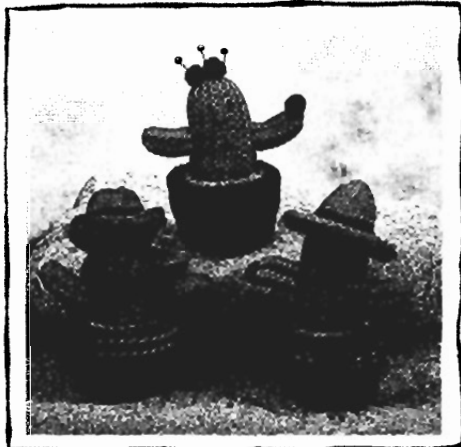


Comical Cacti



Three cheeky characters which can be made as pincushions or amusing ornaments.

Measurements: Cactus with flowers is 11cm [4 1/4in] high, those with hats are a bit taller.

Materials: Stuffing; 3mm [No 11, USA 2] knitting needles.

Basic cactus

Cactus

Using green cast on 24 sts and g-st 29 rows. Cast off. Oversew cast on and cast off edges together. Gather round one set of row ends for top of head. Pull up tightly and fasten off. Turn right side out and stuff firmly to measure 12cm [4 3/4in] around at centre of the cactus. Gather round remaining set of row ends for base, pull up tightly and fasten off.

Soil

Using a sandy shade of yarn cast on 16 sts and work in g-st for 18cm [7in]. Cast off. Fold 2cm [3/4in] down at one long edge of strip, then catch the entire folded-down edge loosely in place. With the folded portion against cactus and the other set of row ends level with base of cactus, wind the strip tightly around the cactus twice. Sew end of the soil strip in place. Catch all row ends to cactus at base. Catch rows together at top of soil strip.

Plant pot

Using colour required for pot [see illustration] cast on 24 sts and work in g-st for 11cm [4 1/4in]. Cast off. Oversew cast on and cast off edges together. Fold down one set of row ends to meet the other set, so you now have a double thickness tube-shape. Oversew row ends together. Place the piece onto the soil, stretching it to go over soil and having lower row ends of both level. Catch row ends of pot to soil. Catch soil to pot at top, noting that top edge of pot will be a bit higher than soil level.

Arms [make two alike]

Using green cast on 9 sts and g-st 11 rows. Cast off. Oversew seam and gather one end as for cactus. Turn right side out and stuff. Sew the open ends of arms to sides of cactus as illustrated.

Face

Use black yarn. Work a chain stitch for each eye, about 2cm [3/4in] down from gathered top of head and 1cm [3/8in] apart. Work a V-shape for mouth 1cm [3/8in] below eyes.

Flowering cactus

Make basic cactus. Add flowers as illustrated, making them as for buds on Picture Frame [page 10].

Mexican cactus

Make basic cactus. To decorate the plant pot, use contrast colour yarn and work running stitches round the pot through the g-st loops. Use another colour to sew up and down alternately through these stitches, forming decoration illustrated. Repeat the design if desired.

Hat brim

Using three strands of yellow yarn, cast on 36 sts for edge of brim.

Break off two strands and continue in single yarn. When knitting the next row, treat the three strands of yarn on each st as one st.

St-st 5 rows.

Next row: (P1, P2tog) to end — 24 sts. Cast off. Oversew row ends together. Place brim on top of cactus and sew cast off edge in place.

Crown of hat

Using red cast on 24 sts loosely. P 1 row.

Break off red and join on yellow.

Beginning with a K row, st-st 2 rows.

Shape top

1st row: (K4, K2tog) to end — 20 sts.

2nd and every following alternate row: P.

3rd row: (K3, K2tog) to end — 16 sts.

5th row: (K2, K2tog) to end — 12 sts.

7th row: (K1, K2tog) to end — 8 sts.

B & T tightly.

Oversew row ends together and turn right side out.

Put a little stuffing inside. Slip stitch cast on edge to brim, with this edge overlapping cast off edge of brim.

Blanket

Using red cast on 6 sts. Work 2 rows in g-st. Join on light blue and continue in g-st working in two-row stripes of light blue and red alternately. Work 24 rows. Cast off using red. Place over one arm and catch to cactus.

Texan cactus

Make basic cactus. Decorate pot as for Mexican cactus but oversew through the running stitches instead of working up and down.

Hat

Using tan instead of yellow, black instead of red, work and sew in place as for Mexican hat. Catch the brim to base of hat crown at sides. Push centre top of hat down and catch it to head.

Neck scarf

Using red cast on 35 sts and work throughout in g-st. Cast off 3 sts at beginning of every row but slip first st each time. Continue until 2 sts remain. Fasten off the 2 sts. Place scarf around cactus and sew ends together at one side as illustrated.

Pop-up Cacti



These jolly pop-up plants will give many hours of playtime fun.

Measurement: Cactus body measures 5cm [2in] in length.

Materials: A 6cm [2 1/2in] size plastic plant pot — the inexpensive flexible type sold at garden suppliers; three 5mm [1/4in] diameter plastic drinking straws; stuffing; 3mm [No 11, USA 2] knitting needles.

Pop-up handle

Trim each of the straws to measure 15cm [6in] in length. Now assemble them as given for Mobile hanging rod from ★ to ★★ [page 15]. To cover the handle, use tan yarn and cast on 5 sts. Work in st-st until strip is same length as the straw handle. B & T tightly.

Gather up the cast on sts tightly. Starting at this end, oversew row ends together with P side of st-st outside and enclosing the handle as you go.

Cactus

For body use green and cast on 14 st. G-st 19 rows. Cast off. Oversew cast on and cast off edges together. Gather round one set of row ends for top of head. Pull up tightly and fasten off. Turn right side out and stuff firmly to half way down body. Insert one end of the handle against the stuffing. Continue stuffing the body round the handle, until body is full. Gather round lower set of row ends, pull up tightly around handle and fasten off. Catch to the knitted sts on handle.

Use black yarn for face. Work a chain stitch for each eye 1.5cm [5/8in] down from gathered top of head and 5mm [1/4in] apart. Work a V-shape for mouth just below eyes.

For arms [make two alike] use green, cast on 7 sts and g-st 9 rows. Cast off. Make up as for body, turn right side out and stuff. Sew open ends of arms to sides of body.

Add flowers as illustrated, making them as for the buds on Picture Frame [page 10].

Plant pot

Cut a hole at centre of plant pot base, making it large enough for the pop-up handle to pass through easily. If necessary, use a bit of sandpaper to smooth off the hole.

To cover the pot use tan yarn. Cast on 24 sts and work in g-st for 11cm [4 1/4in]. Cast off.

Oversew cast on and cast off edges together. Turn right side out. Gather round one set of row ends for base of pot. Pull up gathers, leaving a finger-sized hole for the handle to pass through. Fasten off. Pull the knitted pot on to the plastic plant pot. The top set of row ends will extend about 2cm [$\frac{3}{4}$ in] above top edge of plastic pot. Gather round this set of row ends and draw up gathers just enough to make this section lie flat across top of pot. Fasten off.

Push end of handle through hole in pot base, so that cactus is inside the pot.

To keep the handle from coming out of the pot when cactus is popped-up, make a retaining strip as follows. Use tan, cast on 14 sts and g-st 3 rows. Cast off. Wind this strip tightly round and round the handle 5cm [2in] away from the end. Sew the wound strip to handle.

Cactus Finger Puppets

Continuing with the cactus theme, you can make these miniature finger puppets, complete with tiny pots.

Measurement: 5cm [2in] in length.

Materials: Stuffing; 3mm [No 11, USA 2] knitting needles.

Cactus

Make body, add face and arms in same way as for Pop-up Cacti but do not stuff the body and leave lower edge of body open.

Plant pot

Using two strands of tan yarn begin at top edge and cast on 18 sts. Break off one strand and continue in single yarn. When working next row, treat the two strands of yarn on each st as *one* st. G-st 6 rows. Cast off P wise.

Oversew row ends together and turn right side out. Slip the pot onto lower portion of cactus, with lower edges of both level. Slip stitch lower edges together and catch top edge of pot to cactus.

