Wren ★ Feathers

A-line Series for Nancy: Week 1

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I assume you have basic sewing knowledge and the explanation should suffice, but if you need help please email me!

Quarter inch seams are allowed unless otherwise specified

Doll is a repro Nancy Famosa –

It will probably fit Wellie Wishers too, I just don’t have the energy to go find one and check. This series is more about decorating an A-line than patterns, so hunt around my site or etsy shop and you’ll find A-line patterns to fit everyone somewhere 😊

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Man, it has been a rough week! I’ll just condense for you that kids are back in school in person...sort of, wildfires are burning and microsoft wasted 40 minutes of the time I had available to blog installing an annoying new update.

So, I didn’t want to give the impression that all soviet fashion was behind the times after last week’s comment, and after a bit of searching for actual 1960s soviet patterns, I found a book on a Russian children’s library site from 1969. (link below) Many of the dresses are A-line, just as they were elsewhere at the time. In fact, I wonder if the 1960s may have been the heyday of the A-line dress. Was it partly because of all the new, somewhat thicker knit synthetic fabrics that weren’t necessarily quite as stretchy as knits we’re used to today? Or, it was just a reaction to the huge amounts of fabric in the overly full 1950s dresses?

When you think about it, A-line dresses might be the perfect all-ages style. They are timelessly cute on babies and, depending on the fabric, range from simple and casual to elegant for adults. In between those ages, which is where all the dolls usually fall on this blog, fabric and embellishing choices are pretty much unlimited. Batiste with a little bit of hand embroidery? Yes! It’s a slip or nightgown. Cotton print with a fun novelty trim? Yes! It’s a cute summer dress! Fleece with applique? Yes! It’s a winter jumper to wear over a turtleneck and leggings. Satin with rows of beads or sequins? Yes! It’s a party dress! And that’s not even counting what can happen when you get creative with collars or sleeves or pleats or...

With this series of probably 4 weeks, we’re going to use a basic A-line and explore different trims and decorating methods to recreate the looks from the book!

image on (L) from:
https://arch.rgdb.ru/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/35303/Image00009.jpg?sequence=9&isAllowed=y
Surprisingly in the poll, crochet came in second, so I’ve started this series with a simple A-line dress embellished with a crochet flower and rows of chainstitching to mimic the look of crochet. If you don’t crochet, you could use the guidelines on the pattern to chainstitch a flower instead.

The little flower couldn’t be simpler! I used 5/2 perle cotton, and would strongly recommend the DMC brand instead of what I did use, which was the kind that is sold in huge packs to make friendship bracelets. It does work fine for crochet, but when I was trying to use it to embroider it broke a few times, which was frustrating.

Gauge is not very important here, I used a 2.75mm hook. Ch 5, join. For each petal, chain 6 (or number for desired petal size) and attach to the ring with sc. Tada!

This dress was finished with simple serged edges turned under once and stitched by hand.
Then, I got into something great with the hat – a sort of cable-y texture! I had been under the impression that crochet was only good for amigurumi, granny squares, and lace, but the more I explore it, the more I love it! I recently learned the existence of front/back post dc stitches and was thrilled to find they made something like a cable! So, Nancy got a hat too! I used worsted weight yarn and loose tension with a 5.5mm/US I crochet hook. The brim of this was 33sts= 11” which is a gauge of about 3sts/in in sc.

1. Ch4, join
2. Ch 3, 7 dc, join (8sts total)
3. Ch3, 1dc *into each dc from previous row do 1dc and 1 front post dc* repeat between stars - 16sts total, join
4. Ch 3, 1dc * 1dc and 1 fpdc into each stitch of previous row (33 sts)
5. No more increases! Ch 3 and now work dc into previous dc and fpdc into previous fpdc, join
6. Repeat 5
7. Repeat 5 (it should be curving down now)
8. sc in front loop only all around
9. sc in front loop only all around (repeat if you want a wider brim)

Proving crochet is easily adaptable by changing up the yarn and hook size, these instructions are modified from a tiny hat in a Licca crochet book available here: [https://www.amazon.co.jp/-/en/Shumatsu-Kagibari-Ami-Rika-Chan-Rika-chan%2520s-Original/dp/4021907963/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=licca+crochet&qid=1604017076&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.co.jp/-/en/Shumatsu-Kagibari-Ami-Rika-Chan-Rika-chan%2520s-Original/dp/4021907963/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=licca+crochet&qid=1604017076&sr=8-1)

![Crochet Hook Inserted into Post](image)

If it’s new to you, this is how the hook gets inserted in the “post” (previous row of dc) for front post dc.

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Row of alternating posts and plain dc completed

Plain dc (L) fpdc (R)
Wren☆Feathers
1960s A-line
for dolls like Nancy Famosa
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Front cut 1 on fold