



Tip of the Month

Beautiful Beginnings



We are all familiar with the starting chain that is needed for all patterns worked in rows. But are you always happy with the look and feel of it when your project is completed? Often this row looks and can feel, tight. There are a number of things you can try to alleviate it being too tight and improving the appearance of the beginning of your projects—creating some beautiful beginnings. Below are a few:

- Use a hook one size larger for the chain. But don't forget to change back to the size needed for the whole project when you've completed the chains.
- When working the first row into the chain, instead of working into the top two strands (I call this the traditional method), turn the chain over and work into the back bump. The full chain remains in view at the bottom, giving a neater edge that is consistent with the final edge. This also makes it easier if you are going to work back along the other side.
- When working the first row into the chain, work into the top strand of the chain and the back bump. This gives a tight and thinner edge for the bottom of the project, but it is not as tight as the traditional method.
- Work the first row into the top loop only of the front of the chain. This is by far the easiest method of working the first row. It provides an edge looser than the traditional method with some stretch.
- Create the starting chain and the first row at the same time—often referred to as the foundation crochet stitch. This has the advantage of not only being looser, it gives the starting row the same stretch as the other rows in your project. It also means that you don't end up with too few or too many chains at the end of the first row. You can do this with either a double crochet, half treble or treble stitch.

Few patterns if any specify a technique to be used for working the first row. Which method you use will depend on your personal preference and the desired look for the project.