

Empire Waist Crochet Tutu Dress

with Cluster Pearl Detail

12 to 18 months

(with changes for 9-12 months and 18-24 months)

by DaisyGirlCrochet



I have always been a fan of empire waist dresses. Their simple beauty elicits a feeling of youthfulness and innocence unlike anything else. Add to that the element of tulle and you have a dress that is simply spectacular! This little dress has a shortened bodice that starts just under the breastbone, I added a row of little pearl clusters along the sleeve and kept the back partially open. These dresses are not only beautiful, they are super fun to make and have endless design possibilities. Let's get started!

Materials: US Terms

12-18 months: Crochet Hook Size H.

Changes for 9-12 months and 18-24 months as follows:

9-12 months, use Crochet Hook Size G. 18-24 months use Crochet Hook Size I

1 Skein of your favorite worsted weight yarn-level 4. I used I Love This Yarn.

2 Spools of Tulle. Purchase the 6" Spools of tulle as these are the easiest to work with. Each spool contains 25 yards and you will use all of it for a super full, super beautiful skirt!

Yarn Needle for finishing your tails

Silk Flower for embellishment

Extra Tulle for tying a bow to the back of the dress

3/4 inch button for closing the back of the dress

Pattern is in standard American terms.

Stitches:

Double Crochet

Scallop Stitch: 2dc, ch1, 2dc

Cluster Pearl: All in same stitch, YO, insert hook and draw up a loop (3 loops on hook). YO, Insert hook, draw up a loop (5 loops on hook). YO, insert hook, draw up a loop (7 loops on hook).YO, draw through all 7 loops on hook. CH 1 to close the cluster.

Bodice:

Row 1: Chain 62. Dc in 4th chain from hook and into the next 5 chains. 3dc in next chain. (Increase made) * 1dc in each of the next 14 chains. 3dc in next chain. (Increase made) Repeat from* two more times. 1dc in each of the next 7 chains. Ch 2, turn.

Row 2

Dc in each of the next 7 stitches, 3dc in next stitch.* 1dc in each of the next 16sts. 3dc in next st. Repeat from * two more times. 1dc in each of the next 8 sts. Ch2, turn.

Row 3

Dc in each of the next 8 sts, 3dc in next stitch.* 1dc in each of the next 18 sts. 3dc in next st. Repeat from * two more times. 1dc in each of the next 9 sts. Ch2, turn.

Row 4

Dc in each of the next 9 sts, 3dc in next stitch.* 1dc in each of the next 20 sts. 3dc in next st. Repeat from * two more times. 1dc in each of the next 10 sts. Join with a slip stitch to the top of CH 2. Crochet will continue in the round. Ch 2.

Round 5

Dc in each of the next 10sts, 3dc in next stitch.* 1dc in each of the next 22 sts. 3dc in next st. Repeat from * two more times. 1dc in each of the next 11sts. Join with a slip stitch to the top of Ch 2.

Row 6- Clusters

Ch 3. *Skip next stitch, Cluster in next.* Repeat *to*. Join with a slip stitch to the top of CH 3. (49 Clusters and 50 spaces).

Round 7 -Shaping the arm holes

Ch 2. Dc in each of the next 13 clusters and spaces. CH 2. Skip 23 clusters and spaces. 1dc in each of the next 25 clusters and spaces. Ch2. Skip 23 clusters and spaces. 1dc in each of the next 14 clusters and spaces. Join with slip stitch to top of Ch 2.

Round 8-Scallop Edging

Ch 3. Dc in same space, ch1, 2 dc in same space (first Scallop made) *skip next stitch, Scallop in next stitch.* Repeat *to*all the way around. (NOTE: You will treat the arm hole as a stitch so be sure to put a Scallop in that space). Join to top of Ch 3.

Round 9-Second Row of Scallop Edging

Slip stitch to the Ch 1 center of the first scallop in Round 8. Ch 3, Dc, Ch 1, 2 Dc all in the same stitch. Scallop in the center Ch 1 of every scallop around. Sl st to the top of the Ch3. Finish off.

Scallop Neck edging: Turn bodice so that the back of the work is facing you. You will join yarn to the top of the opening on the left side. 3sc in same stitch as joining. *Slip stitch into the next 2 stitches. 3sc in next stitch* Repeat from*to* all the way around to the right side of the opening. Finish off. (20 sc scallops)

It's Tulle Time! See Photo Tutorial As Visual Guide.

Cut strips of tulle 30-32 inches long. Shorter for smaller sizes. The length of the tulle is personal preference! Lay your bodice, **RIGH SIDE UP**, on a flat clean surface. Turn up the scalloped edge so that you are looking at the **UNDERSIDE**. You will attach the tulle to the dc posts in round 7 on the underside of the edging. Attach one strip of tulle to each dc post, alternating colors as you go. I did not attach tulle to the underarm area as I thought that might be too scratchy on the skin.

To attach the tulle, use your crochet hook to pull it through the dc post. I simply used very small knots, similar to tying a shoe lace, which creates the illusion of little pearls going around the right side of the bodice. I chose to hand knot the tulle because I want the little girl to be able to wear the dress without worrying that she will permanently damage the tulle. If something happens to a piece of tulle, it can be taken off easily and replaced with a fresh one. Once the tulle is attached, fluff it up, stand back and admire your beautiful work!

Tips and Ideas:

1. Be sure to buy the tulle by the spool. 6" spools with 25 yards of tulle are perfect for this project. These spools reduce the amount of cutting you need to do, plus they are more economical and softer than tulle by the spool. If you want to soften the tulle further AND reduce the amount of static cling associated with tulle, fill a water bottle with room temp water and add about 1-2 tsps. liquid fabric softener. Shake it up and **LIGHTLY** mist the layers of tulle. Do not saturate.
2. To make an extra full tulle skirt, double up on the tulle you use on each dc post. Personally I think a girl can never have **ENOUGH** tulle:)
4. Feel free to embellish the bodice in any way you wish...use silk flowers, crochet flowers, ribbon bows and buttons. Add a single crochet in a contrast color around the neckline or add a scallop edge around the arms. Use extra tulle to make an oversized bow for the back of the dress or to create a dramatic train, weave an extra long piece of tulle in and out of the stitches around the waist or around the neckline! The possibilities are endless.

For the flower you see on my dress, I layered various sizes of silk petals and hot glued them onto an alligator clip. The clip can then be moved to a different place on the dress, worn in the little girl's hair or even attached to a headband. I love versatility!

5. This dress cannot be machine washed. You must wash it by hand. Tulle and yarn are delicate fibers and can tear easily. Fill a basin with cold water and add a mild detergent. Let it soak for about 10 minutes, then gently swish the dress around in the water, taking care not to overly stretch the bodice. Gently squeeze excess water from the dress, drain the water and refill it with fresh cold water. Rinse the entire dress by wafting the water through it to remove residual detergent. Lay flat to dry, being sure to straighten all pieces of tulle.

I hope you enjoy my little pattern. The dresses really are beautiful and so much fun to make. I look forward to seeing your photos. Thank you!

Photo Tutorial For Attaching Tulle



1. Lay Bodice Right Side Up



2. Locate dc post



3. Gently Pull Tulle Through



4. Raise Tulle Up Like Bunny Ears



5. Tie A Small Knot



6. This Is What It will Look Like From Front