

# How to...

FREE  
information

## Knit

### Introduction

Knitting is the art of using wool or yarn to make fabric from interlocking loops. Knitted items are fun to make and provide an opportunity for creative selection of colour and style. In this beginners guide you'll discover the basic techniques to get started in this popular craft.

### Equipment needed

#### Wool

The type of wool or yarn should be selected to suit each individual project, taking the composition and thickness into account.

The choice includes wool, cotton, linen, silk, acrylic, nylon, blended fibres and novelty yarns.

#### Needles

Knitting needles come in a range of sizes from very fine to really fat. It is important to choose needles that feel comfortable in your hands and allow the stitches to slide along easily. The size is determined by the type of yarn and style of pattern but most garments require an average size needle.

#### Pattern

Knitting patterns are available for a wide range of projects. When knitting an item of clothing be sure to follow the same size throughout the pattern. One set of figures indicates it applies to all sizes.

### Method

#### Casting on

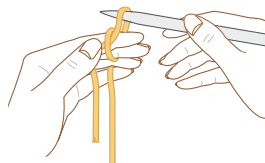
To make the very first loops on your needles, you 'cast on' stitches. There are several methods, but all of them require you, in the first place, to create an initial loop on your needle. A commonly used technique is shown here. All cast-on loops should be made as evenly as possible. Avoid casting on too tightly. The cast-on stitches should slide freely on the needle.

#### Making the first loop

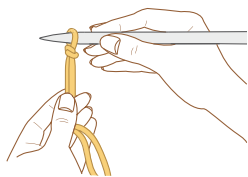
- 1 Wrap the yarn around the first and second fingers of one hand.



- 2 Place the tip of the needle under the front loop and draw the back loop through the front one.



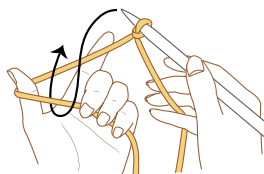
- 3 Withdraw your fingers from the loop, then tighten it on the needle to form the first stitch.



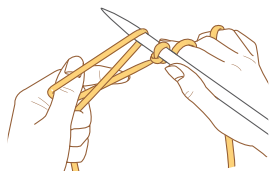
## Thumb cast-on

This is a common, and easy, method of casting on. The tail end of the yarn is held in the right hand and the ball end of the yarn (also called the working yarn) is held in the left hand.

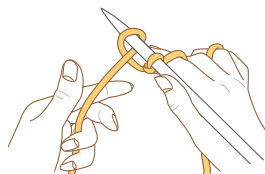
- 1 With the initial loop on the needle, held in the right hand, hold the working yarn in the palm of the left hand, as shown, passing it around the thumb. If necessary to keep the loop on the needle in place, hold the tail end of the yarn with the right hand. Pass the tip of the needle from front to back under the front strand of yarn on the thumb as shown by the arrow.



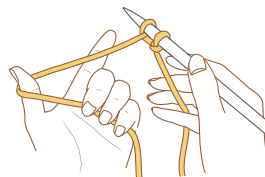
- 2 With the strand of yarn around your thumb caught by the needle, gently slip your left thumb out of the loop.



- 3 Tighten the new loop on the needle, but make sure it will still glide along the needle. You have now made the second cast-on loop.



- 4 Reinsert your left thumb under the working yarn to begin the next cast-on loop. Continue to cast on stitches by repeating steps 1 through 3.



## Knit stitch

This is the first stitch you learn and is abbreviated in knitting patterns as k. It creates a simple ridged fabric known as garter stitch when worked on its own. When worked in alternate rows with purl stitch it forms a smooth textured stitch known as stocking stitch. Knit stitches are formed by inserting the tip of the knitting needle through from front to back of each stitch, passing the yarn around the needle and drawing a loop through.

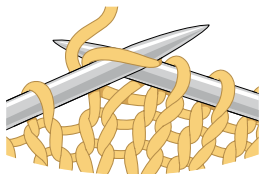
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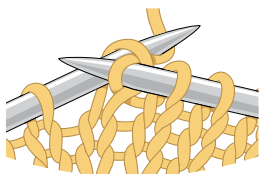
for more ideas, information  
and top tips

## How to work the knit stitch

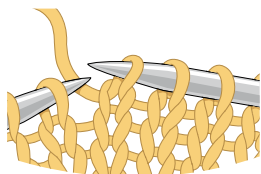
- 1 Insert the tip of the right needle through the first loop on the left needle, from front to back. Then wrap the working yarn around the tip of the right needle.



- 2 Pull the tip of the right needle and the yarn through the loop on the left needle.



- 3 Slip the old loop off the left needle to complete the stitch. Continue knitting.

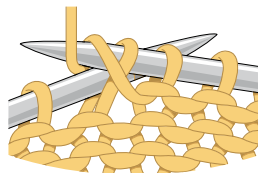


## Purl stitch

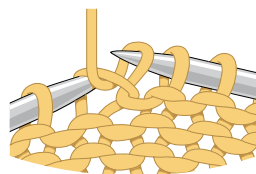
This is the second stitch to learn and is very similar to the knit stitch. If all rows are purled a garter stitch fabric is created. When purl rows are combined alternately with knit rows, they form stocking stitch. The purl side of the stocking stitch fabric is called reverse stocking stitch. When a purl stitch is worked the yarn is held at the front of the work rather than at the back of the work as with the knit stitch.

## How to work the purl stitch

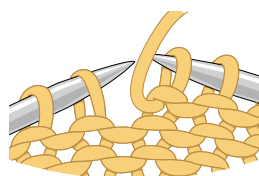
- 1 Insert the right needle through the front of the first stitch on the left needle from right to left and wrap the working yarn around the tip of the needle as shown.



- 2 With the tip of the right needle, pull the yarn through the loop on the left needle.



- 3 Slip the old loop off the left needle, leaving a new stitch on the right needle. This completes the purl stitch. Continue in the same way until all the stitches on the left needle have been purled. This completes one purl row.



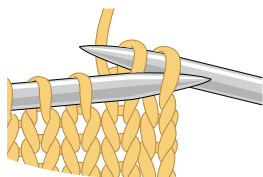
## Casting off

Once you have completed your knitting, you will need to finish off the work. This is known as casting off. The stitches can be cast off as they are knitted, purled or worked in a pattern stitch, but the method is the same. The simple knit cast-off is shown overleaf.

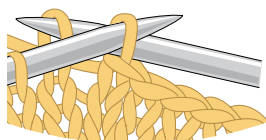
## How to cast off

Be careful when casting off not to do so too tightly. You can use a larger size needle to avoid this, if you wish.

- 1 Knit the first two stitches. Then pick up the first stitch with the tip of the left needle and pass it over the second stitch and off the right needle altogether, to leave one stitch on the right needle.



- 2 Now knit the next stitch so there are two stitches again on the right needle. Cast off another stitch by repeating step 1.



- 3 Continue to cast off stitch by stitch across the row until only one stitch remains. Break the yarn, draw the end through the last stitch, and slip the stitch off the needle. Pull the yarn to fasten off. The tail end will be darned in later during making up.



## Knitting Abbreviations

The following are popular abbreviations found in knitting patterns:

C	contrasting shade of yarn
Cn	cable needle
Dec	decreasing
Inc	increasing
K	knit
Knit up	pick up and knit stitches along edge of knitting
Meas	measure
MS	main shade of yarn
P	purl
Patt	pattern
RS	right side
Sl1	slip one stitch
St(s)	stitches
St st	stocking stitch
Tbl	through back of loop
Tog	together
WS	wrong side
Yfwd	yarn forward
Yfrn	yarn forward round needle
Yon	yarn over needle

## Introduction to Crochet

Crochet can be used to create an interesting range of household soft furnishings and fashion accessories. It can also be used to join seams in knitting and to create edgings for sleeves and necklines.