

# Crocheted Cushions

Susie Johns



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**Susie Johns** is a hugely successful author of crochet, knitting, sewing and craft titles, with dozens of books under her belt. She is an experienced crafter, an inventive designer, and has articles published regularly in mainstream crafting magazines. Visit her website at: [www.susieatthecircus.typepad.com](http://www.susieatthecircus.typepad.com)



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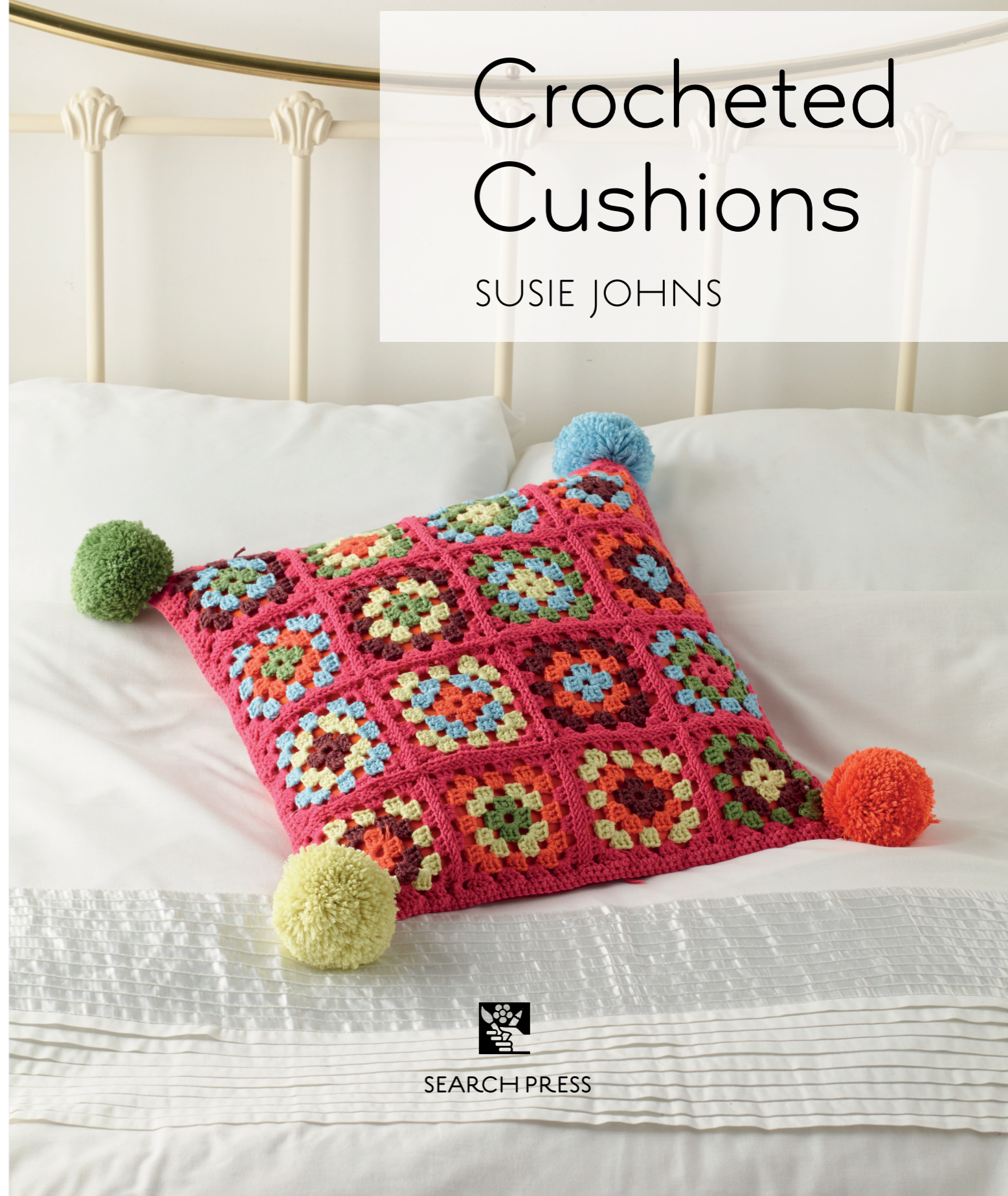
## DEDICATION

For my grandmother Caroline Edith Mary Samworth – known to me as 'Nana May' – who patiently taught me to crochet when I was a child, and for my daughter Elisabeth Grace Cockrell – known to everyone as 'Lillie' – who is the only one of my children to learn and enjoy this versatile craft.



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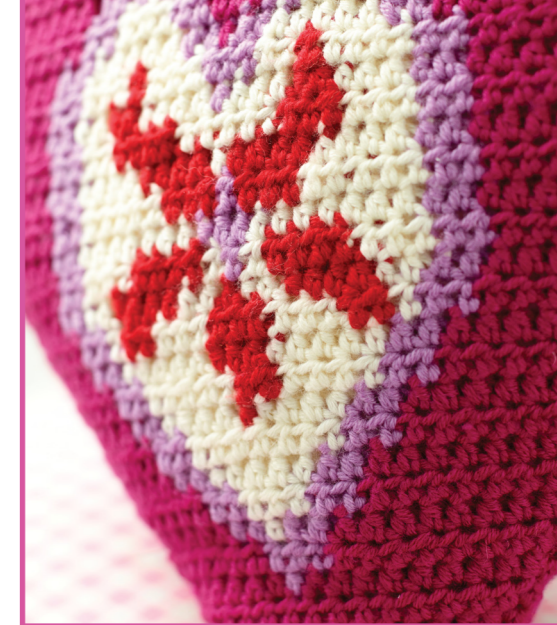
Standard UK crochet terms have been  
used throughout this book. UK–US  
crochet conversions are given on page  
126 or, alternatively, please see the US  
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# Preface

My grandmother and mother taught me to crochet when I was just eight years old. We made a patchwork blanket together, and the granny square still remains one of my favourite crochet patterns. When I was asked to write a book on crocheted cushions, the granny square was my starting point – you will find two cushions using granny square motifs (see pages 54–57 and 86–89) – but there are lots of other stitch patterns and styles as well. In fact, there are twenty-six different cushion designs within these pages. I have tried to introduce variations in colour, texture, shape and size, while also trying to ensure that every cushion is easy to make, even if you are relatively new to crochet.

It was my aim to design a cushion to suit every type of situation. There are cushions here for every room in the house: the kitchen, dining room, sitting room, bedroom, nursery, study, conservatory, and maybe even the bathroom. You can even crochet cushions for the garden, the car, caravan, boat or beach hut – not forgetting to make a few to take on picnics or fishing trips. You may wish to crochet a cushion or two for yourself but any of the cushions in this book would make a lovely gift for someone you care about. Some of the cushions are sophisticated enough for a chic modern apartment or classic, elegant interior while others are unashamedly ‘silly’: a novelty owl cushion (see pages 26–29), for example, and one with a spooky spider’s web (see pages 34–37).

I love bright colours, and I am an inveterate hoarder, so I have included two very colourful cushions that are perfect for using up yarn scraps (see pages 50–53 and 62–65). Of course, colour is a matter of taste but that is where your own creativity comes in: you can choose your own palette of colours for any of the cushions in this book, to suit your own tastes and the colour themes in your home. Crochet and knitting are enjoying a big revival and there is plenty of lovely yarn out there from which you can make your choices, so get carried away with crocheting cushions!





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# Introduction

Crochet comes from a bygone age, when cushion covers would be hand-made, not mass-produced. But that doesn't mean a crocheted cushion has to be old-fashioned: there are twenty-six gorgeous, contemporary designs to choose from in this book. Crocheting cushion covers is easy and the results can be sophisticated, classy, quirky, subtle, eye-catching or just plain charming. Crochet is also very versatile. Many cushion covers can be made in one piece, without too many seams and with very little finishing off to do. You can also adapt patterns quite easily to suit your decor, your lifestyle and your budget, by using your own colour palette or by substituting your own choice of yarns – even using up oddments left over from previous projects.

It is assumed that you already know the basics of crochet or that you can find this information from another source. You may, however, have never made a cushion before, so you will find lots of general advice and information in the following few pages, including how to make your own cushion pads. While we are on the subject, when choosing or making a cushion pad it is important to decide whether you want your finished cushion to be firm and supportive – especially important for a bolster or a long rectangular cushion that can be used as a back support – or soft and supple, so that you can sink into it. For a firm result, choose a pad that is slightly larger than the finished cushion cover – but not too large, or it may distort the cover and stretch it out of shape. For a softer result, choose a pad that fits the cover exactly but is not over-stuffed with filling. Guidance is given with each project.

Each pattern is clearly set out and contains a list of all the tools and materials you will need. Hook sizes are given in metric, with US and old UK sizes also provided. Try to use the recommended yarn or something as close as possible – follow the yarn notes given with each project for advice on substitution. If you have to substitute a different yarn, you are advised to make a tension sample and measure this against the tension given for that project: read the notes on tension on page 126, where you will also find a list of abbreviations used in the patterns, which are written using UK crochet terms.

With all this at your fingertips, in next to no time – and with very little effort – you can produce a batch of beautiful cushions to accessorise your home. Then, when visitors compliment your beautiful home furnishings, you can proudly say, “I made them myself”.



# Materials

Crochet is a simple craft that requires few tools and materials. If you are a keen crocheter, you will already have a selection of hooks and maybe even a basket of yarn left over from other projects. That's really all you need to get started. Most people have scissors and measuring tools; on these pages, there are some suggestions for other items you will find useful.

## Yarns

Yarns are classified by weight. While most of the cushion covers in this book have been made using DK or double-knitting (8-ply) yarns, fine fingering (4-ply) yarns have been used for some of the smaller cushions and aran (worsted) yarn for some of the larger ones. Yarns are also made up of different fibres, both natural and man-made. As a general rule, I prefer to use natural fibres, as these are soft on the hands when crocheting and they produce good results: wool and wool-blend yarns, especially those containing alpaca or cashmere, are warm, soft and cosy; while cotton yarns are crisp and cool, with good stitch definition. Where I wanted really bright colours, however, I used acrylic yarns for their vibrancy and colour range. Look carefully at the

ball band when buying yarn: check the fibre content and the washing instructions. Natural yarns tend to be a little more expensive than those made of synthetic fibres and sometimes require hand washing. If the specified yarn for any of the patterns in this book is not available, or you decide to substitute another, similar yarn, you will need to check the yarn length on the ball band, to make sure you have enough to complete the project. You will also need to check the tension given for the pattern (see page 126 for guidance) before proceeding.

## Hooks

Various different hook sizes have been used to make the crocheted cushions in this book and they have been chosen in order to produce a particular result. Sometimes a different sized hook from the one recommended by the manufacturers has been used, usually in order to produce a firm fabric. Whichever cushion you choose to make, if you want it to end up the same size as the one shown in the picture, it is important to check your tension so that you don't end up with a cover that is too big or too small to fit the size of cushion pad specified.



## Pins, needles and threads

A blunt tapestry needle is useful for darning in yarn ends and for sewing seams or joining components. It can also be useful for threading ribbon through eyelet holes, though you may prefer to use a bodkin or a safety pin for this. Safety pins can also be used to pin pieces of crocheted fabric together prior to sewing; of course you can also use straight pins for this, but it is advisable to choose ones with glass heads as these are easier to see and less likely to be left behind, buried in the fabric. You will also need a sewing needle and thread for stitching buttons and zips in place.

## Trimmings

Bobble braid has been used to trim the cushions on pages 50–53 and velvet ribbon has been threaded through rows of eyelet holes on pages 106–109. There is a huge range of trimmings to choose from, so hunt around in haberdashery shops and online to find those perfect finishing touches.

## Buttons and zips

Buttons provide not only an effective fastening but an attractive design detail – and there are so many shapes, sizes and colours, you'll be spoilt for choice. Zips are also useful for covers you wish to remove. The type of zip you use will depend on the size and weight of the cushion: a lightweight zip is fine for a small cushion but for a larger, heavier cushion a heavier zip, such as the metal zip shown on page 101, might be preferable.



## Other equipment

A small pair of scissors will be necessary for snipping yarn ends. If you intend to make your own cushion pads, you will also need a good pair of dressmaking shears for cutting fabrics, and a tape measure.

