A BONUS FROM THE CROCHET PORTRAIT KIT

Order-Ready Kit



A practical way to price a custom piece and to write clear messages to the people who want one.

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BEFORE YOU QUOTE

How to use this kit

This bonus is for makers who want to take custom orders: a portrait from someone's photo, made to a size and a finish you agree in advance. It is a set of working tools — a pricing method, a list of questions, and message templates — not a promise that custom work will sell.

Read the pricing chapter once and fill in the worksheet with your own costs and your own pace. The example numbers in this kit are labeled as examples so you can follow the arithmetic. They are not recommended prices, and they are not typical earnings.

The templates are starting points. Change the tone so it sounds like you. Keep a copy of each sent message with the order. If you are still learning the stitch, finish a piece for yourself first so your time estimates are based on work you have actually done.

> WHAT THIS KIT DOES NOT DO
>
> It does not forecast income, suggest that custom orders are a full-time living, or tell you to promise a likeness or a delivery date you cannot meet. A careful quote and a clear no are both professional answers.

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CHAPTER 1

How to price a custom piece

A useful price covers the materials, pays you for the hours, and leaves a little room for fees, revisions, and the next order. Write it as a formula, then round it to a number you can say out loud.

The formula

A straightforward starting point is:

> PRICE
>
> **Materials + (hours × hourly rate) + margin.** Margin can be a percentage of the first two parts, or a fixed amount that covers platform fees, packaging, and a modest buffer for a revision or a delayed supply.

MATERIALS

Add the yarn you expect to use (including a buffer skein if a color is central), the pillow form, fabric, frame, dowel, hanging hardware, label, and packaging, and the share of small tools you are willing to count (a new hook, bobbins, a printed pattern). Use what you actually pay, not a guess from memory. If leftover yarn will go into another piece, you can count only the portion this order will use.

HOURS

Count more than the crochet. Include the time to write back, check the photo, generate and adjust the pattern, swatch, stitch, weave ends, finish, photograph the piece, pack it, and travel to the post office. If you have not timed a similar piece, time the next one you make for yourself and use that as a baseline. Do not quote a large custom piece on an optimistic guess.

HOURLY RATE

This is a number you choose. It should feel sustainable for work that uses your hands and your attention for many evenings. It can be different for stitching than for admin if you want that much detail, but one honest rate is enough to start. Look at what you would need to be paid to take the work on a busy week, not only on a quiet one.

MARGIN

Payment platforms and marketplaces take a fee. Yarn runs short. A customer asks for a small change after you have started. A margin — often expressed as a percentage of materials plus labor — is how you avoid doing that extra work for free. If you already add shipping at cost, do not also hide shipping inside the margin; say it clearly in the quote.

Other ways to use the same math

Once you have priced a few sizes, you can publish a simple menu (for example: a small wall hanging, a mid-size pillow, a framed portrait) so you are not starting from zero in every conversation. The menu still comes from the formula. When a request falls outside the menu — a very large blanket, a tight deadline, a difficult photo — go back to the worksheet and quote that piece on its own.

A rush fee is a multiplier on labor, or a fixed addition, for a deadline that changes the rest of your week. Apply it only when the date is genuinely tight, and say so in the quote. A deposit (often around half, paid before you start) protects both sides: you buy materials, and the customer holds a place in your calendar.

CHAPTER 2

A worked example

The numbers below are an example of the arithmetic. They describe one imaginary 20-by-20-inch pet portrait pillow. They are not a suggested price, a typical price, or a forecast of what you will earn.

EXAMPLE ONLY — REPLACE EVERY FIGURE WITH YOUR OWN

Use this page to see how the formula is assembled. Then open the worksheet and fill in your costs, your hours, and your rate.

Example materials

Item	Example amount
Yarn (with a buffer of the two main colors)	$22.00
Pillow form and backing fabric	$14.00
Packaging, label, and printed pattern	$3.00
Example materials total	$39.00

Example time

Task	Example hours
Messages, photo check, and pattern setup	1.0
Swatch and any size adjustment	0.5
Crocheting the portrait	14.0
Weaving ends, assembly, and finishing	2.0
Photographing and packing	0.5
Example time total	18.0

Example labor, margin, and total

Step	Example figure
Hourly rate (example)	$18.00
Labor (18.0 × $18.00)	$324.00
Materials + labor	$363.00
Margin at 15 percent of that subtotal	$54.45

Example total before shipping	$417.45
Rounded example quote (before shipping)	$420.00

In this example, shipping is quoted separately at cost. The rounded figure is a convenience, not a rule; you might keep the exact total, or you might set a menu price nearby once you have priced a few similar pieces. If your rate is different, if you stitch faster or slower, or if a frame is part of the finish, the total will move. That is the point of the worksheet.

> READ THIS ONCE, THEN IGNORE THE DOLLAR AMOUNTS
>
> Nothing in this example is a claim about the market in your area, about how many orders you will get, or about how quickly you will stitch. Your quote should be built from your numbers alone.

CHAPTER 3

What to ask before you say yes

Most difficult orders are difficult because something important was left unsaid. Ask these questions early, in one message if you can, and wait for the answers before you buy yarn.

The photo

- Is there a sharp, well-lit photo, with the face or the pet filling most of the frame?
- Did the customer take it, or do they have permission from the person who did?
- If the photo shows a person, especially a child, has the right person agreed that it may be used for this piece?
- May you generate a pattern from it and, separately, may you share a photo of the finished work?

The piece

- What finished size do they have in mind, measured in inches?
- What is the piece for — a wall hanging, a framed portrait, a pillow, a blanket, or a gift still to be decided?
- Are there colors they want you to lean toward or avoid?
- Will they supply a frame or a pillow form, or should you include those in the quote?

The practical details

- Is there a date they need it by, and is that date a firm event or a preference?
- Where should it be delivered, and is the quote including shipping or not?
- How will you be paid, and are they comfortable with a deposit before you start?
- Who is the decision-maker if the request is coming through a third person?

When to decline, or to offer a different version

You can say no to a photo that will not make a clear pattern, to a deadline you cannot meet, or to a use you are not comfortable with. Offer a reason in one or two sentences and, if you can, a useful alternative: a tighter crop, a later date, a smaller size, or a referral. A clear no, sent promptly, is better than a yes you cannot finish.

CHAPTER 4

Message templates

Copy a template into your own email or messenger, then change the bracketed words. Keep the facts — size, price, date, and what is or is not included — in writing.

1. Inquiry reply

TEMPLATE · INQUIRY REPLY

Hi [Name],
Thank you for writing about a custom crochet portrait. I would like to help if the photo and the timing are a good fit.
To put a clear quote and a timeline together, I need:
• A well-lit, sharp photo, with the face or the pet filling most of the frame
• The finished size you have in mind, and whether it should be a wall hanging, a framed piece, a pillow, or something else
• Any colors you would like me to lean toward or avoid
• The date you need it, if there is one
• Confirmation that you took the photo or have permission to use it
Once I have those details I will send a quote, an estimated completion time, and the deposit amount if we move ahead.
Thank you,
[Your name]

2. Quote

TEMPLATE · QUOTE

Hi [Name],
Thank you for the photo and the details. Here is the quote for your review.
Piece: [description, for example a 16 × 16 inch portrait pillow in worsted-weight yarn]
Photo: [file name or a short description], used with your permission
Price: $[amount], which includes [what is included: yarn, finish, this packaging]. It does not include [what is not included: shipping, a frame, extra revisions].
Shipping, if you would like me to send it: $[amount] to [city or region], estimated at today's rates.
Timing: if you confirm by [date] and the deposit is received, I expect to finish by [date]. I will send a photo of the work in progress around the halfway point.
To go ahead, reply with your approval of this quote and I will send the deposit details. The remaining balance is due before I ship or hand the piece over.
If you would like any part of this changed, tell me before I start and I will see whether a revised quote is possible.
Thank you,
[Your name]

3. Deposit and payment terms

TEMPLATE · DEPOSIT AND PAYMENT TERMS

Hi [Name],
I am glad we are moving ahead. Here are the payment terms for your [piece].
Total: $[amount], plus shipping of $[amount] if you want it posted.
Deposit to start: $[amount] (half of the piece price).
How to pay: [method]. Please use the reference [order name or number].
I will start when the deposit arrives, and I will write to confirm the start date. The remaining $[amount], plus shipping if it applies, is due when the piece is finished and before I ship or meet you to deliver it.
The deposit holds the materials and the time in my calendar. If you cancel before I start stitching, I will refund the deposit minus any materials already bought for this order. If you cancel after stitching has started, the deposit is kept toward the work already done, and we can talk about any remaining balance based on how far the piece has got.
If anything in these terms is unclear, ask me before you pay the deposit.
Thank you,
[Your name]

4. Progress update

TEMPLATE · PROGRESS UPDATE

Hi [Name],
A short update on your [piece]. I have reached [row, section, or a plain description, for example “the features are in and I am working the upper background”]. I am still on track for [date], / I need to move the date to [new date] because [brief reason].
I have attached a photo of the work as it stands. Colors can look a little different on a screen, and the likeness often reads more clearly once the surrounding rows are in, so please treat this as a progress picture, not the final one.
If anything in the photo concerns you, write back this week so we can talk about it while there is still time to adjust.
Thank you,
[Your name]

5. Delivery

TEMPLATE · DELIVERY

Hi [Name],
Your [piece] is finished and the final photo is attached. The remaining balance is $[amount], including shipping of $[amount] / for collection.
When the balance arrives I will [post it the same or next posting day to the address you sent / meet you at an agreed place on this date]. I will send the tracking number as soon as I have it.
Care: [a short line, for example “spot clean, lay flat to dry, keep out of strong direct sun”]. If something arrives damaged, take a photo of the packaging and the piece and write to me within [three or five] days so I can help.
Thank you for trusting me with this photo. I hope it has a good home.
[Your name]

6. Photo consent

TEMPLATE · PHOTO CONSENT

Hi [Name],
Before I start, I need your written okay on the photo and on how the finished piece may be shown. Please reply to this message with “I agree” (or tell me any limit you want to set) to the points below.
1. I confirm that I took this photo or have permission from the person who took it, and that I have the right to have a crochet portrait made from it.
2. If the photo shows a person, I confirm that I am that person, or I have permission from that person (or from a parent or guardian, if it shows a child) to use the photo for this piece.
3. You may / may not share a photo of the finished piece in your portfolio, shop, or social media. If I say you may, I understand you will not share the original photo itself unless I agree separately.
4. I understand the piece is a stitched interpretation of the photo, worked from a color-coded pattern, and that a crochet portrait will not look like a print of the picture.
Thank you,
[Customer name and date, on the reply]

If the customer agrees to some points and not others — for example, they are happy for you to make the piece but do not want it shown online — that is a complete answer. Write the limit on the order sheet and keep it.

CHAPTER 5

Photo consent

A short written record protects the customer and you. It does not need legal language. It does need to be clear, dated, and stored with the order.

What to keep

- The photo you actually used, or a reliable reference to the file name and date.
- The customer's message confirming they have the right to use the photo.
- Any extra permission needed when the photo shows another person, and a parent or guardian's permission when it shows a child.
- A separate yes or no to sharing a photo of the finished piece, and any limits (no face, no name, no location).
- The quote, the deposit confirmation, and the agreed date.

Good habits

Do not start work on a photo pulled from someone else's social media account without that confirmation. Do not use the original photo in your own posts unless the customer has agreed to that as well. A 'no' to portfolio use should be easy to honor: keep the work off your public pages, and do not treat silence as a yes.

If a request involves a trademark, a professional photograph with a studio watermark, or a well-known character, pause. Those cases are outside a simple personal-photo consent, and this kit is not legal advice. When you are unsure, do not start.

> CHILDREN'S PHOTOS
>
> Get permission from a parent or guardian, keep the original photo off your public pages unless they have clearly agreed, and be cautious about including a child's name or school in any caption they later allow you to use.

PRINTABLE WORKSHEET

Pricing worksheet

One sheet per order. Use your own figures. Leave the example numbers from Chapter 2 off this page.

Order / customer _____ Date _____

Piece (size, finish, yarn) _____

Photo file, and permission on file? Y / N _____

Needed by _____ Start date if deposit paid by _____

MATERIALS (YOUR COSTS)

Yarn _____ Backing / form / frame _____

Hardware and packaging _____ Other _____

Materials total _____

TIME (YOUR HOURS)

Messages and pattern setup _____ Swatch _____

Crocheting _____ Finishing, photos, packing _____

Hours total _____ Your hourly rate _____

Labor (hours × rate) _____

MARGIN, SHIPPING, AND QUOTE

Materials + labor _____ Margin (% or amount) _____

Subtotal before shipping _____ Shipping (if separately quoted) _____

Quote you will send _____ Deposit amount _____

CHECKLIST

- ☐ Photo is sharp enough to use
- ☐ Portfolio permission is a clear yes or no
- ☐ Quote lists what is and is not included
- ☐ Progress update planned
- ☐ Rights and consent are in writing
- ☐ Deadline is possible at this rate
- ☐ Deposit terms sent and accepted
- ☐ Final photo and care note ready

Notes (limits on sharing, color requests, reasons for a rush fee or a no)

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