

Lion Brand Yarn + Michael's Community Classroom

Knitting 101

In **KNITTING 1** you will learn how to read a yarn label, cast on, knit and bind off. We'll also practice reading a simple pattern and demonstrate the horizontal seam you'll use to finish the cowl.

Before You Start

Find a comfortable chair in good light. As with any new skill, learning to knit requires equal measures of patience and perseverance.

Remember, you should have fun with your knitting. If you get stuck, take a deep breath, but keep at it! Knitting will give you a lifetime of pleasure and relaxation.

CO = Casting On

Casting On is the term for making the foundation row of stitches on your needle.

To begin, you will need a pair of knitting needles and a skein (also called a 'ball' or a 'hank') of yarn. The terms 'skein', 'ball' and 'hank' refers to the style of the yarn packaging:

- A 'skein' is the form that the yarn is in when it wound by the manufacturing equipment. Some skeins are designed so that you can pull the yarn from the inside as well as the outside. These are called 'pull skeins' or 'center pull'.
- A 'ball' is yarn that has been rolled into a ball (sometimes done by knitters for convenience or to divide a skein into multiple quantities for use)
- A 'hank' is the yarn wound loosely in a circle. Hanks are common in hand-spun or hand-dyed yarn, but are not common in commercially-prepared product. If your yarn is in a hank, it will tangle easily and it is necessary to roll it into a ball before beginning work.

In these instructions, we use the term 'ball' to describe the yarn in bulk, but the term 'skein' would be equally accurate – we do not mean that you have to wind your skein into a ball!

There are many different methods of casting on. In this class we'll use the knitted cast on, as the first steps are very similar to making a knit stitch. As you gain experience you can learn other methods of casting on, either as called for in a particular pattern, or to fit specific needs – stretchy, firm, or durable, for example.

Making a slip knot:

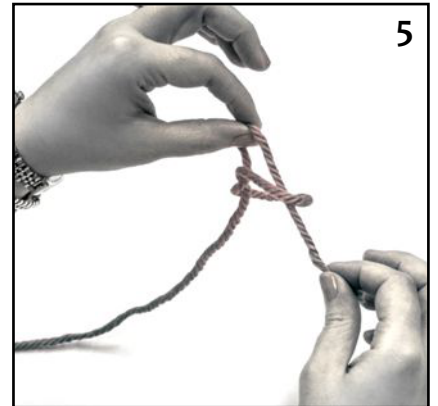
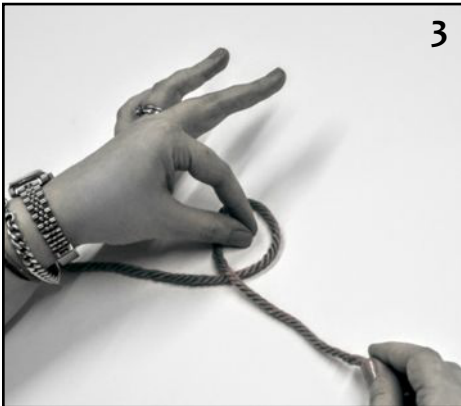


1: Tying a slip knot is very similar to tying a regular knot.

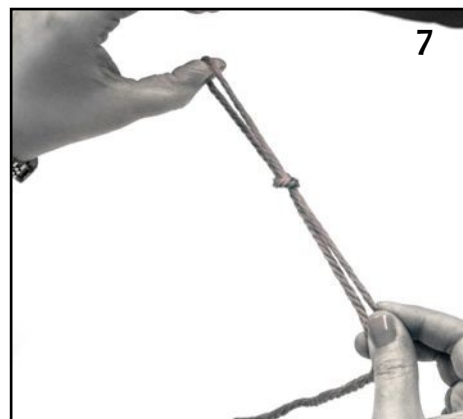


2: First make a loop with your yarn.

3 - 5: Next, pull **a loop** through the loop you just made, making sure you don't pull the tail through.



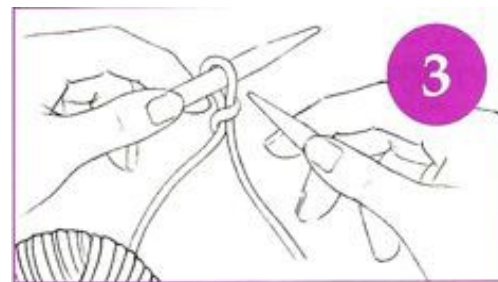
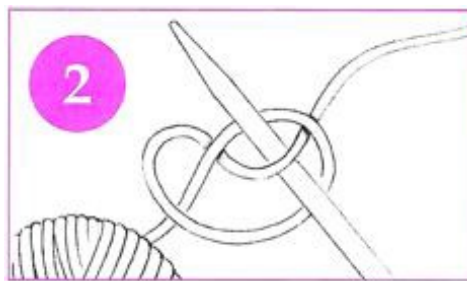
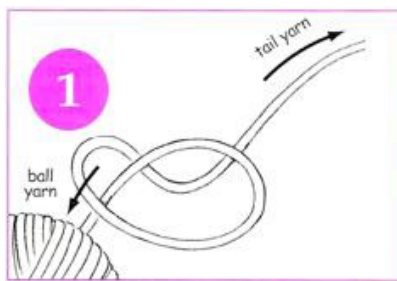
6-7: Hold on to both the tail and the working yarn (leading to the ball) while you tighten it.



Place the slip knot on your needle. Snug it so that it isn't so loose it falls right off, but isn't so tight that you cannot get the tip of your needle into it.

Your slip knot is the first stitch. Now you're ready to cast on the rest of your stitches!

Slip Knot Illustrations from our website:



The Knitted Cast On:

4: With a motion from front to back, insert the tip of your empty right needle into the loop on the left needle, underneath the left needle. The needles will cross inside the loop with the right needle under the left one.



5: Adjust your thumb so that you are gently gripping both needles between the thumb and forefinger of your left hand. The right needle is still on the bottom. There are two strands of yarn hanging down from the stitch. One is the tail of the yarn and the other strand goes to the ball of yarn. You will be working with the strand that goes to the ball of yarn.



6: Holding the yarn with your right hand and keeping the needles in your left, bring the strand of yarn underneath the right needle. Wrap the strand around the tip of the right needle, starting underneath from the right, going around the back to the left and bringing the yarn up over the needle to the right so that the yarn is wrapped in a counter-clockwise motion (point the tip of the needle at your nose to determine the direction the yarn travels around it.) The strand of yarn will be on your right when you have finished:



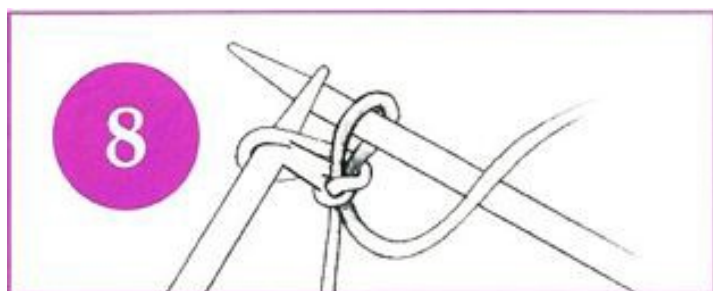
7: Pull the yarn with your right pointer finger to tighten it so that it is not loose on the needle.

Keeping the yarn wrapped on the right needle, pull the tip of the right needle towards you, out from below the left needle and up through the center of the stitch on the left needle. Then slide the tip of the right needle so that it is now on top of the left needle and the yarn that is wrapped around it has been pulled through the stitch that is on the left needle.

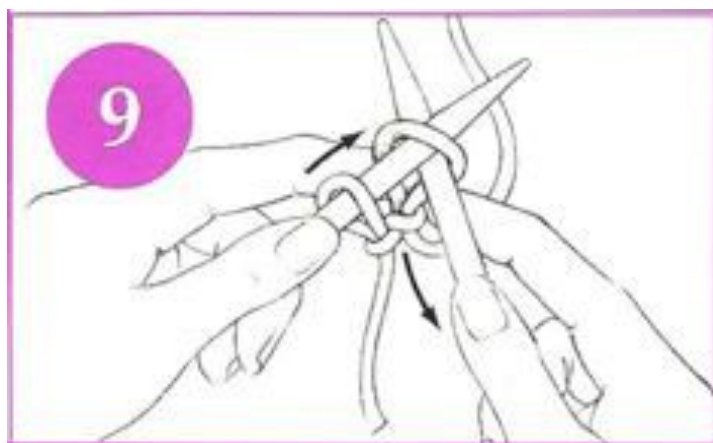
When you are finished, the tips of your needles will be crossed with the tip of the right needle on top and the left one below. There is a loop on the right needle that has been pulled up through the stitch. Don't get discouraged if you don't get this on the first try! There is a 'knack' to moving the right needle and the loop on it so that the loop does not slide off when making this motion. This can take several tries before it becomes natural.



8: Now you have one loop on each needle. Elongate the new loop on the right needle by pulling it gently. This will soon be your second cast-on stitch!



9: Transfer the new cast-on stitch from the right needle to the left needle by inserting the tip of the left needle into the loop of the stitch that you have just created on the right needle and slipping the stitch from the right needle to the left needle.



10: You now have 2 loops ('cast-on stitches') on your left needle!

Repeat steps 4 through 9 until you have the desired number of stitches on the left needle. When you have as many stitches on the needle as are required by your pattern, your cast-on is complete!

k = knit

Knitting is the art of creating a fabric by making interlocking loops of yarn.

The action of inserting your working (right hand) needle through the first loop from left to right and pulling a new loop toward you through the first loop is called 'knitting'.

There are different methods for holding the yarn and needles. In the 'English' method, the yarn is controlled (or 'thrown') with the right hand to create stitches. In the 'Continental' method, the yarn is controlled in the left hand and the stitches are made by 'picking' loops off the left needle with the needle held in the right hand. Some knitters feel that the Continental method is faster because there is less wasted motion. Right handed crocheters often are more comfortable with the yarn tensioned in their left hand. Experiment with both to find the way that feels most comfortable for you.

Note: These illustrations show how to knit using the English method.

1: Start by casting on as many stitches as are required by your pattern. When your cast-on is ready, hold the needle with the cast-on stitches on it in your left hand so that the first stitch is approximately one inch [2.5 cm] from the tip of the needle. Loop the yarn that goes from the bottom of the first stitch to ball over the top of the forefinger of your right hand and hold the empty needle in your right hand.



2: Guess what? You already know what to do next! Insert the tip of the right needle into the stitch closest to the tip of the left needle. This is the same way that you inserted the needle in step 4 when casting on.



3: Move your left hand so that both needles are held in your left hand between your thumb and your forefinger. Using your right forefinger, wrap the yarn from the stitch on the left needle up and around the right hand needle counter-clockwise. (This is the same motion that you used in step 6 in the section on casting on.)



4: Slide the right needle (with the loop of yarn on it) down and towards you through the center of the stitch that is on the left needle.



5: Pull the yarn that is around the tip of the right needle down and through the stitch on the left needle to create a new loop ('stitch') on the right needle. This is the same motion you used in step 7 when casting on



6: Now for something new! Slip the new stitch and the stitch from the left needle to which it is connected completely off the tip of the left needle.

CONGRATULATIONS! You have just knit your first stitch!

Now continue repeating steps 2 through 6 until you have knit all the stitches off of your left needle and onto your right one. When you reach that last stitch **DON'T PANIC**. Just knit the stitch. You have now completed a ROW. Note that the cast-on does not count as a row if you are knitting a piece where you have to count rows. What you have just finished – cast-on included – is row 1.

When the row is finished, it is time to turn your work. Exchange the empty needle in your left hand with the full needle in your right and begin again.

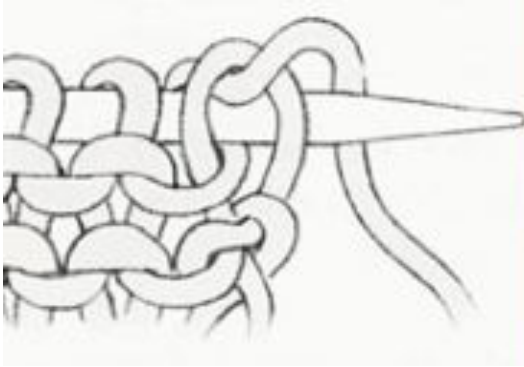
There are 4 main steps to remember to form the knit stitch:

1. Insert the needle
2. Wrap the yarn
3. Pull through the loop
4. Pull off the new stitch

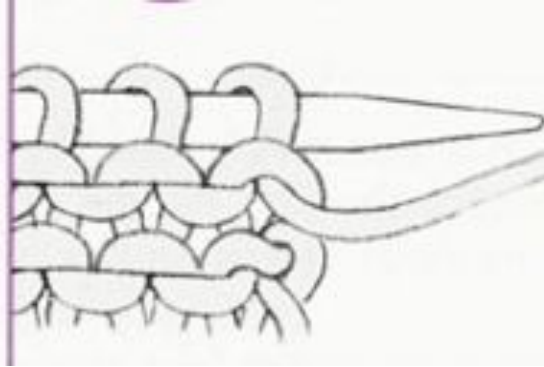
TIPS:

- Straighten your work at the end of a row by tugging the fabric downward.
- Get in the habit of counting your stitches at the end of a row. It's common for beginners to add or lose stitches. Counting regularly will help you prevent mistakes from becoming problems.
- Pay special attention to the first stitch of the row. It will look loose and 'wrong' but pulling the yarn over the top of the needle to tighten it up will actually stretch the last stitch around the needle so it looks like two stitches. If you find your work growing along the edge, this is probably why.

wrong:



right:

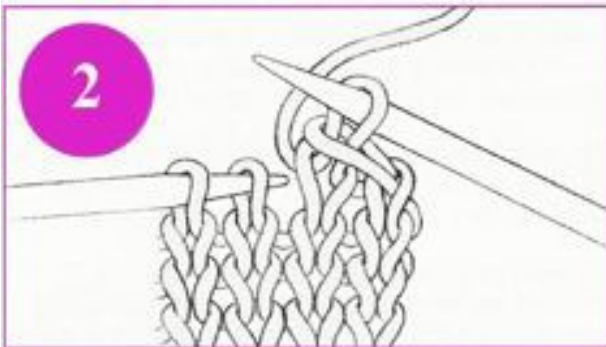


BO = bind off

So your piece is finished! Congratulations! Now to get it off the needles and into use! This tutorial shows you how to finish off your knitted piece. The first step in finishing is to secure the stitches, changing them from “live” stitches to bound off stitches.



1: Knit two stitches in the usual way. Insert the tip of the left needle into the first stitch on the right needle. Lift the stitch over the last stitch you knit and off the end of the right needle, taking it off of both needles. This stitch should fit around the base of next stitch like a collar.



2: One stitch remains on the right needle. Knit another stitch. Lift the stitch furthest from the tip over the stitch you just knit. Continue in this way until one loop remains on the right hand needle.



3: Cut the yarn, leaving a tail of 4 or 5 inches and draw the end through the last stitch.

LION BRAND® HEARTLAND® THICK & QUICK® KNIT LEVEL 1 COWL

BEGINNER

SIZE

About 10 x 32 in. (25.5 x 81.5 cm)

MATERIALS

! Lion Brand® HEARTLAND® THICK & QUICK® (Art. #137)

#113 Redwood 2 balls

or color of your choice

! Lion Brand knitting needles size 11 (8 mm)

! Lion Brand large-eyed blunt needle

GAUGE

11 sts = about 4 in. (10 cm).

BE SURE TO CHECK YOUR GAUGE.

NOTE

Cowl is worked in one piece, then twisted and sewed together.

COWL

Cast on 28 stitches.

Work in Garter stitch (knit every stitch on every row) until piece measures about 32 in. (81.5 cm) from beginning.

Bind off and cut yarn, leaving a 20 in. (51 cm) long yarn tail.

FINISHING

Thread yarn tail into blunt needle. Twist the cowl once. With yarn tail, sew cast on and bound off ends of Cowl together.

Weave in ends.

ABBREVIATIONS

k = knit

st(s) = stitch(es)

Every effort has been made to produce accurate and complete instructions. We cannot be responsible for variance of individual knitters or crocheters, human error, or typographical mistakes.

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Reading a ball band

The ball band of your yarn contains some very useful information. You should always keep one ball band for the yarn used in your projects. It contains the care information you'll want to refer to when washing your finished items. In addition to care information, you will find the weight category and gauge of the yarn. Yarn is divided into 7 basic weight categories by the Craft Yarn Council:

Yarn Weight Symbol & Category Names	 0 LACE	 1 SUPER FINE	 2 FINE	 3 LIGHT	 4 MEDIUM	 5 BULKY	 6 SUPER BULKY	 7 JUMBO
Type of Yarns in Category	Fingering, 10 count crochet thread	Sock, Fingering, Baby	Sport, Baby	DK, Light Worsted	Worsted, Afghan, Aran	Chunky, Craft, Rug	Bulky, Roving	Jumbo, Roving



Yardage (imperial & metric) Weight of ball (ounces & grams)

Fiber Content

Weight Category (thickness)
Gauge for knit & crochet

Care information

Dye Lot

Joining a new ball (or color):



1: Leave a tail 4" P 6" long to weave in later. It's best to join new yarn on the edge.
(If you are not sure whether you have enough yarn to get across your next row, you'll need about 3x the width of the row.)



2: Insert your working needle into the first stitch. Loop your new yarn over the right hand needle.



3: Pull your first stitch through with the new yarn. (It can help to hold on to both ends of your new yarn to keep it taught.)



4: Continue knitting across the row with the working yarn from your new ball.

Seaming: Whip Stitch

Whip stitch is the most basic seam. It is the easiest to work and while it is visible, if you work neatly it will look fine. In Knitting 2 you will learn the Mattress Stitch seam which is invisible on the right (public) side of your project.

To whip stitch your cowl, match your cast-on edge to your bind-off edge and hold them parallel so that you can see both edges clearly.

Thread a large eye blunt needle with a length of yarn about double the width of your seam.

1: Leaving a 4" tail to weave in later, bring the needle up through the first stitches of both layers on the edge. Be sure to catch both sides of the stitch into your seam for stability.



2: Bring the yarn around and insert the needle *in the same direction* through the next two stitches. This creates your first stitch.



3: Repeat across, always going in the same direction and being careful to bring the needle under both legs of your edge stitches. Pull stitches snug, but not too tight, as you work. It's harder to tighten them up later without creating large gaps in your fabric.



Wrong side:



Right side:



Weaving in ends:

We discourage using knots to secure your ends because they form hard lumps in your projects and they are not secure for long. Knots can come untied in the course of wearing and washing your handknits and ends cut short at a knot will unravel if that happens. You should always leave a tail 4" P 6" long on your cast-on and bind-off as well as both tails whenever you join a new ball.

To weave in your ends, thread a large eye blunt needle with the tail you are hiding. If your project has a wrong side, or inside you should hide your ends there. Hide tails under purl bumps, and be sure to zig zag or change directions so the end can't just slide straight out from under the stitches.

