# Balaclava

## PATTERN

A cosy chunky hood in dusty rose with a cream ribbed face edging - part hat, part scarf, all warmth. A free, easy one-weekend project for beginners.



The finished balaclava, about 28 cm (11 in) tall.

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| **Finished size** | Approx. 28 cm (11 in) tall; face opening approx. 18 x 14 cm (7 x 5 1/2 in) | **Skill level** | Easy / beginner |
| **Time** | One weekend (about 6-8 hours) | **Terms** | US crochet terms |

This balaclava is worked from the crown down in simple half double crochet rounds, then the face opening is shaped in rows, and the neck and shoulders are built out last. A neat ribbed edging in cream frames the face and gives the whole piece a finished look. Work in joined rounds unless a section says to turn, mark the first stitch of every round, and try the hood on as you go - the fit around the face is the one thing worth checking twice.

## Materials

- Bulky-weight (#5) yarn in **dusty rose**, approx. 150 g
- Small amount of bulky-weight yarn in **cream**, approx. 30 g
- 6.0 mm (US J-10) crochet hook
- Yarn needle, stitch marker, scissors
- Measuring tape
- A little patience for the face opening - it is the fiddliest part

## Abbreviations (US Terms)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **MR** | magic ring | **ch** | chain |
| **sl st** | slip stitch | **hdc** | half double crochet |
| **FPdc** | front post double crochet | **BPdc** | back post double crochet |
| **inc** | increase - 2 hdc in one stitch | **FO** | fasten off |
| **st(s)** | stitch(es) | **rnd** | round |

**Size & gauge:** Adult size, fits most heads 54-58 cm (21-23 in) around. Approx. gauge: 11 hdc x 8 rows = 10 x 10 cm (4 x 4 in). Gauge matters a little here, because the hood has to fit a real head - if your crown measures much wider than 20 cm (8 in) across after round 6, go down a hook size. To make a child size, stop the crown increases at 40 stitches; for a larger adult, add one more increase round, (hdc 5, inc) 8 times, for 56 stitches.

## Crown & Hood (dusty rose)




Step 1 - the crown just started.

Work with a relaxed tension; a stiff crown will not drape over the head the way this hood is meant to. After round 6, lay the crown flat and measure across - it should be about 20 cm (8 in) wide.

**Rnd 1:** 8 hdc in a magic ring, join with a sl st to the first hdc. **[8]**

**Rnd 2:** Ch 1, 2 hdc in each st around, join. **[16]**

**Rnd 3:** Ch 1, (hdc in the next st, inc in the next st) 8 times, join. **[24]**

**Rnd 4:** Ch 1, (hdc in the next 2 sts, inc in the next st) 8 times, join. **[32]**

**Rnd 5:** Ch 1, (hdc in the next 3 sts, inc in the next st) 8 times, join. **[40]**

**Rnd 6:** Ch 1, (hdc in the next 4 sts, inc in the next st) 8 times, join. **[48]**

**Rnds 7-10:** Ch 1, hdc in each st around, join. **[48]**




Step 2 - the hood taking shape.

Try the piece on after round 10 - it should sit like a beanie, covering the top of your head and reaching just above your eyebrows.

## Face Opening (dusty rose)




Step 3 - the face opening being worked.

From here you work in rows instead of rounds. The 12 unworked stitches are the face opening, so count them carefully before you turn.

**Row 11:** Ch 1, hdc in the next 36 sts, turn, leaving the last 12 sts unworked. **[36]**

**Rows 12-18:** Ch 1, hdc in each st across, turn. **[36]**

Try the hood on: the top edge of the opening should rest across your forehead and the bottom edge just under your chin. If the opening feels too tight, work one extra row before moving on; if it gapes, skip a row.

## Neck & Shoulders (dusty rose)



Step 4 - the neck and shoulders being built.

Two gentle increase rows widen the piece so it drapes over the shoulders instead of hugging the neck too tightly.

**Row 19:** Ch 1, inc in the first st, hdc in the next 34 sts, inc in the last st, turn. **[38]**

**Row 20:** Ch 1, hdc in each st across, turn. **[38]**

**Row 21:** Ch 1, inc in the first st, hdc in the next 36 sts, inc in the last st, turn. **[40]**

**Rows 22-24:** Ch 1, hdc in each st across, turn. **[40]**

Try the balaclava on again after row 24. The shoulder edge should fall a few centimetres past your collarbone and lie flat without curling. Fasten off, leaving a tail of about 15 cm (6 in) for weaving in.

## Ribbed Face Edging (cream)



Step 5 - the cream ribbed edging.

Work the post stitches around the stitch below, not into the top of it - that is what makes the ribs pop. Keep the edging snug but not tight: it should frame the face, not pull the opening smaller.

**Edging Rnd 1:** With cream, join with a sl st at a corner of the face opening. Ch 1, work 40 sc evenly around the opening (12 across the top, 8 down each side, 12 across the bottom), join. **[40]**

**Edging Rnd 2:** Ch 2, (FPdc in the next st, BPdc in the next st) 20 times, join. **[40]**

**Edging Rnd 3:** Ch 2, (FPdc in the next st, BPdc in the next st) 20 times, join. **[40]**

Slip stitch to join, fasten off and weave in the cream ends neatly on the inside of the hood.

# Finishing




Step 6 - the finished balaclava, ready to wear.

Weave in every yarn tail on the wrong side of the work, following the path of the stitches so the tails disappear completely. Chunky yarn tails are bulky, so split the plies and weave each half separately if a tail shows through. Give the balaclava a light steam with an iron held a few centimetres above the fabric (never press the iron down on the stitches) to relax the fibres and even out the shape. Pull the hood up, tuck the shoulder edge under your coat collar, and check the fit: the face opening should frame your face without slipping, and the neck should feel warm but not tight.

# Tips

- **Try it on as you go.** The face opening and the shoulder width are the two fit points that matter, and both are easy to adjust mid-project but hard to fix afterwards.

- **Keep your tension relaxed.** Chunky yarn and a tight hand make a stiff, board-like hood. If your stitches feel hard to work into, you are pulling too firmly.

- **Care:** hand wash in cool water with a gentle detergent, press out the water in a towel (never wring it), and lay flat to dry.