

How to Knit

By Andrea Whicker

Knitting involves creating a series of loops with two needles. For many people it is a hobby that is very relaxing. Before you embark on your first project it's a good idea to practice on a simple block.

Visit a sewing store and buy a skein of thick worsted yarn and a pair of straight knitting needles, size 10 or larger. Wind the yarn into a loose ball to keep it from becoming tangled. Before you begin, make sure you have a pair of scissors, a yarn needle with a large eye, and a tape measure nearby.

Casting On

Casting on is the technique of placing stitches of yarn onto a needle so that you can begin knitting. (It is best not to make the stitches too tight.)

1. Make a slip knot on the shaft of one needle for your first stitch. Put the needle with the stitch in your left hand and hold the other needle in your right hand to position the yarn. Insert the end of the right needle from front to back into the slipknot and under the left needle.
2. Holding the left needle in your left hand, move your left fingers over to secure the right needle. Using your right index finger, pick up a strand of yarn from the ball. Release your right hand grip on the needle and use your index finger to bring the yarn under and over the point of the right needle.
3. Using your right fingers on the right needle, pull the yarn through the stitch with the point of the right needle.
4. Push the point of the left needle into the back of the new stitch and remove the right needle. Slowly pull the yarn ball to make the stitch fit securely on the needle. You should have two stitches remaining on the left needle (the slip knot counts as a stitch).
5. Insert the point of the right needle from front to back into the stitch just completed and under the left needle. Repeat the steps until you have 25 stitches (or the number needed for your desired width) on the left needle. This completes your cast-on row, which is the foundation for all knitting projects.

First Knit Row

1. Hold the needle with stitches in your left hand and insert the point of the right needle in the first stitch from front to back just as you did in casting on. With your right index finger pull yarn from the ball under and over the point of the right needle. Draw the yarn through the stitch with the right needle point.

2. Slip the loop on the left needle off so that the new stitch is on the right needle. Repeat the steps with each stitch still on the left needle, transferring each to the right. When the last stitch has been transferred, you will have completed one row of knitting.

3. Your next step is to measure your project. If it is too wide, you can adjust by starting over and casting on fewer stitches, or if it's too short, you can start over and cast on more stitches.

4. When you have knitted the desired width, you can start another row. Turn the right needle and hold it in your left hand. With the other needle in your right hand, repeat the steps of knitting the first row with each stitch. You will once again take the needle with stitches in your left hand and work another row of knit stitches straight across. Repeat by making rows of knit stitches until you have reached your desired length.

Binding Off

To complete your block of knitting, you will need to bind off all the stitches. Begin by knitting the first two stitches. Insert the left needle into the stitch you knitted first and pull it over the second stitch and completely off the needle. One stitch is now bound off.

Knit another stitch and insert the left needle into the first stitch on the right needle and pull it over the new stitch and completely off the needle. This binds off another stitch. Repeat the steps until one stitch remains. Cut the yarn from the ball leaving a six-inch end. Pull the end up with the needle and through the last stitch to secure it. Thread the yarn end into a yarn needle and weave it into several stitches to make it secure.