

Homework for Lisa Doherty's Wonky Freeform Spirals class at the Carolina Fiber Fest 2026

This is a detailed pattern for a wonky spiral. If you can make a spiral using this pattern before class, you'll have an understanding about how wonky effects work, and you'll be able to make the most of class time to learn about how to try variations of your own.

Materials:

- Yarns: I used approximately 12g of a cotton worsted weight yarn (Rowan Handknit Cotton, specifically) in the main color (Color A) and small amounts of 4 more colors. The pattern will work with any weight or fiber content, though, so use what you have in your stash. Just keep in mind that for this particular pattern, all of the yarns should be the same weight as each other. When you are improvising in the future, you can mix weights freely, of course, but keep the weight consistent for this stitch-by-stitch pattern, or your spiral will likely end up with unwanted lumps and bumps.
- F hook, 3.5mm, or the size that you especially like to use with worsted weight yarn. If you substitute another weight of yarn, choose a hook size that coordinates with that weight. For instance, with bulky weight yarns, try an H (5mm) or an I (5.5mm) hook.
- Two removable stitch markers
- Tapestry needle
- Scissors



Wonky Spiral, a stitch-by-stitch pattern

This pattern uses basic stitches and standard abbreviations, with US terminology. Definitions and instructions can easily be found online and are not included here.

Abbreviations:

ch = chain

slst = slip stitch

sc = single crochet

hdc = half double crochet

dc = double crochet

tr = treble crochet

st = stitch

sts = stitches

***Note:** I use a 4 chain + slip stitch for the center ring in this pattern. If you prefer a different method for starting a center ring, go with your preference.*

1. To start the spiral, ch 4 with Color A and sl st in the 4th chain from the hook to form a small ring.
2. Into the ring, work 2 sc and 11 hdc.
3. Working into the back loops only, work 2 hdc in each of the first 3 stitches that were worked into the ring.

Now that the spiral shape is established, let's vary the stitch heights to make the spiral go wonky. The pattern is written stitch-by-stitch, so there are a **LOT** of words and numbers. It's written in complete sentences early on, but as the pattern goes along and you get the hang of how things work, I'll use fewer and fewer words whenever possible because it's easier to follow the numbers without so many words in the way.

4. Continuing to **work in the back loops only for the whole spiral**, work 2 dc in each of the next 6 stitches.
5. Still working into the back loops only, work 2 tr in the next st, 1 tr in the next st, and 2 tr in each of the next 2 sts.
6. Work 2 dc in each of the next 2 sts, 1 dc into the next st.
7. Work (1 hdc in the next st, 2 hdc in the next st) 2x. Work 1 hdc in the next st.
8. Work 2 sc in the next st, 1 sl st in each of the next 3 sts. Put a removable stitch marker in the front loop of the second slip stitch. The photo below shows this marker in white. Leave this marker in place until directed to remove it.
9. Work 2 sc in the next st, 1 sc in each of the next 2 sts.
10. Work 1 hdc in the next st. Work (2 hdc in the next st, 1 hdc in the next st) 2x. Work 2 hdc in the next stitch.
11. Drop Color A and put a removable stitch marker in the live loop to prevent unraveling. The photo below shows this marker in pink.



Adding in a contoured wedge

12. Choose another color, Color B, for the contoured wedge
13. **Reminder: continue working into the back loops only for the rest of the spiral.** With Color B, skip the next 2 sts, draw up a loop in the next st, and sl st into the next.
14. 1 sc into the next st, 1 sc + 1 hdc into the next stitch, 1 hdc into the next, 1 hdc into the next.
15. Work 2 dc in the next stitch, 1 dc in the next, 2 dc in the next.
16. Work 1 hdc in the next st, 1 hdc in the next, 1 sc in the next, 1 sc in the next, sl st into the next stitch. (16 total stitches in the wedge, including the slip stitch at each end)
17. Cut Color B. Pull up on the live loop until the tail comes through the top of the stitch.
18. With a tapestry needle, take the tail to the back of the work and weave it in. Also, weave in the other tail of Color B.



Continuing with Color A

19. Take the stitch marker out of the loop in Color A and put the loop back on the hook.

20. **(Reminder: keep working into the back loops only)** dc into the next stitch, 2 dc in the next.
21. The next stitch is where Color B was attached for the wedge. Into the Color A stitch itself (avoiding Color B), work 1 dc (see next photo).



22. Work the next dc into the Color B slst itself, work 1 dc into the next stitch, 2 dc in the next, 1 dc in the next, 1 dc in the next, 2 dc in the next st.



23. The next group of stitches will be treble crochets (tr). Work 1 tr in the next st, 1 tr in the next, 2 in the next, 1 in the next, then 2, 1, 1, and 2.
24. The next group of stitches will be dc's. Work 2 into the next stitch, 1 into the sl st at the end of the wedge, 1 into the same stitch the sl st is worked into, 1 in the next, 1 in the next, then 2, 1, 2, 1, and 1.



25. The next group of stitches are tr's. Work 1, 1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2, and 1. **Note:** that's a long string of numbers to follow! If I add parentheses, it looks like I'm telling you to repeat what's inside, and that's not what I want to indicate. But you can circle groups of these numbers, maybe 3 or 4 in each circle, and check them off as you go to make it easier to keep your place.
26. Work (2 dc in the next stitch, 1 in the next) 4 times.

Adding in a wedge of mesh

27. Drop Color A and put a removable stitch marker in the live loop as before.
28. **(Reminder, keep working into the back loops only)** Using color C (orange in the photo below), pull up a loop in the next st, slip stitch into the next. Ch 1, sc in next stitch, ch 1, hdc in next stitch, ch 1, dc into next stitch.
29. (Ch 1, tr into next st) 2 times.
30. Skip a stitch, then repeat the line above. Skip stitch and repeat the line above one more time.
31. Ch 1, skip a stitch, dc in next st. Ch 1, hdc in next st. Ch 1, sc in next st. Sl st into the next st.
32. Cut yarn and pull up on the live loop until the tail comes through the top of the stitch. (14 total stitches in the wedge, including the slip stitch at each end, but **not** including the chain stitches)



33. Weave in the tails as before in the first wedge.
34. Take the marker out of the live stitch and continue crocheting with Color A again.
35. The next stitch is where Color C was attached. Dc into the stitch itself (avoiding the Color C slip stitch), then hdc into the Color C slip stitch (put the hook through both loops of the slip stitch instead of just the front loop) at the beginning of the mesh wedge.
36. Work 2 sc into the ch-1 space, and work 2 sc into all following ch-1 spaces, which will take you to the last sc and sl st in the wedge. Skip the last sc, and sc into the slip stitch (put the hook through both loops of the slip stitch instead of just the front loop)
37. Sc into the same stitch as the sl st (back loop only), sc into next st (back loop only), sl st in the next (back loop only). Cut yarn and pull up on the loop until the tail comes through the top of the sl st. Weave in the tail on the wrong side of the spiral, and weave in any other remaining tails.



38. Choose a new yarn, Color D, to use for the surface embellishment (light pink in the photo below). You'll be working into the front loops that remained as you worked the main spiral into the back loops only. You'll insert the hook by going under the loop, keeping the hook on the right side of the work at all times, never pushing the hook through to the

wrong side. **Note:** if it's tricky to get the hook into the front loop, try bending the motif away from you slightly at the loop to make it a little easier.

39. Insert the hook into the first front loop at the very center of the spiral and draw up a loop of Color D.
40. Slip stitch into the next front loop.
41. Continue to slip stitch into each front loop until you get to the stitch just under the marked stitch, and stop there.



42. Next, instead of continuing to work into the front loops as they come, “jump the track” by skipping up to the marked stitch and work a slip stitch there. Remove the stitch marker. **Note:** jumping up to the marked stitch will result in an almost complete circle of front loops left unworked, see photo below.
43. Continue slip stitching from there until you run out of front loops, making sure that you keep slip stitching even when you get to the very edge of the spiral. See photo below. At that point, you’ll be able to see both loops of the stitches (front and back), but continue to work into just the front loops. Keep going, working all the way around, over the mesh wedge, until you get to the very end of the Color A stitches.
44. To finish, cut the yarn and pull up on the live loop until the tail comes through. Using a tapestry needle, take the yarn to the back of the motif and weave in the end.



45. Choose another contrast color, Color E (dark pink in the photo below), and draw up a loop in the loop that is visible to the left of the existing surface embellishment. Work a slip stitch into each of the remaining loops and finish off as before.



46. Weave in any ends that remain and block the spiral if desired.