Greek Tortoise

As life speeds up I, for one, find myself drawn increasingly to all things slow: a gentle stroll through the park; a lazy Sunday lunch; a long soak in the bath with a good book. Tortoises have been teaching us, since Aesop first jotted down his fables, that slow and steady always wins the race. If you are willing to take the time to crochet one of these little guys, you will forever have a reminder of the value of slow.

You will need:

- < 25g of scraps of wool, in at least two colours.

- 7mm safety eyes (x 2).

- A lovely 3.5mm crochet hook, a little stuffing and a needle and thread.

- A little pink or red felt for the mouth

- Optional pipe cleaners (x2)
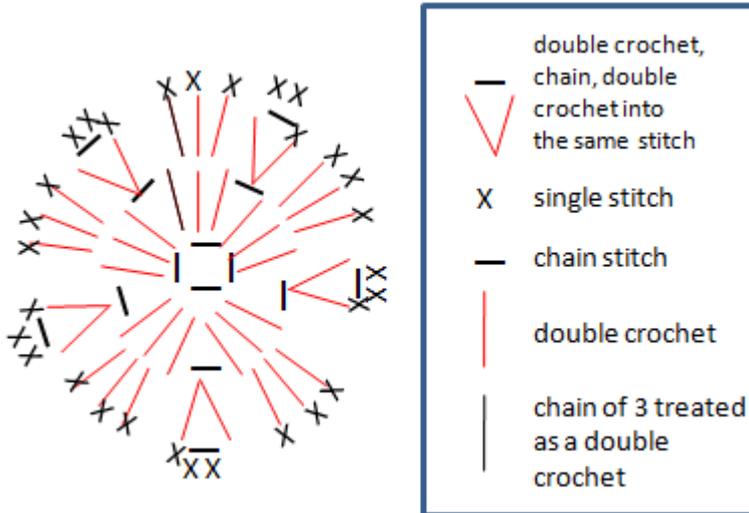
This is written in American crochet terms

Legs:

Make a magic circle (http://www.thecraftytipster.com/crochet/crochet-techniques/magic-circle.html) with 8 stitches. Continue single crocheting around (in a spiral) to make a tube with 8 stitches on each row. The tube should be 12 rows long. (You can use a turning chain on each row if that is easier for you)

Repeat another 3 times so you have four legs.

Granny Squares (x 6)

Legend:
- double crochet, chain, double crochet into the same stitch
- X   single stitch
- —   chain stitch
- | double crochet
- | chain of 3 treated as a double crochet

Row 1: Chain 4, join first and last stitch with a slip stitch to make a loop.

Row 2: Chain 3 (Treat as a double crochet), Chain 1, crochet 3 double crochet stitches into the loop, *chain 1, crochet 3 double crochet stitches into the loop – repeat from * until end (slip stitch to secure). (You should have five sets of 3 stitches to make a pentagon)

Row 3: Chain 3 (Treat as a double crochet), *double crochet, chain, double crochet into the same stitch (The chain stitch from row 2) double crochet into each of the next three stitches – repeat from * until end (slip stitch to secure).

Row 4: Single crochet into the first stitch, then *crochet 2 single crochets into the loop formed by the chain stitch from row 3, single crochet into each of the next 4 stitches – repeat from * until end (slip stitch to secure).

Row 1	Row 2	Row 3	Row 4	X 6

Sew together the granny squares to give you this shape:

Tortoise Head

Row 1-8: Start by chaining 8 and joining with a slip stitch, single stitch 10 around the chained loop, join with a slip stitch.

Make a tube retaining 10 stitches on each row, 8 rows long. You can do this by crocheting continuously in a spiral (one single crochet into the next single crochet) or by using a turning chain on each row. (cast off)

Push the tube flat so you have a top and a bottom side.
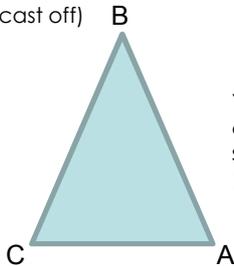
Top Side (All in Single Crochet)
Row 9: Crochet 5 single crochet stitches into the top of the tube.
Row 10: Turn, but **do not** use a turning chain, this will decrease the row by one stitch. Crochet into each of the next 4 stitches.
Row 11: Turn, but **do not** use a turning chain, this will decrease the row by one stitch. Crochet into each of the next 3 stitches.
Row 12: Turn, but **do not** use a turning chain, this will decrease the row by one stitch. Crochet into each of the next 2 stitches.
Row 13: Turn, but **do not** use a turning chain, this will decrease the row by one stitch. Crochet into each of the next 1 stitches.
(cast off)

You should have a shape like this. Single crochet into point A and continue the row of single crochet around the shape (through B to C). Using a turning chain crochet a second row of single crochet from C (through B) to A. Then Using a turning chain crochet a third row from A (through B) to C. Cast off.
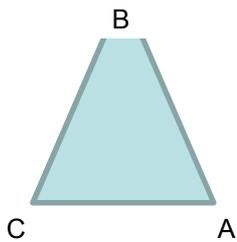
Bottom Side – Like the top side but stop when you have 2 stitches left and only crochet 2 rounds of single crochet to give the mouth shape (All in Single Crochet)
Row 9: Crochet 5 single crochet stitches into the bottom of the tube.
Row 10: Turn, but **do not** use a turning chain, this will decrease the row by one stitch. Crochet into each of the next 4 stitches.
Row 11: Turn, but **do not** use a turning chain, this will decrease the row by one stitch. Crochet into each of the next 3 stitches.
Row 12: Turn, but **do not** use a turning chain, this will decrease the row by one stitch. Crochet into each of the next 2 stitches.
(cast off)

You should have a shape like this. Single crochet into point A and continue the row of single crochet around the shape (through B to C). Using a turning chain crochet a second row of single crochet from C (through B) to A. Cast off.

Sew the edges of the mouth in to give the mouth shape below.

Fix safety eyes, and cut a little piece of pink or red felt to fit the top and bottom of the mouth and glue in. You can give the tortoise more expression by using a little yarn to give him an eyelid.

To report errors with this pattern contact brigitte.read@gmail.com
http://littlegreen.typepad.com/romansock/

Tortoise Assembly

Crochet a circle that fits snugly inside the shell like this. If you are not sure how to crochet a circle there is a great tutorial here: http://crochet.about.com/library/weekly/aa091104.htm

Stuff the shell tightly with stuffing

Stuff the legs with a little stuffing and stick on a frame like this.

If you do not want the tortoise to be posable just stuff the legs and do not make a frame.

Place the frame or separate limbs in the correct position on the stuffed shell, then place the crocheted circle on top. Pin down. Sew around the edge securing the legs and head.

Does a tortoise go faster when fuelled by rocket?