Tip of the Month—December 2018

First time using thin yarns and thread

Have you been hesitant to use finer yarns and threads thinking it is too hard and fiddly? Below we have some tips for those who have never used finer yarns and threads to help get you started.

1. Understanding thread sizes – thread sizes work opposite to yarn sizes. The smaller the number, the thicker the thread – or the higher the number, the thinner the thread. If you are new to thread, start with a number 5 or 10. Cotton perle (pearl) embroidery threads, although generally softer and more shiny than crochet cotton, may be used in crochet patterns as follows:- #5 perle is a little thicker than #10 crochet cotton but is suitable for most #10 cotton patterns; #8 perle is about the same as #20 crochet cotton and #12 perle is about the same as #40 crochet cotton.

2. Work with steel crochet hooks – as they are designed specifically to work with thread. They are thin, so using a hook with an ergonometric handle or comfort cushion will make them not only easier to use, but stop your fingers from cramping.

3. Avoid joining the thread in the middle of a pattern and never make knots to join the thread. As the thread is coming to an end, place the new thread along the top of the work and crochet a few stitches over this. Before the old thread has run out, change to the new thread and work the stitches over the old thread. Cut off or weave in any ends that are left. Or just let them hang and weave them in later.

4. Work your yarnovers close to the head of the hook. Don't allow the loops to go to the wider part of the hook as the loops will be too loose. Tighter tension is better, but don't pull it so tight that it hurts your hands.

5. Work with lighter colours and in good light to reduce strain on your eyes. The stitches are small and can be hard to find. It is easier and more fun when you are refreshed and energised – not tired.

6. Block your work to really show off the pattern. As you work the spaces will close up, so blocking will ensure to open up all the lace. See our blocking tip for more information.