

Learn How to Knit and Crochet

Why Knit or Crochet?

- It has a calming effect -- helps relieve stress.
- It feels good to work with beautiful yarn colors and textures.
- It's a social activity to share with your friends and family.
- Provides a sense of accomplishment when you complete a project.

Knit

- Knitting has long been the favorite technique for sweater making because of the detailing and color patterning that is possible, and the supple, drape-able fabric the stitches produce. The two basic stitches--knit and purl--can be worked alone or together and form the basis of dozens of designs as well as other stitches.

Knit

- Knitting requires two needles and a continuous strand of yarn. You begin by making a slip knot on one needle and "casting on" the number of stitches you need for the project. (That's the term for creating the foundation row on one needle.) The basic stitches are created using both needles, wrapping the yarn over one needle and drawing the wrapped yarn through loops on the other needle.

Crochet

- Crochet is an extremely versatile and popular technique for making a variety of fashion and home decor accessories. By combining basic crochet stitches and lighter weight or softer yarns, you create a delicate, drape-able fabric; a thicker yarn produces a sturdy fabric. Beautiful textured and raised stitches are especially easy to make in crochet.

Crochet

- All you need to crochet is a continuous strand of yarn and a single hook. You start with a slip stitch and continue to make loops (called chains), creating a foundation row. Rows are built on this foundation. Crochet stitches are made with loops and wrapping yarn around the hook. The loops are drawn through the wrapped yarn to make the stitches.

The Basics

Yarn

One of the pleasures of crocheting and knitting is working with beautiful yarn colors and textures. All yarn patterns require specific types of yarn, some mention a specific brand of yarn. There are five basic types of yarn:

- baby/fingering
- sport/baby
- worsted weight
- Chunky
- bulky

Each type of yarn has a different thickness or "weight," with fingering being the finest. The term "ply," frequently seen on labels, refers to the number of strands that were twisted together to form the yarn. Yarn content or "fiber content" tells what the yarn is made of: synthetic or natural fibers or combinations of the two. Synthetic yarns, such as acrylics, are easier to wash and can be worn by people sensitive to wool.

Tools- Crochet Hooks

- As its name suggests, the "**crochet hook**" has a notch at one end for catching loops of yarn and drawing them through stitches. Aluminum, plastic and wood crochet hooks are the most commonly used, and often use the letter system for size marking. They range from B (2.25 mm) to S (19 mm), the largest, and come in 6" lengths.
- For fine work, such as crocheted lace and doilies, "**steel crochet hooks**" are used. They have a different sizing range, using numbers from 00 (3.5 mm), the largest, to 14 (.75 mm), the smallest.

Tools- Knitting Needles

- Straight knitting needles, which come in aluminum, plastic or wood, are the most commonly used. They come in varying sizes, from 0 (2 mm), the smallest, to size 15 (10 mm) and larger; they are sold in pairs, and come in 10" or 14" lengths. There is a point at one end of the needle, and a knob at the other, which prevents stitches from slipping off.
- For large projects like afghans, or sweaters that can be worked in a tube without a seam, "**circular knitting needles**" can be used. These are long flexible needles with points at both ends. For smaller projects that do not have seams (socks and mittens) "**double-pointed knitting needles**" are used. These come in sets of four and as their name suggests, there is a point on each end.

Basic Crochet

- The instructions below will show you how to make a foundation row and a single crochet stitch. If you follow them exactly, you'll complete a 7" by 9" block, which will be great practice.
- With these basics, you can make a scarf, hat, pillow, bag or any number of projects.

Beginner Crochet Block

- **What you need:**
- Worsted-weight yarn, any color or colors
- Size G crochet hook
- Yarn needle with big eye
- Small scissors

How To Begin

- Step 1: Hold crochet hook in right hand and make a slip knot on hook.

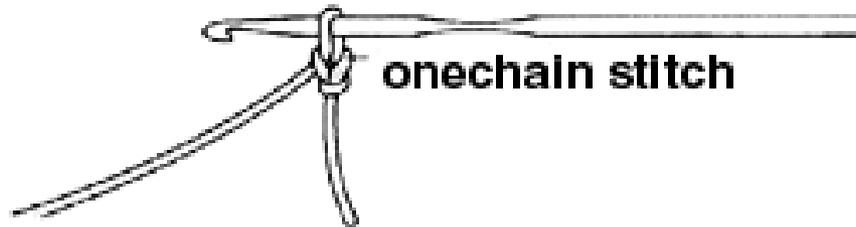


- Step 2: Bring yarn over hook from back to front and grab it with hook.



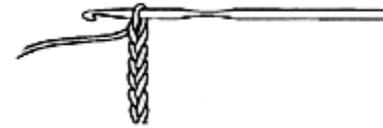
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- **Step 3:** Draw hooked yarn through slip knot and onto hook. This makes one chain stitch. Repeat Steps 2 and 3 in sequence 28 more times. You should have 29 chain stitches and one loop will remain on hook.



Continued

- **Step 4:** Skip the first chain stitch.

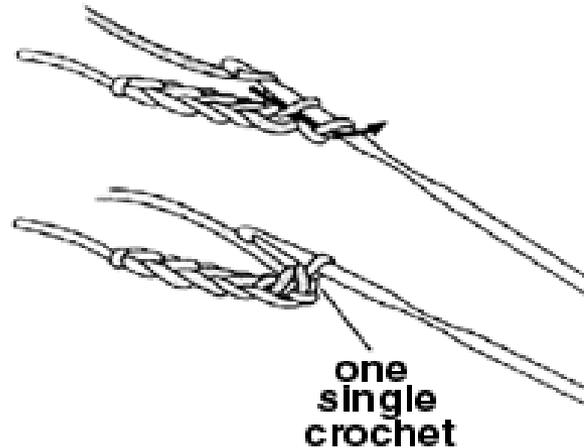


- **Step 5:** Insert hook into center of next chain stitch. Draw yarn through the chain stitch and up onto the hook. There are now 2 loops on hook.



Continued

- **Step 6:** Bring yarn over hook from back to front, and draw it through both loops on hook. One loop remains on the hook, and you have just made one single crochet stitch.

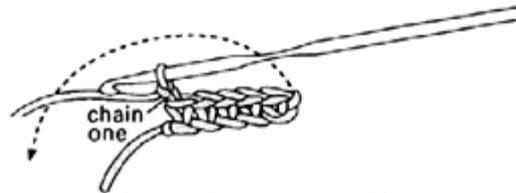


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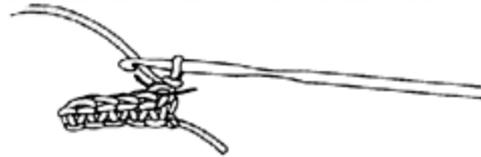
- Repeat Steps 5 and 6 in each of the remaining 27 chains--be sure to work in the very last chain. You have now completed one row of single crochet. Measure your work; it should be about 7" wide. If it is too wide, try again with fewer beginning chains. If it is too narrow, try again with more beginning chains.

Continued

- **Step 7:** At the end of the row, make one chain stitch, then turn the work counter-clockwise, leaving the hook in the chain.

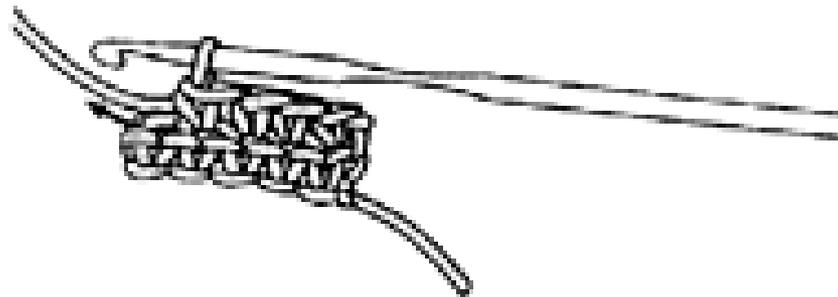


- Now you can begin another row, working into the stitches of the previous row.



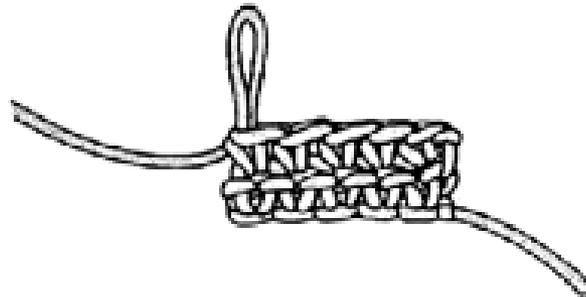
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- **Step 8:** Make one single crochet stitch in first stitch and in each remaining stitch of the previous row. Be sure to work into the last stitch. Chain 1, turn. Repeat Step 8 until the block measures 9" long.



Continued

- **Finishing:** Cut the yarn from the skein, leaving a 6" end. Draw the hook straight up, bringing the yarn through the remaining loop on the hook. Thread yarn into yarn needle and weave back and forth through stitches to secure.



Basic Knit

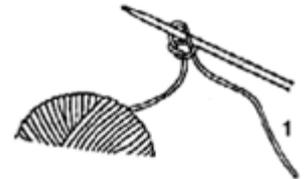
- The instructions below will show you how to cast on and to make a knit stitch, also known as garter stitch. If you follow them exactly, you'll complete a 7" by 9" block, which will be great practice. With these basics, you can make a scarf, hat, pillow, bag or any number of projects .

Beginner Knit Block

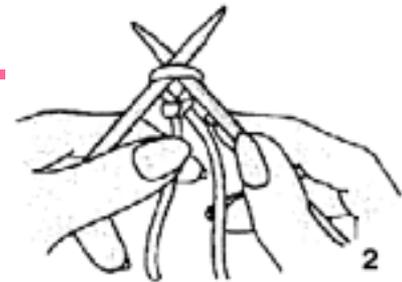
- **What you need:**
- Worsted-weight yarn, any color or colors
- Size 8, 14"-long knitting needles
- Yarn needle with big eye
- Small scissors

Casting On

- **Step 1:** Make a slip knot on the shaft of one needle. This counts as your first stitch.



- **Step 2:** Place this needle in left hand. Hold other needle in right hand to control the yarn. Insert point of right needle, from front to back, into the slip knot and under the left needle.

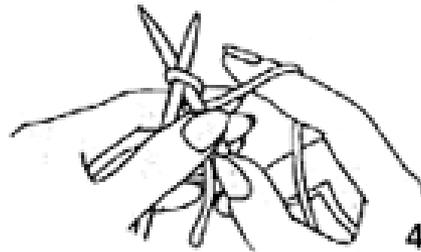


Casting On

- **Step 3:** Hold left needle still in left hand, and move left fingers over to brace right needle.

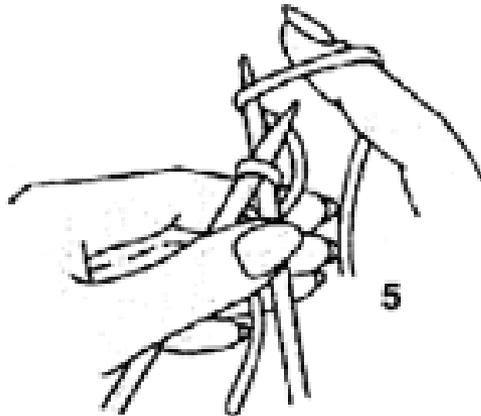


- **Step 4:** With right index finger, pick up the yarn from the ball.



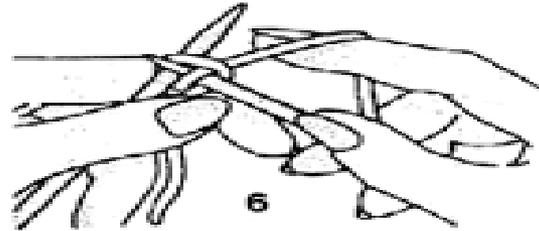
Casting On

- **Step 5:** Release right hand's grip on the needle, and use index finger to bring yarn under and over the point of right needle.

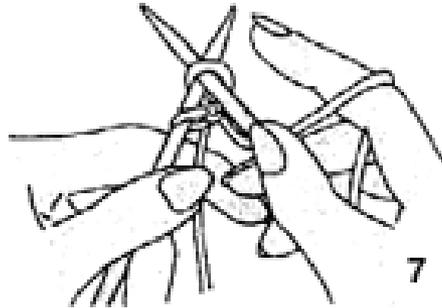


Casting On

- **Step 6:** Return right fingers to right needle, and draw yarn through stitch with point of right needle.

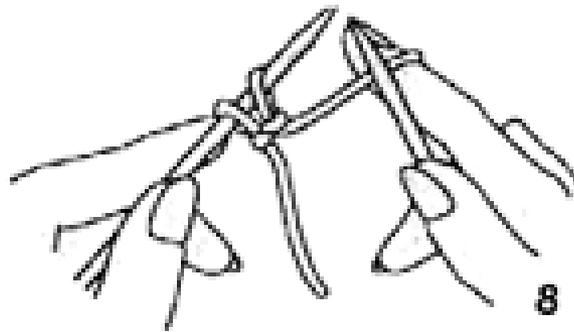


- **Step 7:** Slide point of left needle into back of new stitch, then remove right needle.



Casting On

- **Step 8:** Pull ball yarn gently to make the stitch fit snugly on needle. You have now made one stitch (called casting on), and there are two stitches on left needle (slip knot is counted as a stitch).

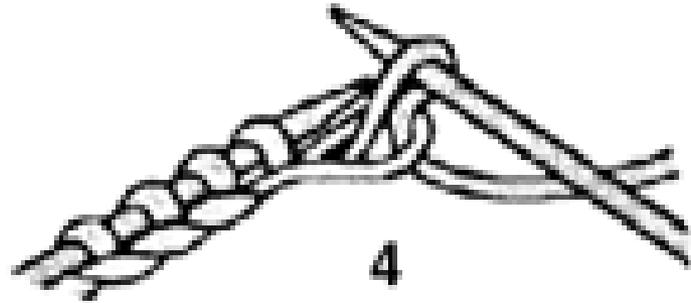
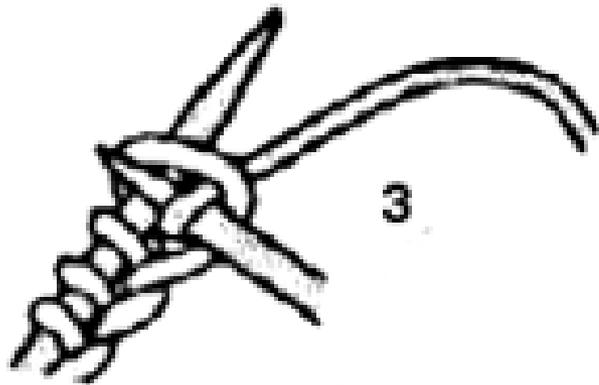
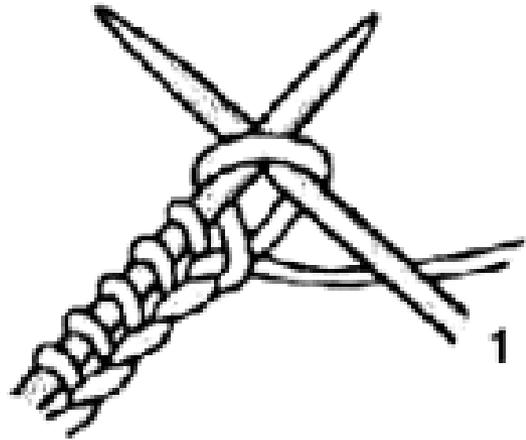


Cast~~ing~~ On

- **Step 9:** Insert point of right needle, from front to back, into stitch just made, and under left needle. Repeat Steps 5 through 9, 26 more times, until you have 28 stitches on the left needle. This completes the cast-on row, which is the way all knitting is begun.

First Knit Row

- **Step 1:** Hold needle with stitches in left hand; insert point of right needle in first stitch, from front to back, just as in casting on.
- **Step 2:** With right index finger, bring yarn from ball under and over point of right needle.
- **Step 3:** Draw yarn through stitch with right needle point.
- **Step 4:** This step now differs from casting on: Slip loop on left needle off, so new stitch is entirely on right needle.

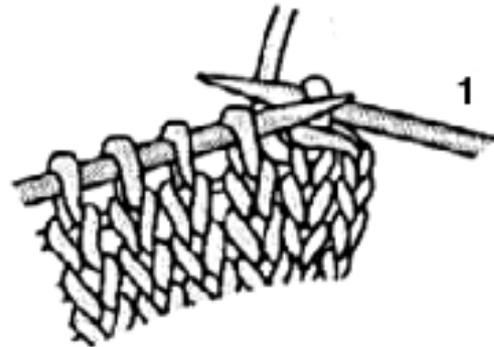
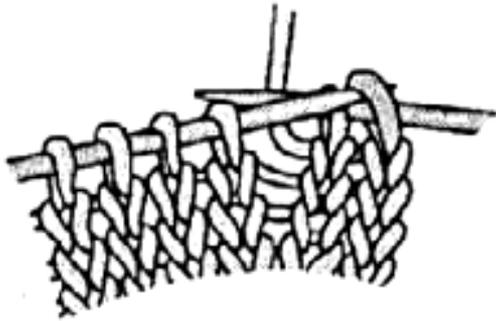


First Knit Row

- This completes one knit stitch. Repeat Steps 1 through 4 in each stitch still on left needle. When the last stitch is worked, one row of knitting is completed.
- Now measure your work. It should be about 7" wide. If it is too wide, start over and cast on fewer stitches; if it is too narrow, start over and cast on more stitches.
- When the width is correct, begin next knit row as follows: turn right needle and hold it now in left hand. With free needle in right hand, work Steps 1 through 4 of First Knit Row in each stitch. Again take needle with stitches in left hand, and work another row of knit stitches. Work rows of knit stitches until block measures 9" long.
- To complete the block, now bind off all the stitches

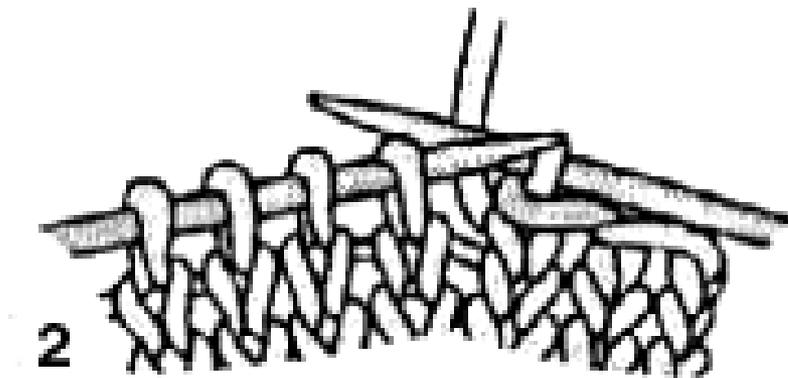
Binding Off

- **Step 1:** Knit the first 2 stitches; insert left needle into stitch you knitted first, and pull it over the second stitch and completely off the needle.
- One stitch is now bound off.



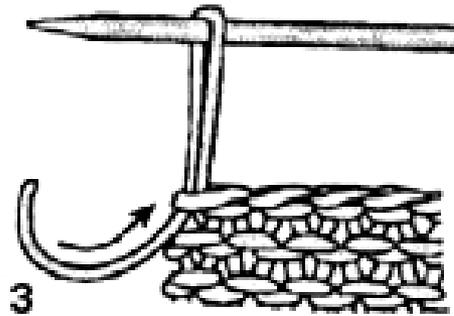
Binding Off

- **Step 2:** Knit one more stitch, insert left needle into first stitch on right needle, and pull it over the new stitch and completely off the needle. Another stitch is bound off; don't work too tightly.



Binding Off

- Repeat Step 2 until one stitch remains; now cut yarn from skein, leaving a 6" end. With needle draw end up and through last stitch to secure it. Thread yarn end into yarn needle and weave end into several stitches to secure it.



Getting Started

- **Look under "Yarns" in the Yellow Pages**
National chains such as Wal-Mart, craft and fabric chains such as Michaels Arts & Crafts, Jo-Ann Stores, A.C. Moore and Hobby Lobby, regional chains such as Ames Department Stores and local yarn, needlework and craft shops offer a wide range of yarns and frequently offer classes.
- **Tap the Internet**
Yarns also are sold via mail order and the Internet. To locate these yarn resources, search on key words--knit, crochet, yarn--and you'll discover thousands of interesting links.

Getting Started

Classes are Everywhere

Classes also are offered in adult-education programs, libraries, Y's, recreation centers, design schools, etc. Learning to crochet or knit in a class environment is fun. Not only do you learn basic techniques, but members of the class share project ideas and tips. Hiring a teacher for personalized lessons is another option and is especially cost-effective if you have a group of friends or business colleagues who also want to learn.