How to Steek Double Crochet　　　　　　　　　by Vicki Brown

This tutorial shows you how to put a 'steek' in double(single US) crochet work. Steeking is a term found in knitting, the wikipedia entry describes it as a 'shortcut used to knit garments in the round, without interruption for openings or sleeves until the end'.

A steek is essentially a section of the work where you would like to have an opening, but instead of knitting back and forth to create one, you cut your work after completion, meaning you can knit in the round throughout. When working on a crochet sweater recently I found I wanted to work in the round, but I also wanted an opening on the neck. After a bit of googling came up with nothing on steeking in crochet, I had a play about and the contents of this tutorial is what I came up with.

I was particularly keen to work out a way to do this, because crochet work, unlike knitting, looks so different worked in rows compared to working in the round, so this technique is especially useful if like I did you want an opening within a piece worked in the round. It would also be great for making a thumb hole in mittens or arm warmers.

You will need :
•yarn
•crochet hook
•tapestry needle
•small sharp scissors

To start:
Chain your required number of stitches, plus 6.
The spare 6 chains will become your steek, the part of the work you cut at the end.
For my example I did 26 chains, 20 to be worked as stitches and 6 for my steek.
Join your last chain to your first chain with a slip stitch to form a large ring, being careful not to twist.

Round 1:
Chain 1 and work 1dc into each chain to the point you would like your steek, for the last dc you work before the steek, **work through just one loop of the chain**, this is very important as this it what will hold your yarn in place after cutting. For my example I worked 10 dc before the steek.

Chain 6, miss 6 chains on the foundation chain, work 1dc in next chain, **through just one loop of the chain.** 1dc in each chain to end of round.
End your round as you wish, either by joining to the top of first stitch and chaining up or working in continuous rounds, for this example I joined and chained up.

Round 2: 1dc in each stitch to 1 stitch from the steek, **work 1dc through the front loop (fl) only of the next st**, again this is very important as this is what will stop your work from unravelling, chain 6, miss the 6ch made on the previous round, **work 1dc through the front loop only of the next st**, 1dc in each stitch to end of round.
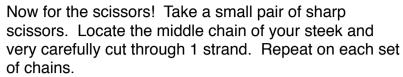
Repeat the last round until your work measures the required depth for the opening.
You will have a series of chains between your double crochet stitches.

Next Round: 1dc in each stitch around, missing the 6 chain steek as you come to it and working straight from the stitch before the chains to the stitch immediately after, **working through the front loop only of the these stitches**.

Continue to work in rounds to complete your piece. If you're just working this as a test piece a couple of rounds is all you need to do.

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Now for the scissors! Take a small pair of sharp scissors. Locate the middle chain of your steek and very carefully cut through 1 strand. Repeat on each set of chains.

On each set, find your ends and gently un-loop them once, so your end is at the edge of the crochet work, pull on the end to secure it in place.
If at this point your work unravels, you've undone your chains too far. Don't panic, you can carefully rework the stitch and bring your end through the loop as you would when fastening off.

With a tapestry needle weave the ends in. I wove mine into the reverse of the crochet work.

There you have it, an opening within your 'in the round' work without ruining the aesthetic of your work by creating different looking stitches.

You can also do this with half treble (half double crochet US) and treble stitches (double crochet US).

This also works mid way through your work, simply add your 6 chains to your work, wherever you would like the opening, remembering to work through the front loops only either side of the chains and on the round you close the opening.

This tutorial was written by Vicki Brown, please do not download or print this tutorial for sale.
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