



Tip of the Month—September 2016



- Yarn Twists

Have you crocheted with thread/yarn and found it easily splits or becomes more tightly twisted and tangled? This arises, not due to poor quality, but often because of the way in which the thread/yarn is twisted. I found that Doris Chan best describes this in her blogs (which I've summarised below)

All fibre (except un-spun roving) is spun to make it become a long continuous thing that then becomes yarn. Some yarns are then constructed without any more twist, such as tubular, woven or ribbon type yarns. For most conventional yarns and threads, there is additional twisting together of plies, which can be done in two directions, clockwise or counter-clockwise. The former gives you an S-twist, the latter a Z-twist. How can you tell? Look at a single strand of yarn; if the fibres or plies make a slant this way \, like the center stroke of an S, then it is S-Twist. If it slants this way /, like the centre stroke of a Z, then it is Z-Twist. Below, Z-Twist on left, S-Twist on right.



Most yarns are produced with an S-Twist. The process of crocheting however makes a Z-twist. (Knitting an S-Twist). Each time you yarn over and draw a loop through you are giving the yarn a little counter-clockwise nudge. When you crochet with S-twist yarn, you are un-twisting as you go, meaning the plies become separated and the yarn will become splitty. Alternatively if you use a Z-twist it strengthens the yarn, but can result in over-twisting causing it to tangle.



To eliminate user twist, rotate the skein/ball as you use it. (which you can only do when pulled from the outside). You often see your yarn ball flipping around when you pull it - that's your feed coming off the ball without twist. To stop the ball flipping around, but allowing it to spin, you can use a yarn pet or something similar. When using a small ball of thread, try a thread holder or use a zip lock bag with a hole in it to feed the thread through and this allows the ball to rotate as you use it.'



Did you know the Lizbeth balls of thread come in a zip lock bag with a small hole in it? You can use this bag to hold the ball with the thread passing through the hole. As you use the ball it rotates in the bag.