Crochet
Cardinal Ornament

Free Step-by-Step Tutorial



Beginner-friendly | ~2 hours | 9 cm (3.5 in) tall

Materials

- Worsted-weight (#4) cotton or acrylic yarn in red, approx. 35 g (body, tail, crest)
- Worsted-weight (#4) yarn in black, approx. 10 g (face mask, wings)
- Worsted-weight (#4) yarn in cream, approx. 10 g (belly patch)
- Worsted-weight (#4) yarn in orange, approx. 5 g (beak)
- 4.0 mm (US G-6) crochet hook
- Two 8 mm black safety eyes
- Polyester toy stuffing
- Yarn needle and scissors
- Stitch marker
- Gold metallic cord or ribbon, approx. 20 cm (8 in), for the hanging loop

Abbreviations

- ch = chain
- sc = single crochet
- hdc = half double crochet
- dc = double crochet
- inc = increase (2 sc in one st)
- dec = decrease (sc 2 sts together)
- sl st = slip stitch
- st(s) = stitch(es)
- rep = repeat

Step 1: Crochet the Round Red Body



- With red yarn, make a magic ring.
- Rnd 1: 6 sc into the ring. Pull tight. [6]
- Rnd 2: 2 sc in every st around. [12]
- Rnd 3: (sc, inc) x6. [18]
- Rnd 4: (2 sc, inc) x6. [24]
- Rnd 5: (3 sc, inc) x6. [30]
- Rnd 6: (4 sc, inc) x6. [36]
- Rnds 7-12: Sc in every st around. [36]
- Keep your tension even and mark the start of each round.

Step 2: Shape, Stuff & Add the Belly Patch



- Rnd 13: (4 sc, dec) x6. [30]
- Rnd 14: (3 sc, dec) x6. [24]
- Stuff the body firmly - firm enough to hold its round shape, not so full the stitches gape.
- Rnd 15: (2 sc, dec) x6. [18]
- Rnd 16: (sc, dec) x6. [12]
- Rnd 17: Dec x6. [6] Fasten off and close the hole.
- Belly patch (cream): magic ring, 6 sc [6]; Rnd 2: inc x6 [12]; Rnd 3: (sc, inc) x6 [18]; Rnd 4: (2 sc, inc) x6 [24].
- Sew the patch onto the lower front of the body, centred.

Step 3: Face Mask & Orange Beak



- Face mask (black): magic ring, 6 sc [6]; Rnd 2: inc x6 [12]; Rnd 3: (sc, inc) x6 [18]; Rnd 4: (2 sc, inc) x6 [24].
- Push the two safety eyes through the mask first, about 6 sts apart, and fix the washers on the back.
- Sew the mask onto the upper front of the body, just above the belly patch.
- Beak (orange): magic ring, 4 sc [4]; Rnd 2: (sc, inc) x2 [6]; Rnd 3: (2 sc, inc) x2 [8]; Rnd 4: sc around [8].
- Stuff the little cone very lightly and sew it to the centre of the mask, point down.

Step 4: Attach the Black Wings



- Make 2 wings with black yarn.
- Ch 6. Sc in 2nd ch from hook, sc in next 3 ch, 3 sc in last ch; work down the other side: sc in next 3 ch, 2 sc in last ch. [12]
- Rnd 2: Inc, sc 3, inc x3, sc 3, inc x2. [18] Fasten off, leaving a long tail.
- Pin one wing to each side of the body, level with the middle of the belly patch, pointed end towards the tail.
- Sew around the top edge of each wing only, leaving the lower edge free so the wings lift slightly.
- Check from the front that both wings sit at the same height.

Step 5: Tail Feathers & Crest



- Make 3 tail feathers with red yarn.
- Ch 9. Work back: sl st in 2nd ch from hook, sc in next st, hdc in next 2 sts, dc in next 3 sts, hdc in last st. Fasten off.
- Fan the three feathers out at the lower back of the body and sew them firmly in place, overlapping slightly at the base.
- Crest: with red yarn, (ch 5, sl st in 2nd ch, sc, hdc, sl st in same st) x2 to form two little spikes.
- Sew the crest to the very top of the head, tilted slightly backwards.

Step 6: Hanging Loop & Finishing



- Thread the gold cord through the top of the head with your yarn needle, right through the crest base so the loop is anchored in the stuffing.
- Pull both ends even, tie a firm knot, then a second knot over it. Trim the ends.
- Give the bird a gentle tug to check the loop holds.
- Weave in all remaining yarn ends and fluff the tail feathers into a fan.
- Hang your cardinal on the tree - your crochet ornament is done!

Tips

- Use cotton yarn for ornaments, always. It holds the round shape, shows crisp stitch definition and does not shed fluff onto the tree.

- Place the safety eyes through the mask before sewing it on. Pushing eyes through two layers of crochet afterwards stretches the stitches.

- Stuff firmly, then check the sit. Before closing round 17, set the body on the table: it should sit upright without rolling.