in)
Nominal height	About 26 cm (10.2 in), excluding tab; final shape depends on gauge
Yarn / starting hook	Smooth worsted-weight (#4) yarn; same yarn line for both colors; 4.0 mm to start; swatch the motif separately

Materials

Allow approximately 170 m (186 yd) of midnight blue yarn and 40 m (44 yd) of cream yarn. These are planning allowances, not measured consumption. Keep extra matching yarn for swatches and corrections.

Also: matching hook, removable stitch markers, yarn needle, scissors and tape measure. Use a fixed display hook appropriate to your surface. Remove all markers before display.

1. Measure and swatch

Target plain sc gauge: 18 sts and 20 rounds per 10 cm (about 4 in), after washing and drying as the yarn label directs. This is a design target, not a measurement taken from the photograph. Start with 4.0 mm to start; swatch the motif separately. Use the smooth yarn and color combination listed on page 1.

Make a swatch tube: chain enough for at least a 24 cm circumference; join without twisting. Work at least 12 cm of joined sc rounds. Lay flat without stretching and measure a central 10 cm strip across one visible layer. Count rounds over 10 cm vertically. Swatch any special texture or colorwork separately. If the special-stitch tube differs in circumference, change hook for that section and recheck.

More stitches in 10 cm means a narrower stocking; fewer means a wider one. Use a larger hook for fewer stitches, a smaller hook for more, then wash and remeasure. Stop if the fabric is too open to hold the intended sealed packet or so rigid that the cuff cannot fold.

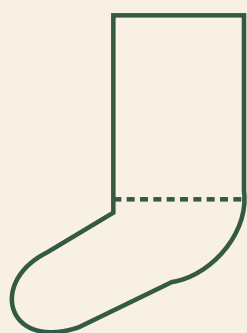
Measure	This guide
Toe to heel opening	13 cm, measured from closed toe along flattened foot
Heel bridge to cuff attachment	20 cm along the leg, before adding cuff
Visible cuff / edge	1.5 cm
Body opening	48 stitches around; approximately 26.6 cm circumference

For a different opening, measure the perimeter of your sealed packet plus about 2 cm of trial ease. With g = washed stitches per cm, choose $N = 12 \times \text{ceiling}(\text{desired circumference} \times g / 12)$. Use at least 36 stitches. Toe increases stop at N; the heel gap is N/2. Recalculate texture and colorwork repeats. This formula does not resize a motif chart automatically.

US crochet terms

ch = chain; sc = single crochet; dc = double crochet; sl st = slip stitch; st(s) = stitch(es); rnd = round; BLO = back loop only; MC = main color; CC = contrast color. inc = 2 sc in one st. sc2tog = insert hook in next st, yarn over and pull up a loop; repeat in next st; yarn over and draw through all 3 loops.

Use joined rounds: ch 1 at the start and sl st into the first actual stitch at the end. Chains and joining sl sts never count as stitches. Work into the first actual stitch, not the joining sl st. Do not turn unless the textured-leg instruction says to turn. Mark the first stitch.



- 1 TOE** Start closed; increase to body count.
- 2 FOOT** Work to the measured length.
- 3 HEEL GAP** Chain half; skip half. Leave it open.
- 4 LEG + CUFF** Continue upward without closing the rim.
- 5 HEEL + TAB** Return to the gap; add and check tab.

Construction sketch only. Not a photograph or a scale template.

2. Toe, foot and heel opening

Start in midnight blue. Join every round as described on page 2. Use both loops for all toe increases. Keep a 15 cm tail to secure the ring later.

Toe round	Instructions	Count
1	6 sc into an adjustable ring; close ring securely	6
2	2 sc in every st	12
3	(sc in next 1 st, 2 sc in next st) 6 times	18
4	(sc in next 2 sts, 2 sc in next st) 6 times	24
5	(sc in next 3 sts, 2 sc in next st) 6 times	30
6	(sc in next 4 sts, 2 sc in next st) 6 times	36
7	(sc in next 5 sts, 2 sc in next st) 6 times	42
8	(sc in next 6 sts, 2 sc in next st) 6 times	48

Continue the foot. After toe round 8, maintain exactly 48 sts in every round until the toe-to-opening length is 13 cm. Measure the flattened stocking from its closed toe to the current working edge. Follow the style schedule below; finish a full round. Do not add an increase round simply to gain length.

Work plain sc in both loops for the foot. For this version the toe, foot and heel remain midnight blue.

Reserve the heel. Ch 1, chain 24 loosely and skip the next 24 actual stitches. Sc in the remaining 24 stitches; join to the first chain of the bridge. The bridge replaces the skipped stitches. There are 48 positions around the new rim, but the skipped stitches below remain an open hole for the heel.

Leg foundation round (G1). Ch 1, sc once into the top of each of the 24 bridge chains and once into each of the other 24 sc; join (48 sc). Leave the underside of the chain free for the heel. Do not work into the skipped stitches yet.

3. Work the leg

Work plain MC through G10 (G1 counts as the first leg round). Then place and work the motif using the chart and centering instructions on page 6. After the chart, continue plain MC to the leg length. Do not add the motif as an applique.

Stop when the leg measures 20 cm from the heel bridge to the cuff attachment line. Use actual length, not an inferred row count from the image. Check the packet can pass through without forcing it. Fasten off, leaving the top open.

4. Work the heel into the opening

Use midnight blue and plain sc in both loops. H1: join at one end of the chain bridge. Work 24 sc into the unused undersides of the bridge chains and 24 sc into the skipped body stitches (48 sc total). Join. Do not add stitches at the corners; small corner gaps are closed with a yarn needle at finishing.

Put a marker at the start of each equal half of H1. Each decrease round uses this formula twice: sc2tog, sc in the next (current half-count minus 4) sts, sc2tog. This removes 4 stitches per round and keeps two equal halves. Move the markers to the first stitch of each new half. Ch 1 and join as usual; neither counts.

Heel round	Repeat twice	End count
H2	sc2tog, sc 20, sc2tog	44
H3	sc2tog, sc 18, sc2tog	40
H4	sc2tog, sc 16, sc2tog	36
H5	sc2tog, sc 14, sc2tog	32
H6	sc2tog, sc 12, sc2tog	28
H7	sc2tog, sc 10, sc2tog	24
H8	sc2tog, sc 8, sc2tog	20
H9	sc2tog, sc 6, sc2tog	16
H10	sc2tog, sc 4, sc2tog	12

At 12 stitches, fasten off leaving a 25 cm tail. Flatten the remaining opening into two sets of 6 stitches. Whipstitch each facing pair together through both loops. Close firmly without bunching the heel; weave in the tail. This original heel is a practical approximation of the photographed shaping.

5. Finish the cuff

Narrow edging. Join cream at the open rim. Ch 1, sc in all 48 sts and join. Repeat for 3 rounds total. Do not fold. This follows the narrow edging visible in the image; measured depth is approximately 1.5 cm at the target row gauge.

6. Make and attach the tab

With midnight blue, ch 5. Row 1: sc in second chain and next 3 chains (4 sc). Ch 1 and turn. Repeat 4-sc rows until the strip measures 14 cm. Leave long sewing tails. Fold in half; overlap the ends by 2 cm on the inside back wall, just below the cuff fold. The exposed loop is approximately 5 cm. Sew through both tab ends and solid body fabric with a box and two diagonals. Do not attach only to the loose cuff edge.

7. Finish, inspect and use

Secure every end. Close the toe ring and weave its tail through several stitches, change direction and weave again. Secure the heel-corner gaps with small yarn-needle stitches without tightening the opening out of shape. Weave every color-change and joining tail on the inside. Trim only after the ends are secure; remove all markers and pins.

Check the actual packet. The stocking should hold the sealed packet without stretching the cuff, opening the stitches or pulling the heel out of shape. Choose the gift around the finished stocking, or resize and remake the stocking. No load rating or pet-proof claim is supplied.

Check the hanging tab. With pets excluded, support the stocking just above a soft surface and add only the intended packet. Look for elongated stitches, slipping joins or strain at the tab. Remove the packet at the first sign of movement or distortion. This household check is not certification for unattended or heavy loading.

Display and storage. Keep both empty and filled stockings inaccessible to pets. A high hook alone may not stop a climbing cat. Keep a filled stocking in a closed cabinet or room your pet cannot open; take it out only while you handle the gift. These are gift holders, not chew toys, wearable socks, feeders or enrichment toys.

Treat handling. Keep pet-appropriate treats in their own suitable sealed packaging. The owner removes and disposes of the wrapper before serving a normal portion. Never put loose food against the yarn or liner. Do not add stringy decorations, small removable parts, human holiday sweets or real bones.

Care and troubleshooting

Follow the actual yarn label. Wash a sample before the full project; do not advertise machine washability without checking the yarn and all components. Dry fully, reshape the cuff and heel, then inspect the tab, seams and woven-in ends. Store empty and dry between seasons.

Problem	What to check
Tube widens or narrows	Count only actual stitches; exclude turning chain and joining slip stitch.
Hole at heel corner	Verify the H1 count first; close a small residual gap by sewing, not extra round stitches.
Texture pulls inward	Swatch the texture separately; relax carried yarn or adjust hook for that section.
Cuff rolls or flares	Match its real circumference to the rim; do not force a short rib strip to fit.
Packet catches inside	Remove it; secure ends and carried strands. Consider the removable-liner version.

Design note: Count the background stitches between pads. Losing those small gaps changes a readable paw into one solid patch.

Prototype record

Yarn and dye lot: _____ Hook: _____

Washed gauge: _____ sts / _____ rounds per 10 cm

Used yarn: MC _____ m; CC _____ m. Finished size: _____

Toe / heel / tab checked: _____ Packet and storage checked: _____

Made by: _____ Date / revision: _____

Terminology: craftyarncouncil.com/standards/crochet-abbreviations

Holiday precautions: aspca.org/pet-care/general-pet-care/holiday-safety-tips

Motif chart and round-by-round color key

The chart is original. It gives a flatter integrated motif; the exact relief or attachment in the image is not established. M = main color/background; C = cream contrast. Read the visual chart bottom to top. Each square is one sc, with no increases or decreases.

After G10, fasten off MC. Flatten the stocking with the heel at a side edge. On the broad side you want facing the viewer, mark 24 consecutive stitches. Rejoin MC at that panel's right-hand edge as viewed from the outside. This becomes the round start. Each chart round: 2 MC, the 20 chart stitches, 2 MC, then 24 MC around the back. Total = 48. Work all rounds from the outside without turning. For left-handed work read each chart row left to right; these motifs are symmetric.

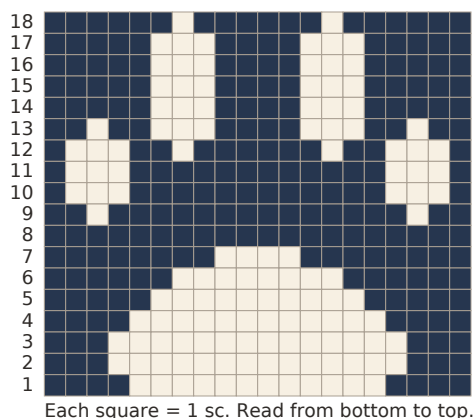


Chart round	20 chart stitches, in working order
1	4M, 12C, 4M
2	3M, 14C, 3M
3	3M, 14C, 3M
4	4M, 12C, 4M
5	5M, 10C, 5M
6	6M, 8C, 6M
7	8M, 4C, 8M
8	20M
9	2M, 1C, 14M, 1C, 2M
10	1M, 3C, 12M, 3C, 1M
11	1M, 3C, 12M, 3C, 1M
12	1M, 3C, 2M, 1C, 6M, 1C, 2M, 3C, 1M
13	2M, 1C, 2M, 3C, 4M, 3C, 2M, 1C, 2M
14	5M, 3C, 4M, 3C, 5M
15	5M, 3C, 4M, 3C, 5M
16	5M, 3C, 4M, 3C, 5M
17	5M, 3C, 4M, 3C, 5M
18	6M, 1C, 6M, 1C, 6M

On the final pull-through of the stitch before a color change, use the new color. Enclose the idle strand within every stitch, keeping it relaxed. The back is visually MC: work its 24 MC stitches over the idle CC strand as well, carrying CC fully around to the next chart-round start with no exposed float. Enclose MC when working cream stitches. After the final chart round, fasten off CC and secure both ends. The count remains 48 throughout.