



## Learn to Knit

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## **Before you start ...**

Find a comfortable chair in good light. Read through the steps before you start. 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!

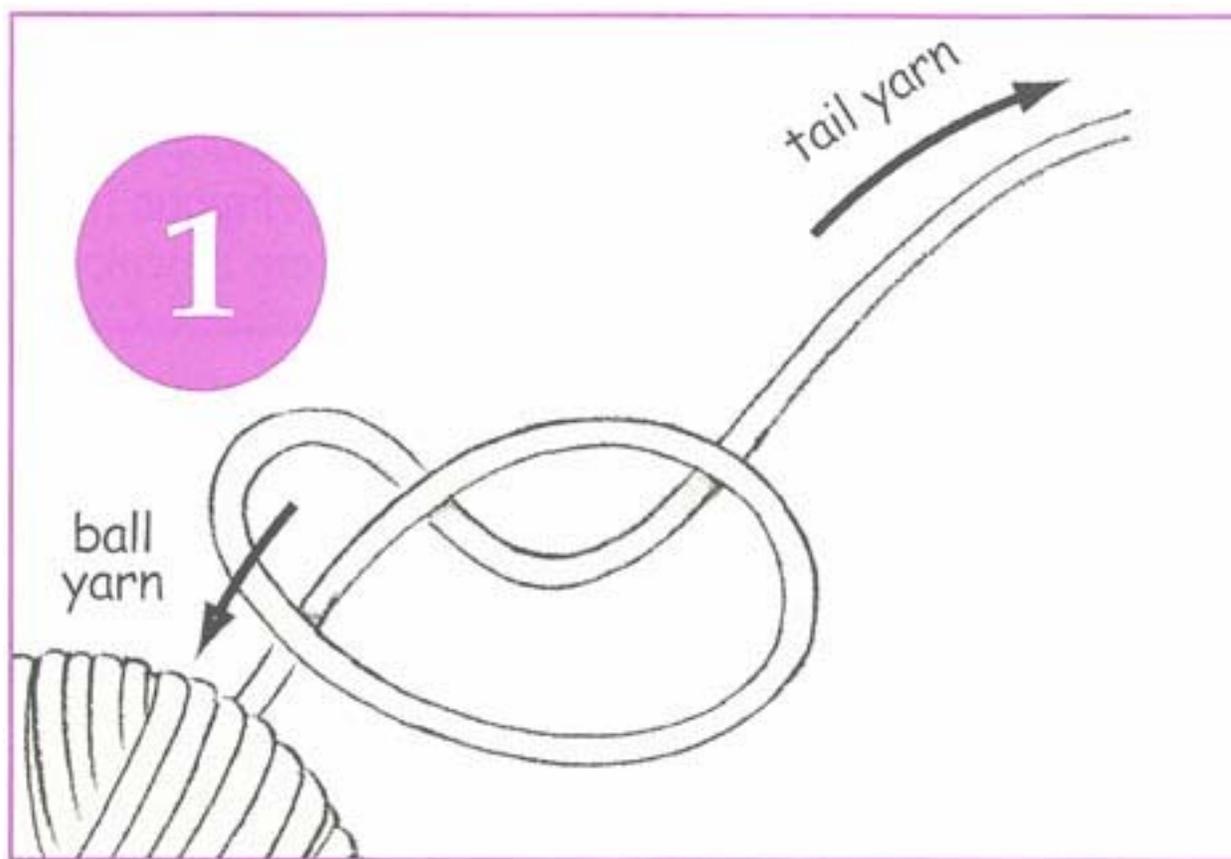
Knitting will give you a lifetime of pleasure and relaxation. You can create handmade knits for yourself and people you love. When you give a lovingly knit gift, part of you goes into it. Your time, talent, the yarn and color you select -- even the thoughts and feelings you have as your work -- are part of your knitted gift.

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## 1. Casting On

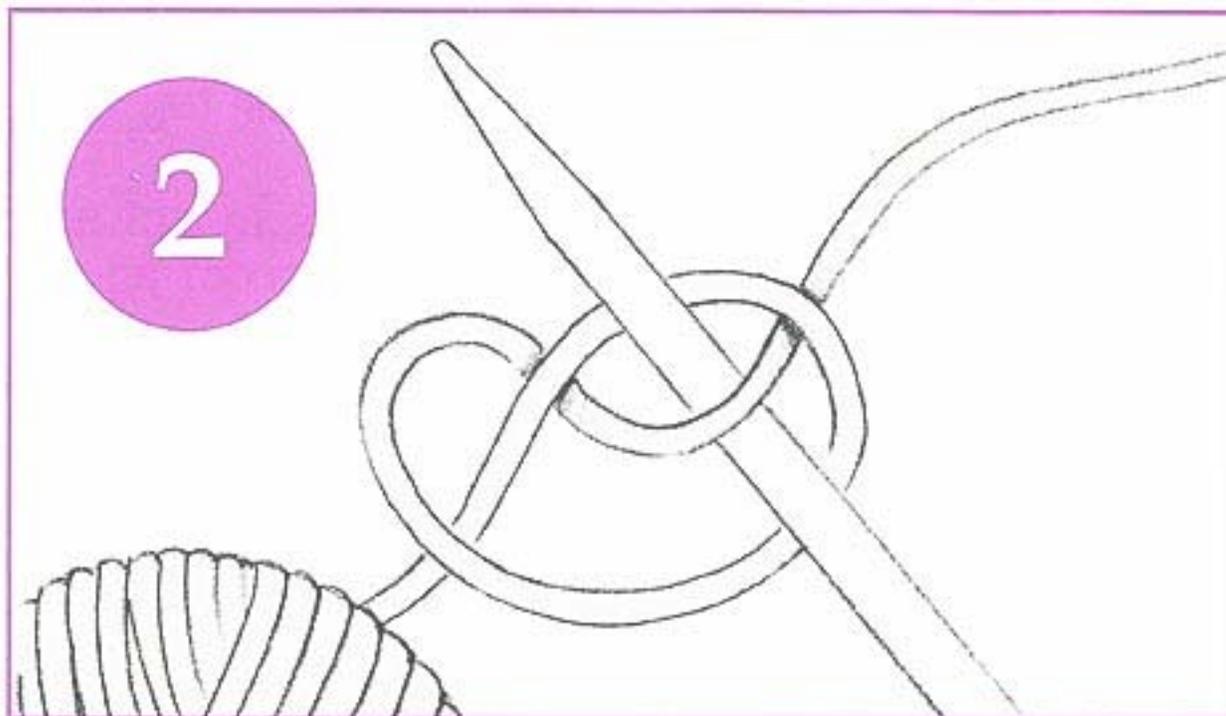
**Casting On** is the term for making the foundation row of stitches on your needle. To begin, you make a slipknot:



Pull the yarn strand from the center of the ball. Make a loop 5 or 6 inches (120 or 150 cm) from the end (the tail) by placing the tail in front of the ball of yarn, then letting the rest of the tail fall slightly behind the loop:

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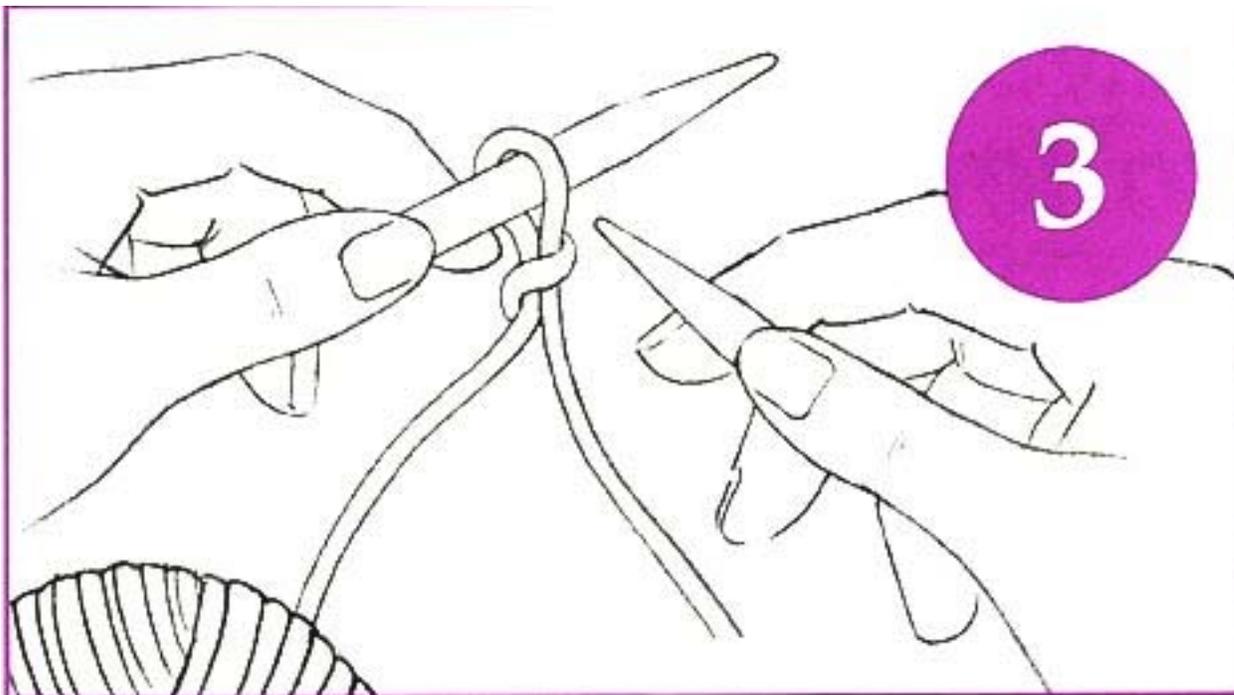
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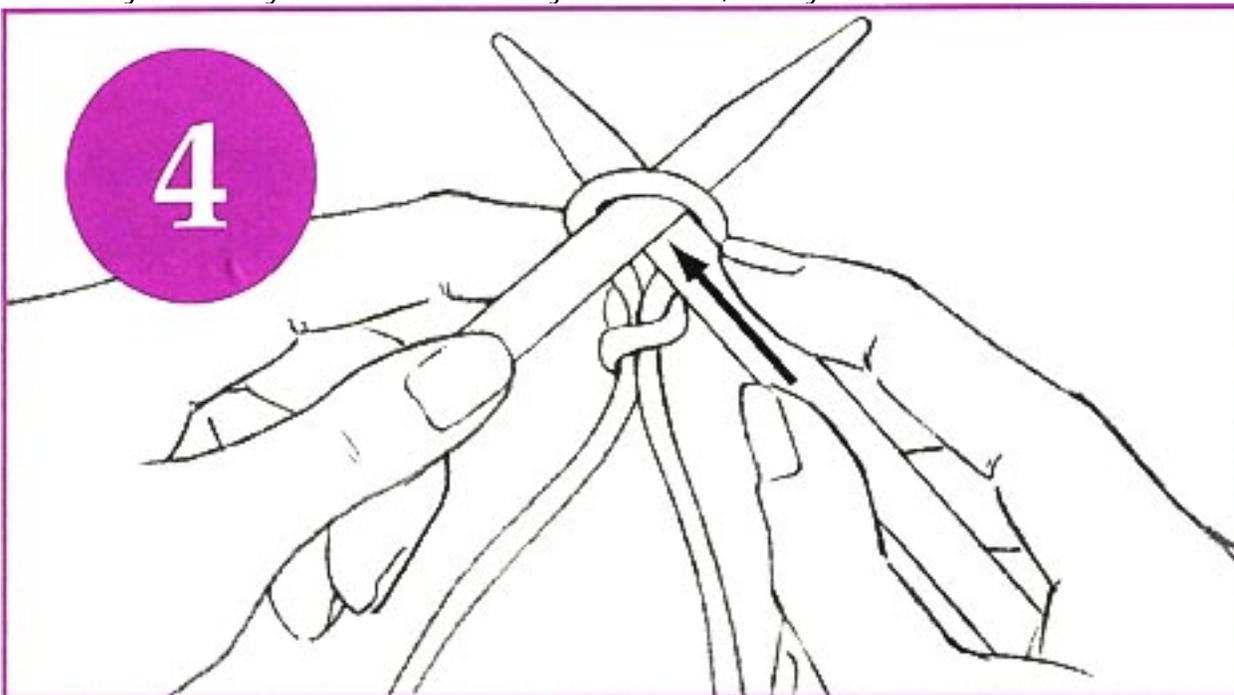
Insert your needle into the loop. Scoop up the yarn in the back of the loop with the tip of your needle. Pull it through the front of the loop. Gently pull the tail yarn to tighten loop around the needle. This is your first stitch.

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With the yarn from your ball IN BACK of your needles, hold your hands as shown.

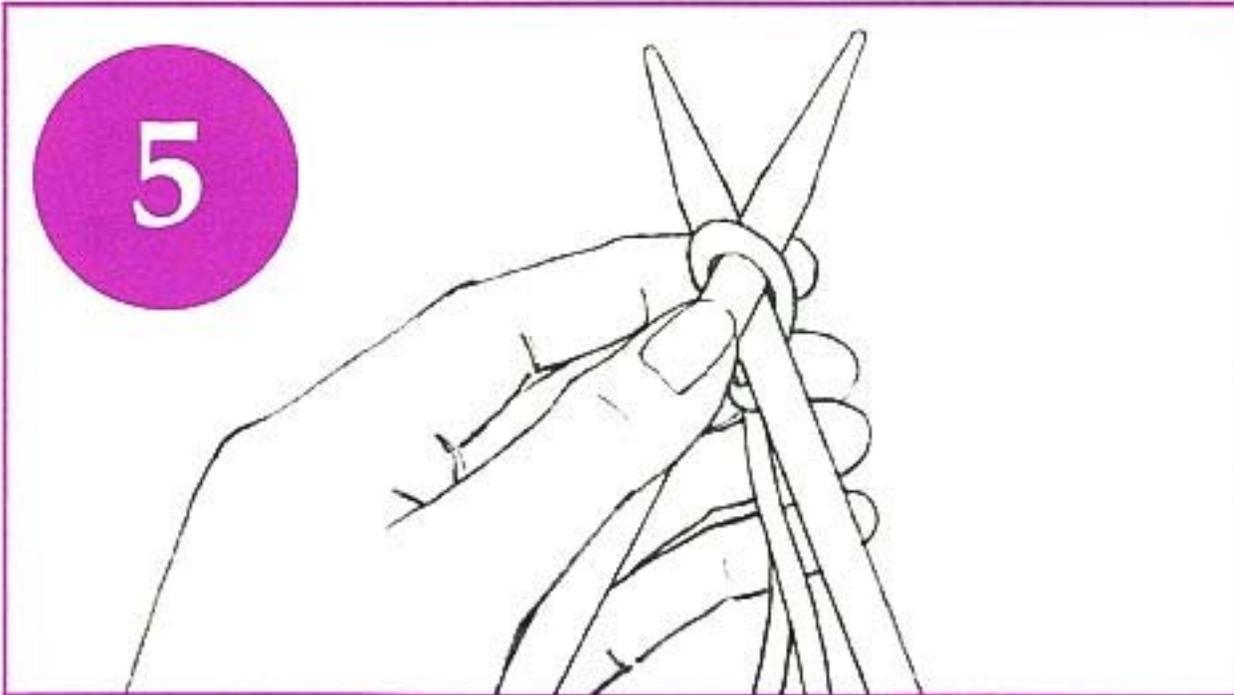


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Insert the tip of your right (empty) needle, from the front to the back (from the left side of the stitch to the right) into the loop on the left needle.

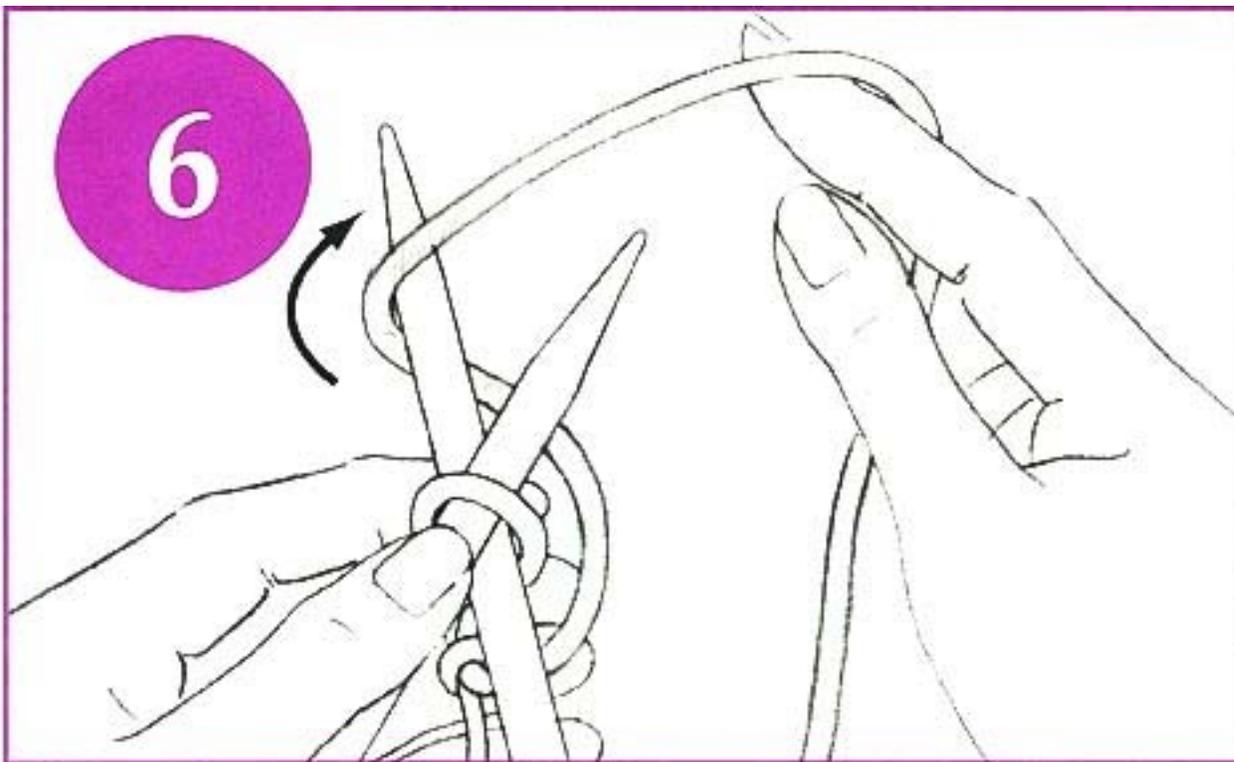
The needles will cross with the left needle remaining on top of the right needle.



Adjust your thumb so that you are gently gripping both needles between the thumb and forefinger of your left hand.

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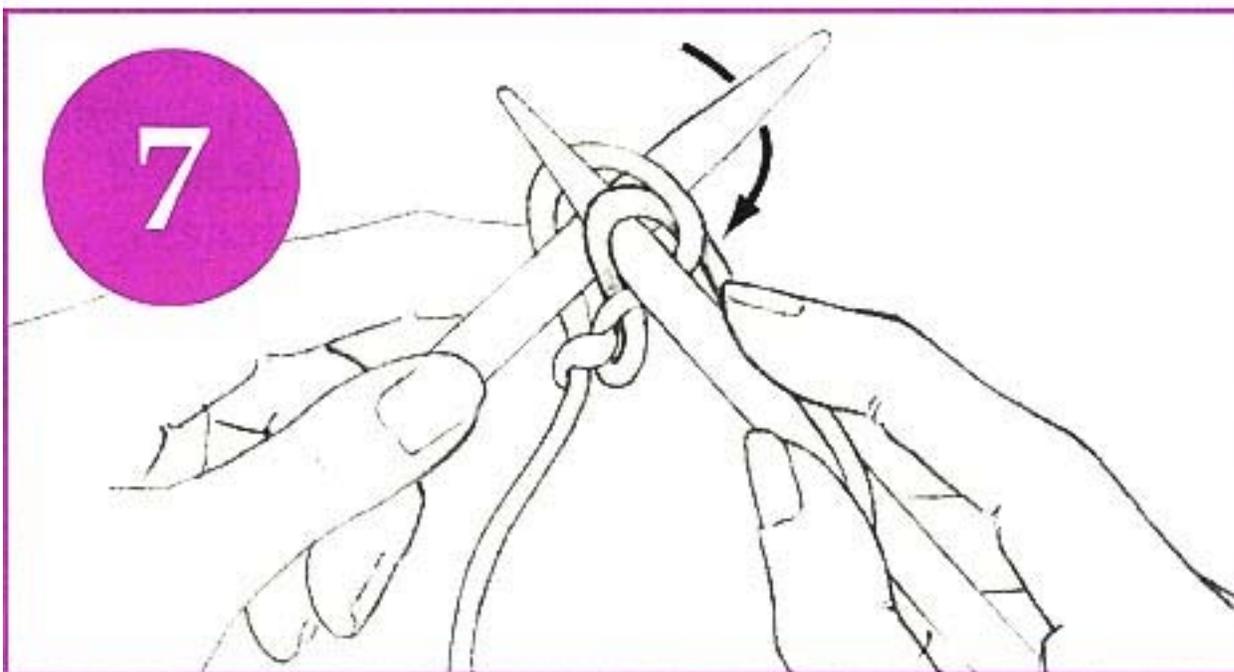
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Holding the yarn with your right hand, wrap the yarn around the tip of the right needle in a clockwise motion as shown.

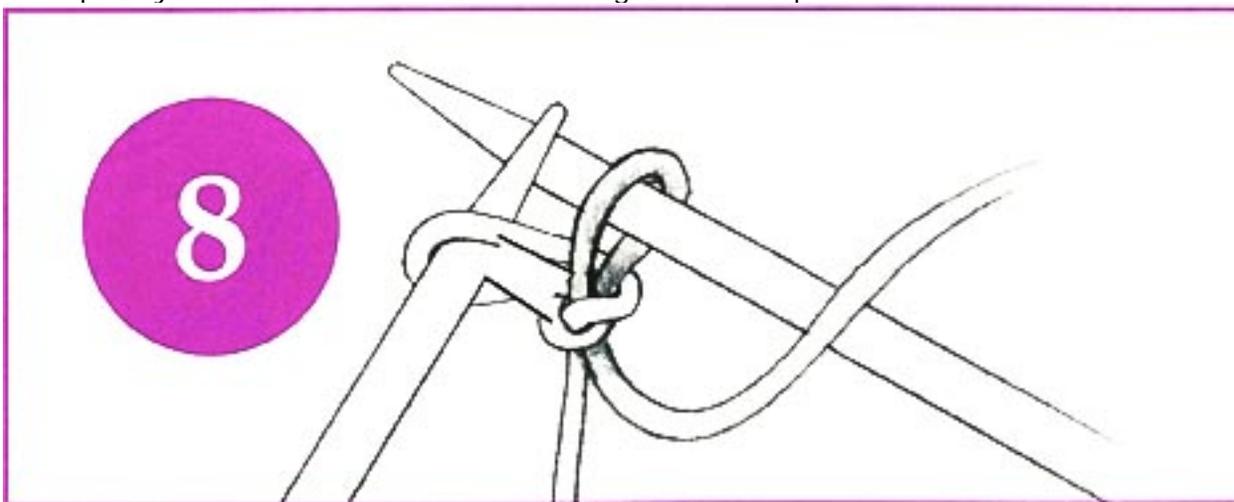
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Secure the loop you have just made with your right pointer finger. Pull the tip of the right needle towards you, below the left needle through the center of the stitch. Don't get discouraged if you don't get this on the first try.

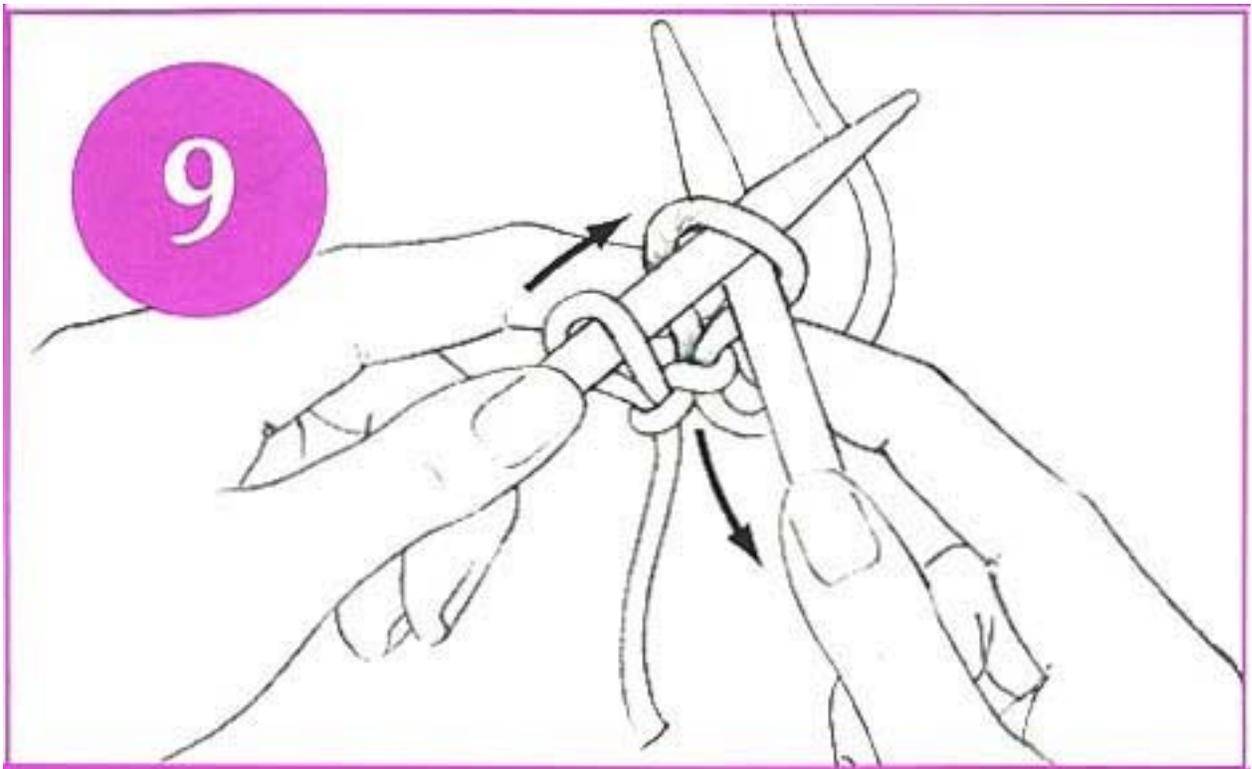
The tips of your needles now cross with the right one on top and the left one below.



Now you have one loop on each needle. Elongate the pulled-through loop.

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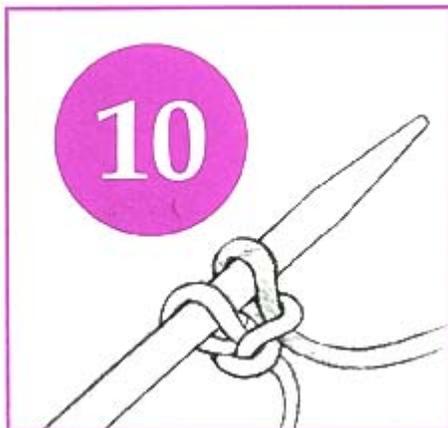
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Insert the tip of the left needle into the loop on the right needle, slip the stitch off.



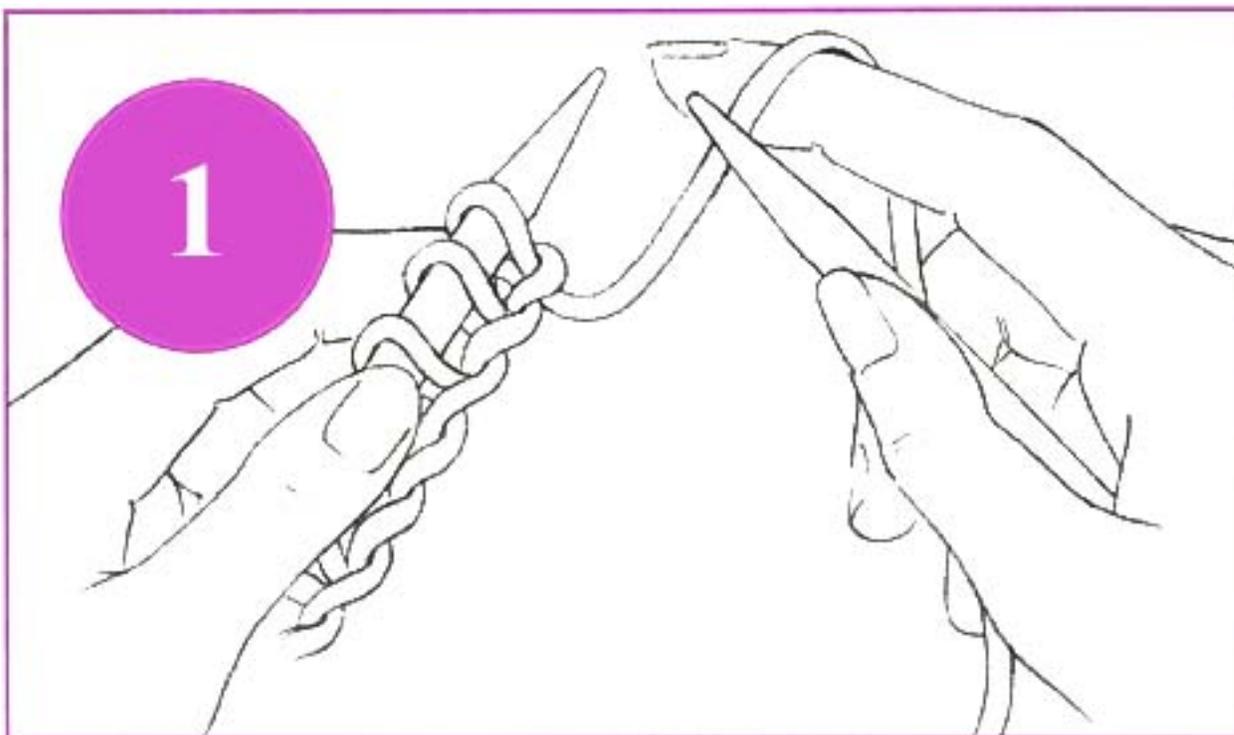
You now have 2 loops on your left needle. Repeat steps 4 through 9 until you have the desired number of stitches.

**Now get ready to knit!**

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## 2. The Knit Stitch



Hold the needle with the stitches on it in your left hand. The first stitch is approximately an inch from the top. The empty needle is in your right hand.

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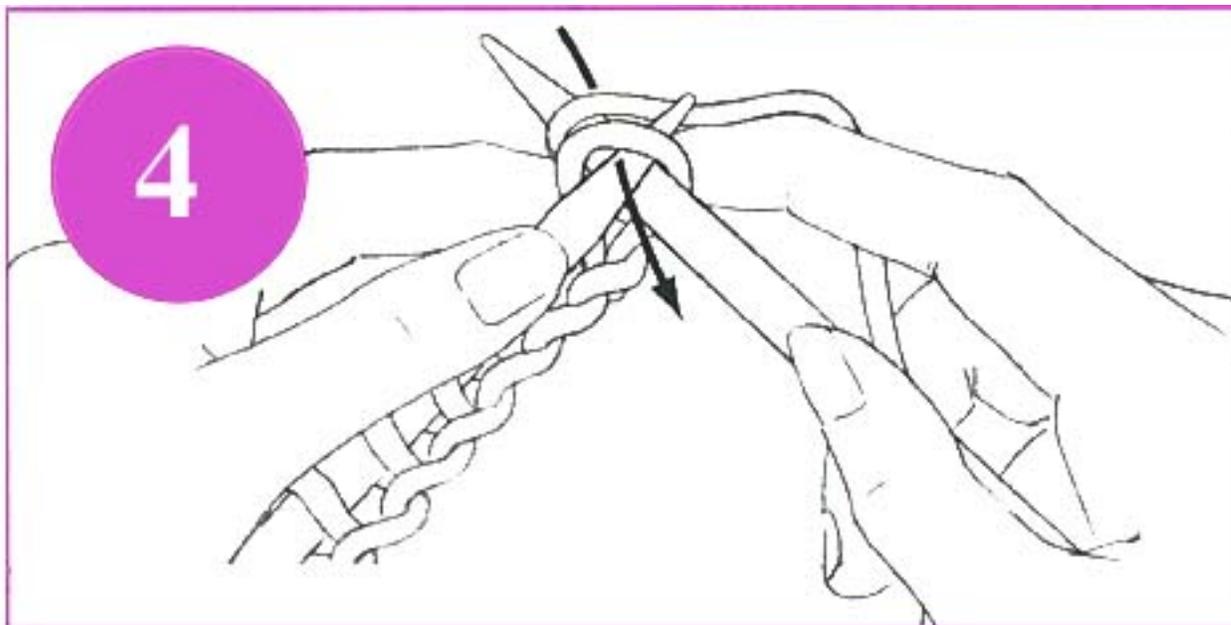
Guess what? You already know what to do next! Insert the tip into the stitch closest to the tip of the left needle (from front to back) the same way as you did in step 4 when casting on.



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Secure the two needles in your left hand between your thumb and your forefinger. Pick up the yarn in your right hand and wrap it in a clockwise motion from under to over the tip of the right needle. This is the same as step 6 in the section on casting on.

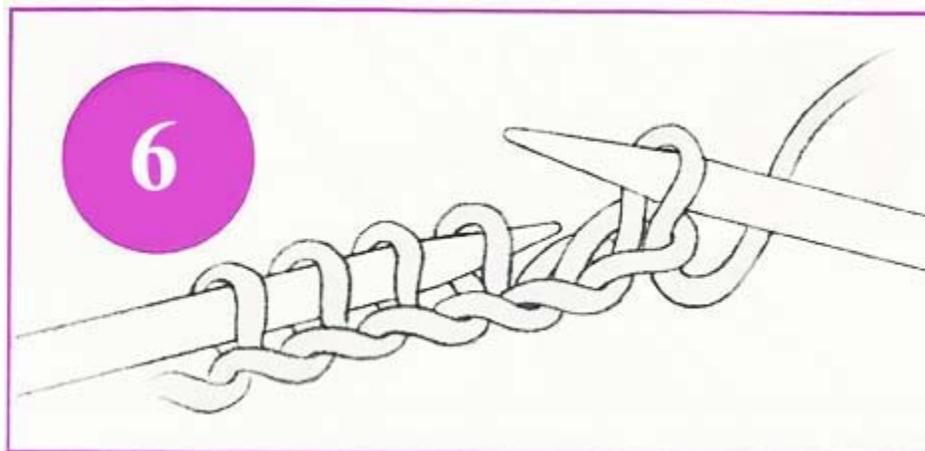


Slide the right needle (with the loop of yarn on it) down and towards you through the center of the stitch. This is the same step you did when you were casting on (step 7).



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Now for something new! Slip the new stitch completely off the tip of the left needle. You now have one stitch on your right needle.

**CONGRATULATIONS! You have just knit your first stitch!**

Now continue repeating steps 1 through 7 until you have knit all the stitches off of your left needle.

When you reach that last stitch DON'T PANIC. Just knit the stitch. You have now completed a ROW.

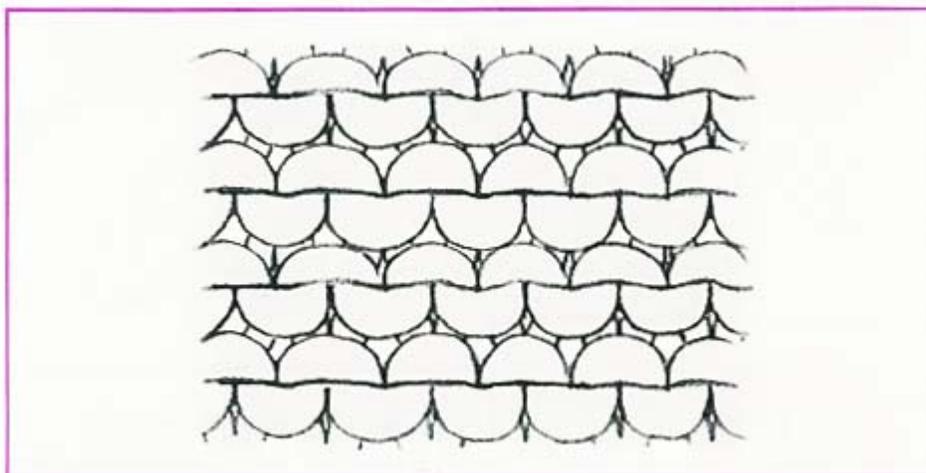
Now its time to turn your work. Exchange the empty needle in your left hand with the full needle in your right and begin again.

Just remember that knitting is a 4-step process:

1. Insert the needle
2. wrap the yarn
3. pull through the loop
4. pull off the new stitch

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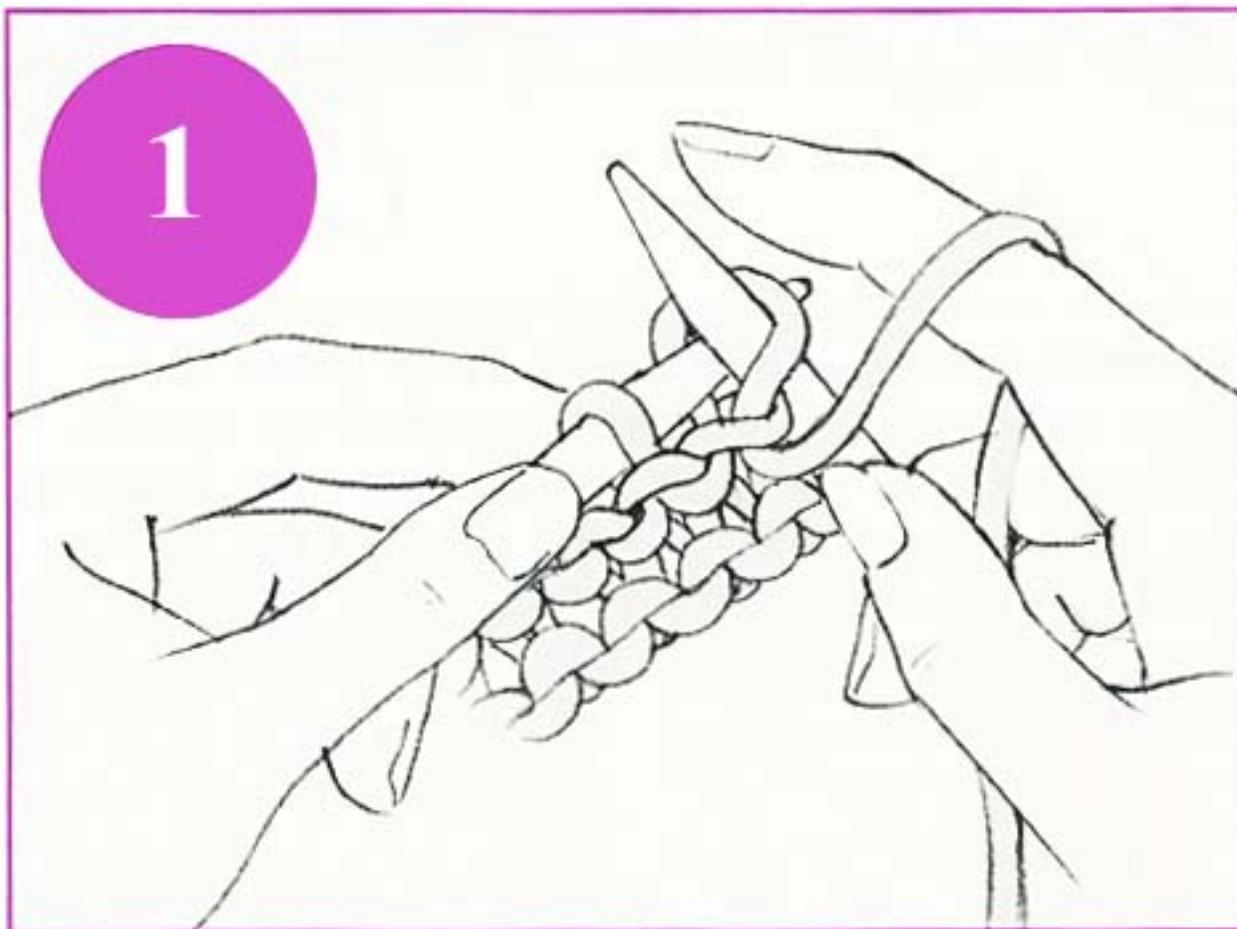
After you have knit several rows, the fabric you have made should look like this. This is called the GARTER STITCH. See the ridges? A ridge is created by two rows of knitting.

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### 3. The Purl Stitch

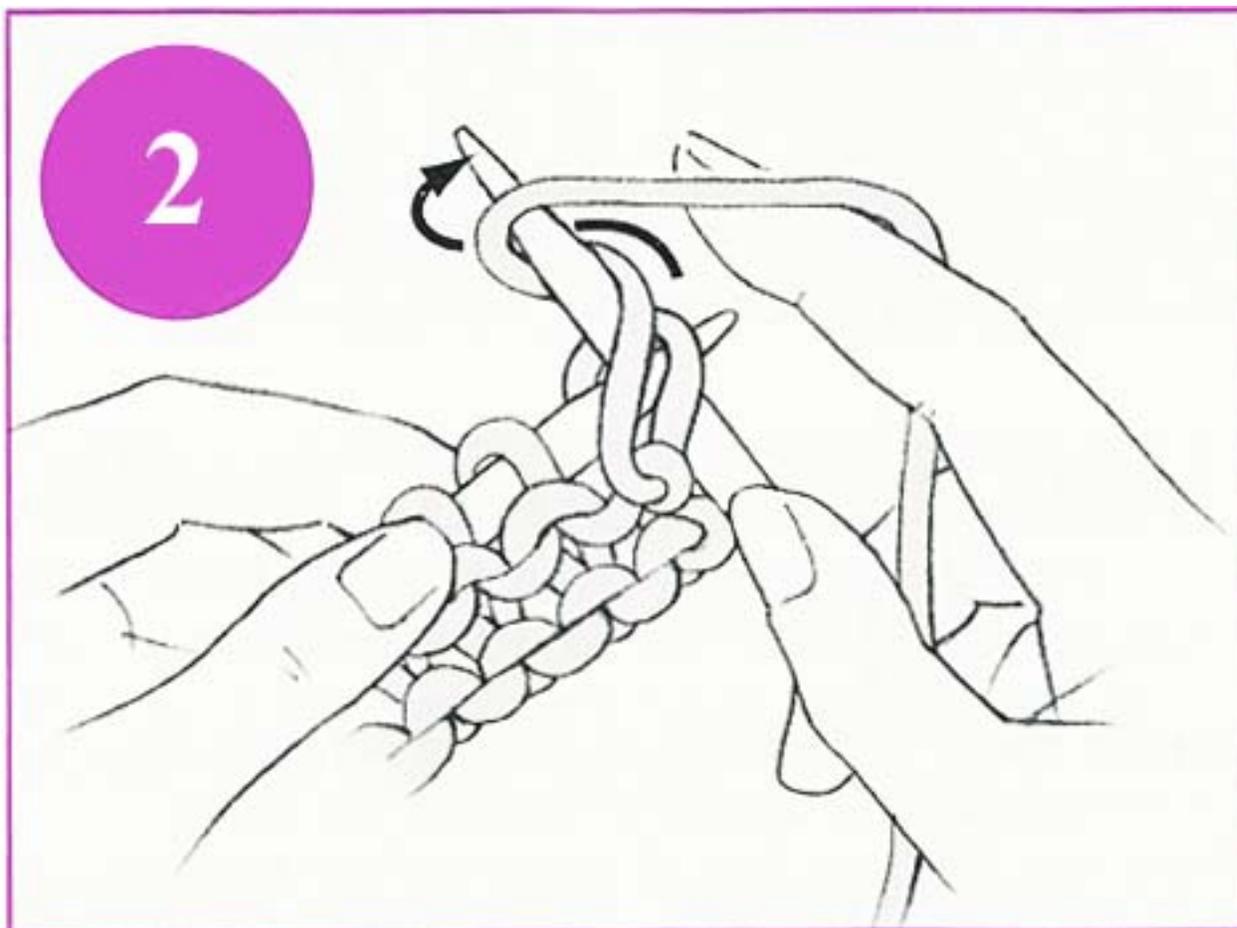
To make a purl stitch, you do all the same steps as you do to make a knit stitch except with slightly different motions.



Hold the needles as if to knit. Place the yarn IN FRONT of the needle. Insert the right needle from BACK to FRONT (right to left) into the first stitch on the left needle.

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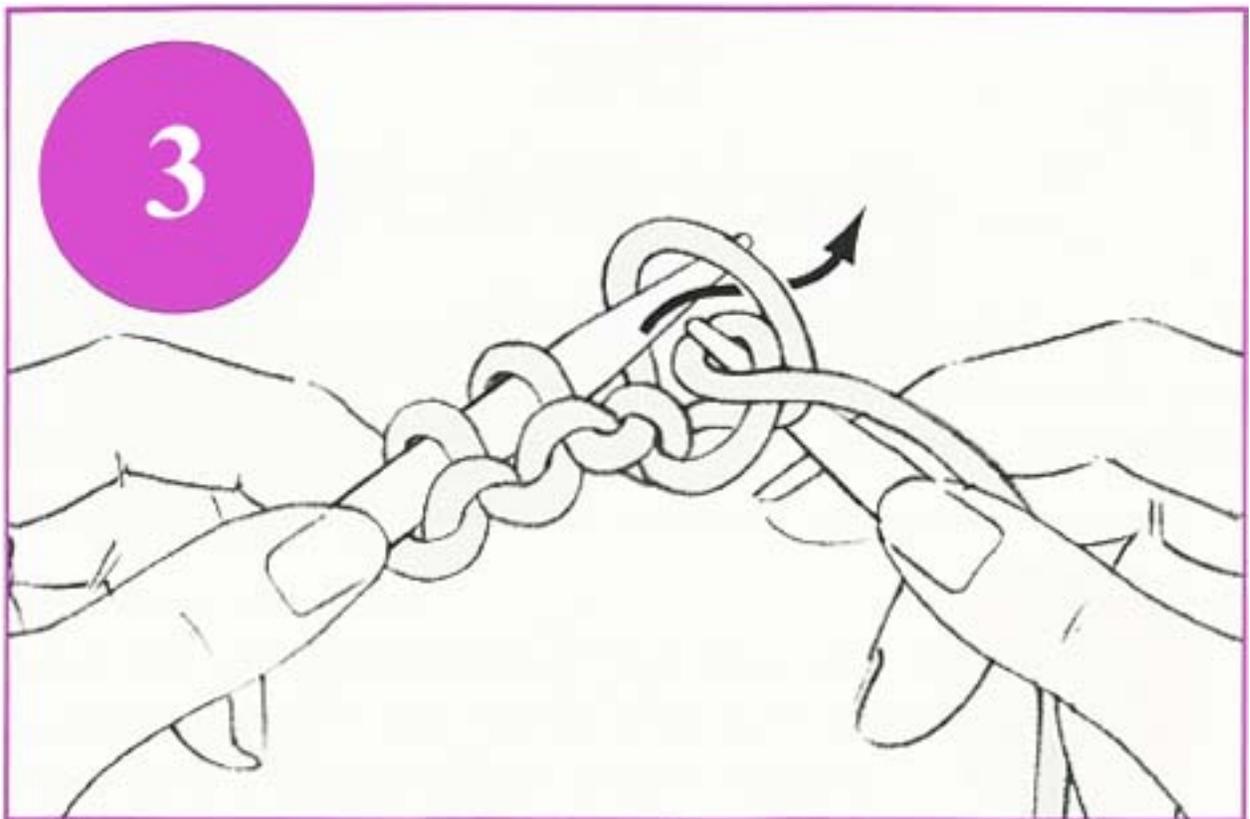
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Loop the yarn around the tip of the right needle in a downward (counter-clockwise) motion.

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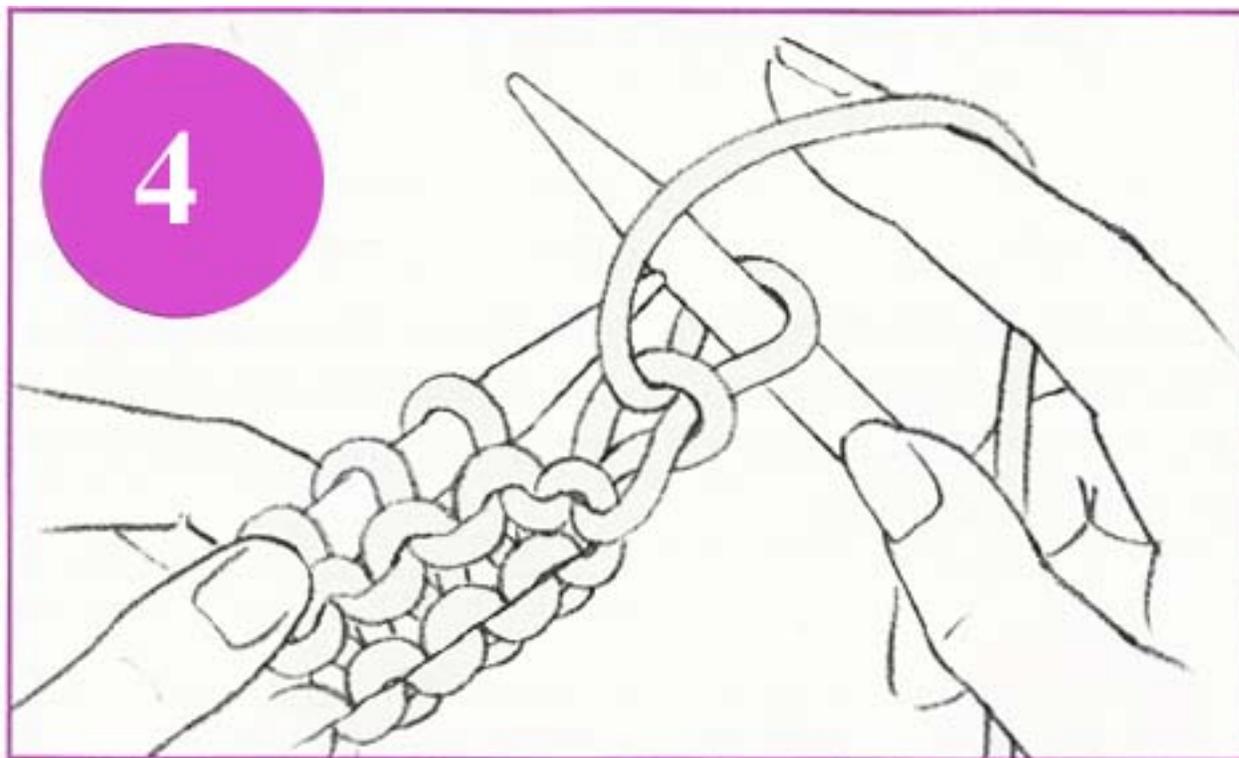
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To make sure you don't lose the loop, place your right thumb over the yarn and against the needle. Slide the tip of the right needle from the front to the back (away from you) and through the center of the stitch on the left needle.

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Pull the new loop off the tip of the left needle. You now have a stitch on your right needle.

**CONGRATULATIONS! You have just made a purl stitch!**

Repeat steps 1 through 4 to complete the row. If it feels a little awkward, you are not alone. Many new knitters find it easier to knit than to purl. Soon you'll feel at home doing either stitch.

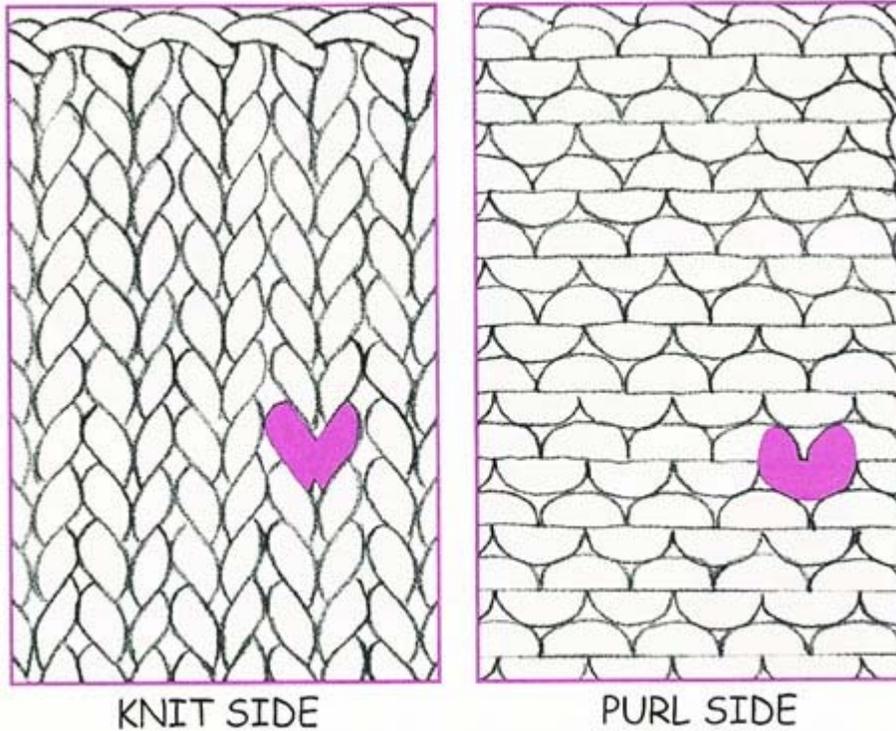
When you have finished this row, turn your work (place the full needle in your left hand and the empty needle in your right hand) and KNIT the next row. After that, PURL the next row. Continue working, alternating each knit row with a purl row. This creates stockinette stitch.

Look at your work. One side of your fabric looks like its covered with V's. That's the knit side. The other side looks like its covered with bumps. That's the purl side.

To figure out whether you should be knitting the row or purling the row, put your work in your left hand.

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Which side is facing you?

If the V's are facing you, you are on the knit side and should knit the row. If the bumps are facing you, you are on the purl side, so purl the row.

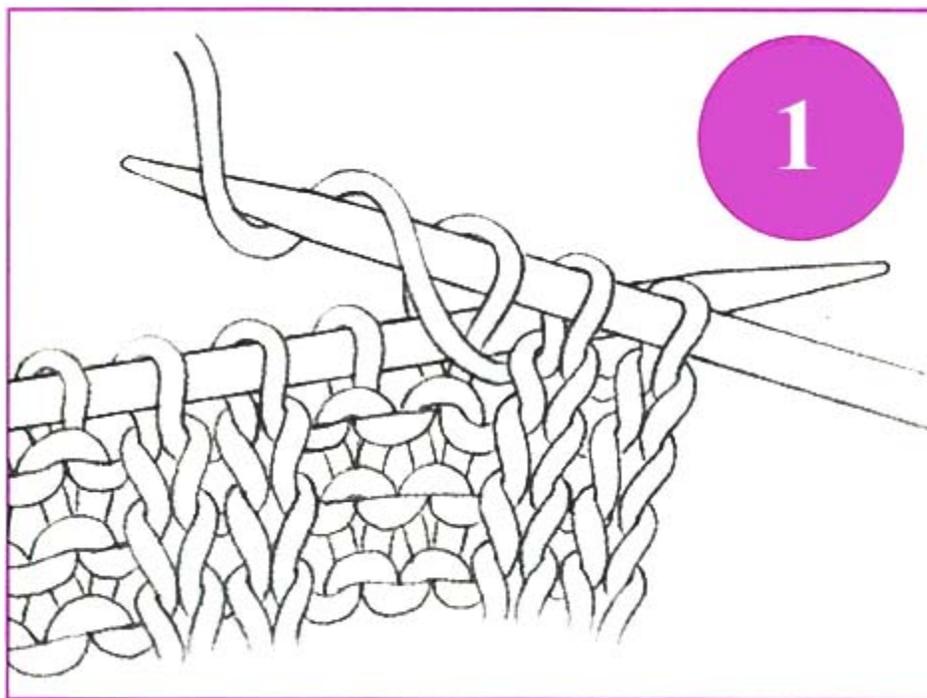
Congratulations! You have mastered the two stitches that make everything possible!

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## 4. Ribbing

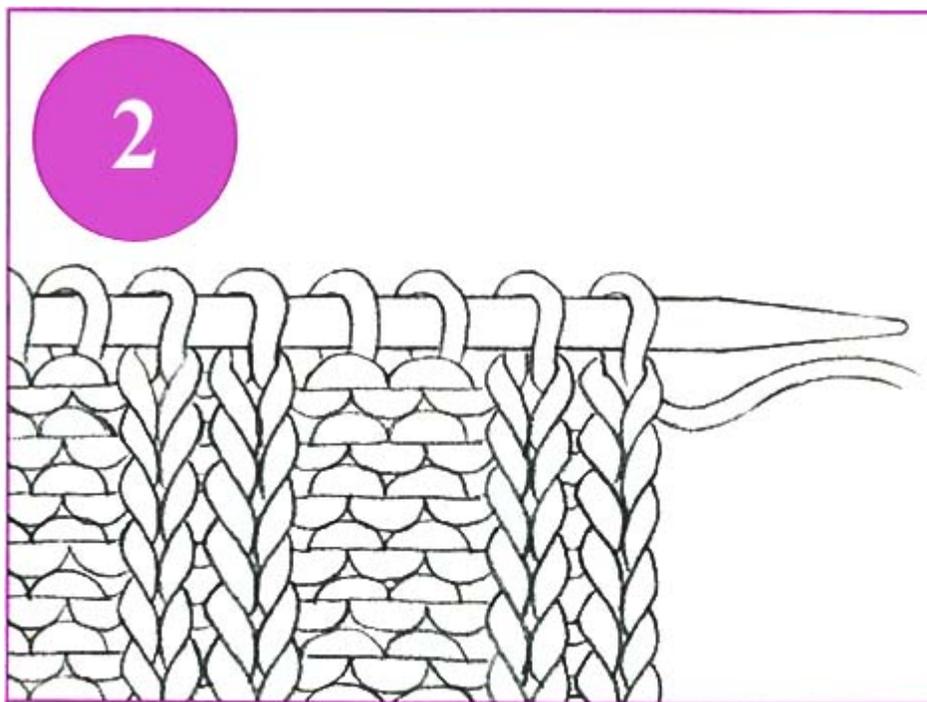
**Ribbing** is a border that is commonly used on the cuffs of sweaters. It is used because it produces a stretchy fabric. It is made with a combination of knit stitches and purl stitches.



Knit two stitches. Bring the yarn from the back of your work between the needles to the front. Now purl two stitches. Bring the yarn to the back of your work between the needles. Knit two stitches.

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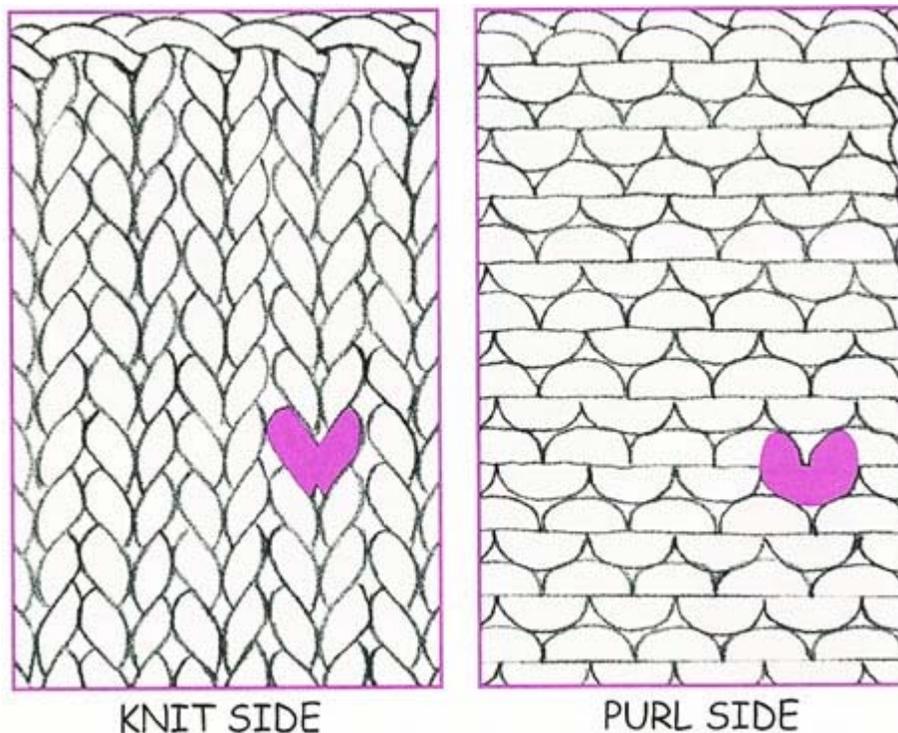
On subsequent rows, knit the knit stitches (V stitches) and purl the purl stitches (bump stitches) Remember to have the working yarn in BACK when you knit and in FRONT when you purl

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## 5. Stockinette Stitch

To figure out whether you should be knitting the row or purling the row, put your work in your left hand.



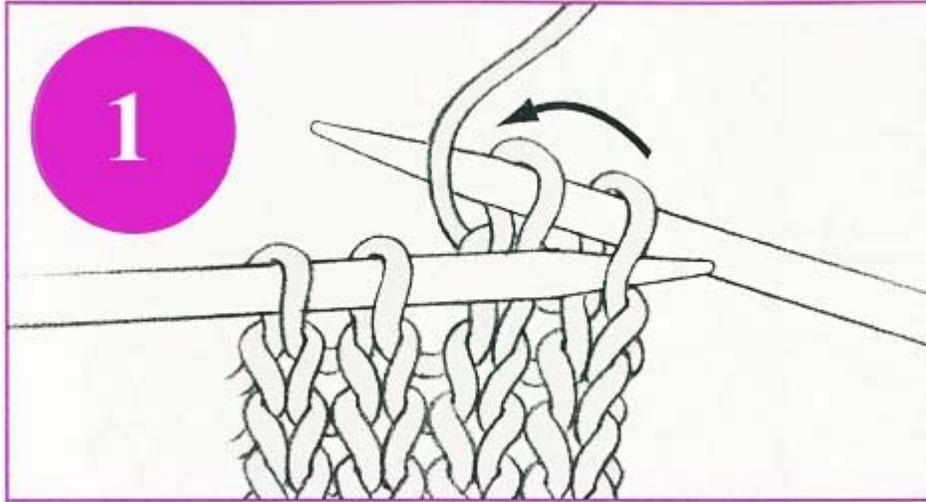
Which side is facing you?

If the V's are facing you, you are on the knit side and should knit the row. If the bumps are facing you, you are on the purl side, so purl the row.

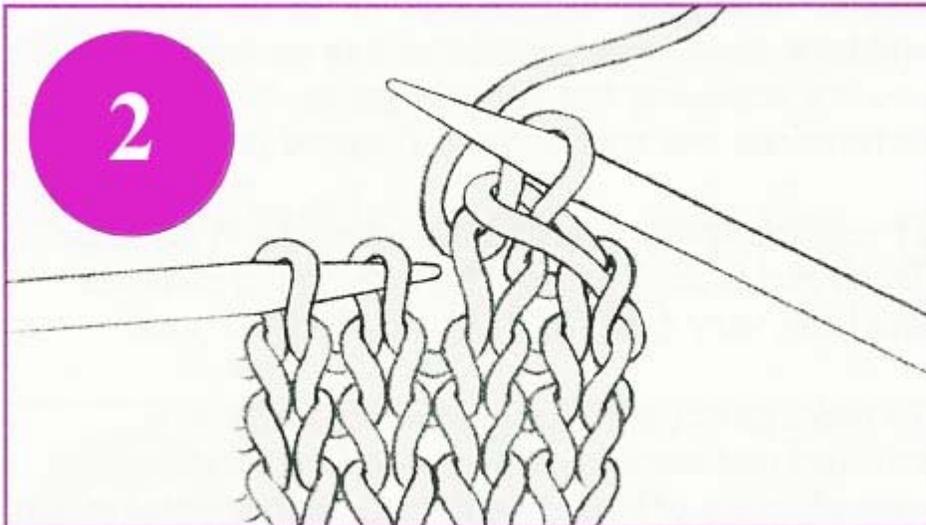
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## 6. Binding Off



Knit two stitches. Insert the top of the left needle into the first stitch on the right needle. Lift the stitch over the last stitch you knit and over the top of the right needle.



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One stitch remains on the right needle. Knit another stitch. Lift that stitch over the stitch just knit.

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## 7. Making a Gauge Swatch

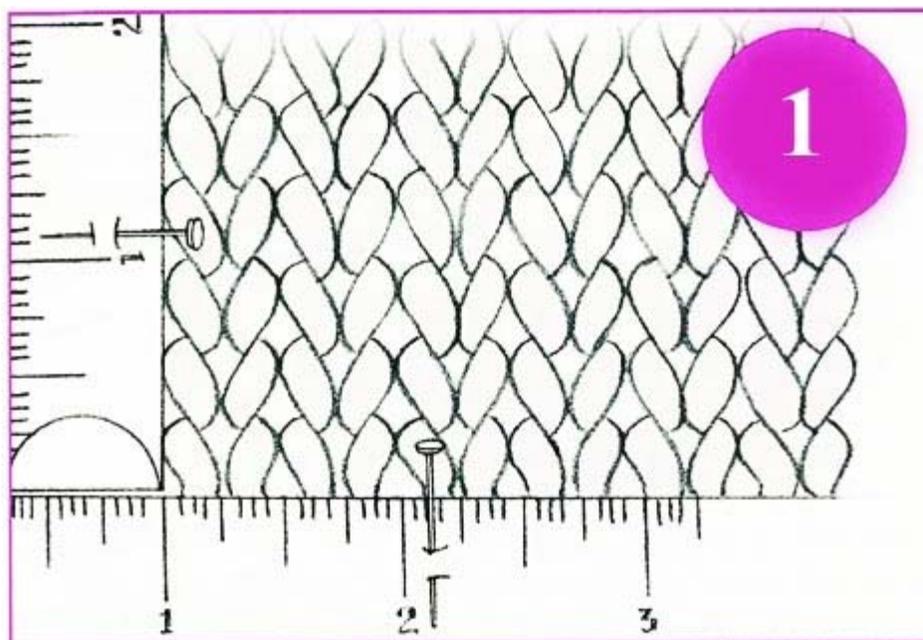
**Gauge** refers to the number of stitches and rows a knitter or crocheter makes per inch using a certain yarn and needles or hook. Gauge varies from person to person, so it is very important to make sure you are achieving the gauge of your pattern. Your gauge determines the size of your finished piece.

If you don't get the proper gauge, the garment will not come out to the intended size.

If you are knitting with a thick yarn like Wool-Ease® Thick and Quick® you'll make bigger stitches and have very few stitches and rows per inch. If you are knitting with a finer yarn, you'll make smaller stitches and have more stitches and rows per inch.

To make an accurate gauge swatch, cast on or chain enough stitches to equal approximately four inches and work in pattern for four inches. Take your stitches off the needle and, without stretching the fabric, place a tape measure on your work and gently pin where the tape measure reads one inch.

Count your stitches. Don't cheat. Make sure to count even a half or quarter of a stitch and include that into your gauge.



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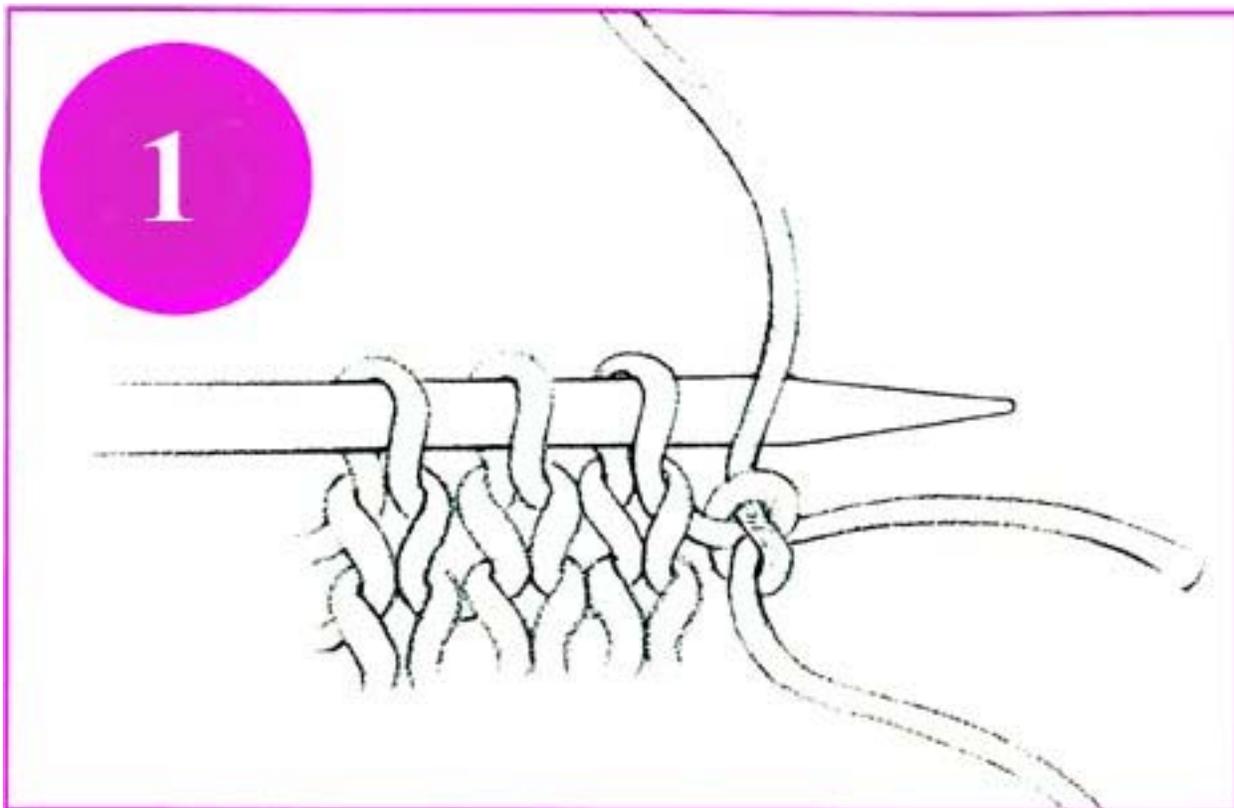
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If you have more stitches per inch than the gauge suggests, that means you are working too tightly; try a larger needle or hook. If you have fewer stitches than the suggested gauge, your stitches are too loose; try a smaller needle or hook

## 8. Joining New Yarn

It is always better to add a new ball of yarn at the beginning of a row. Loosely tie a knot with the new yarn around the old yarn, leaving a tail of a least 4 inches.

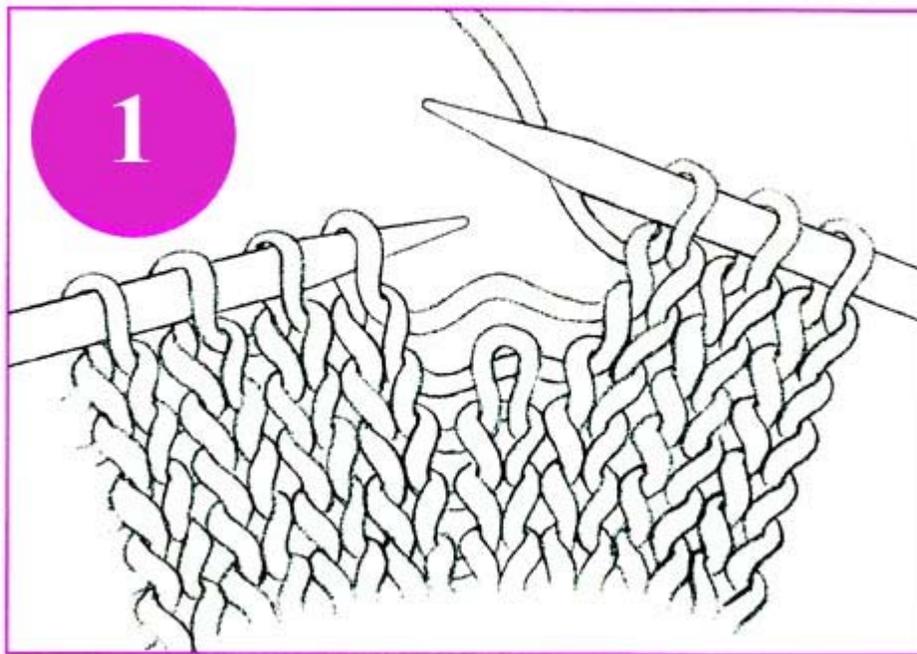
Slide the knot up the tail of the old yarn as close as possible to your work.



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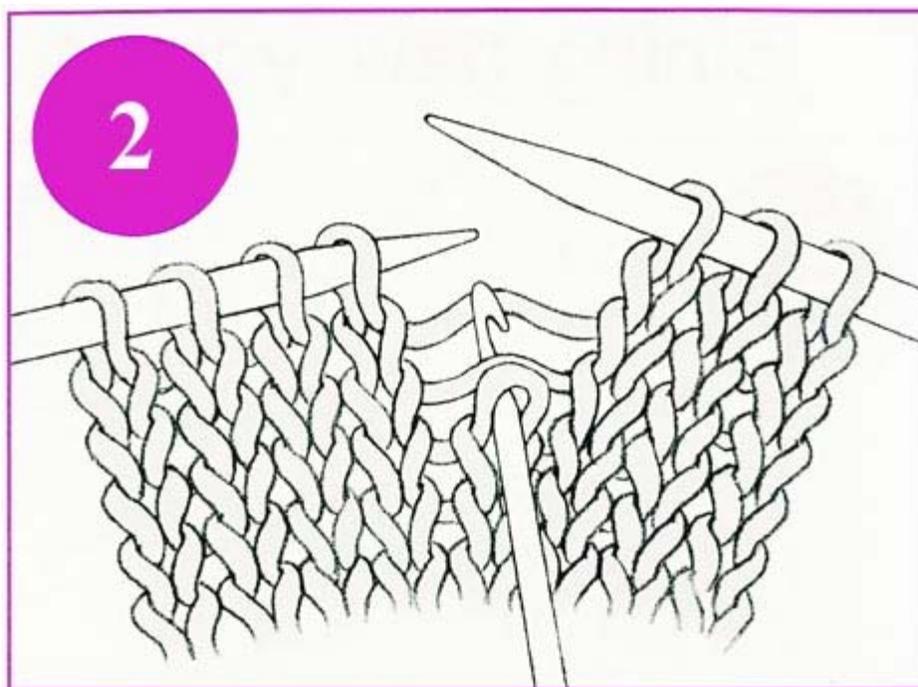
## 9. Recovering a dropped stitch



At some point in your knitting career, you are going to drop a stitch. When this happens, a stitch falls off your needle and unravels for several rows beneath the row you are working on.

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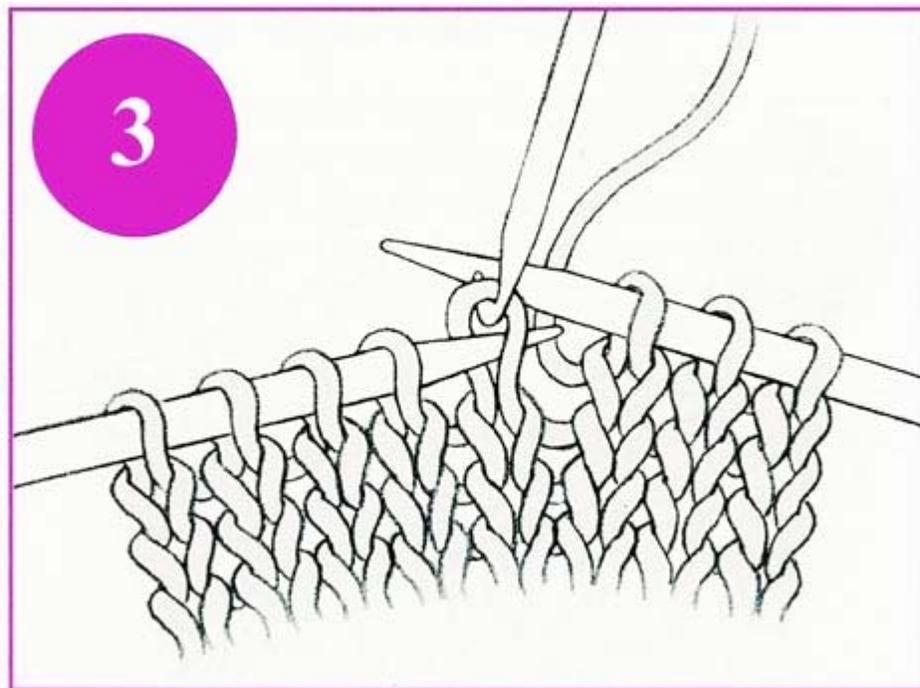


First of all, don't panic. Knit until you've reached the dropped stitch. Insert a crochet hook (if you don't have one available, the top of your needle will also work) into the loop of the dropped stitch.

Now grab the bar of the stitch right above it in the crook of your crochet hook. Pull the bar through the stitch. If your stitch has dropped down several rows, repeat until your stitch is on the same row as the rest of your knitting.

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Slip the stitch onto your knitting needle.

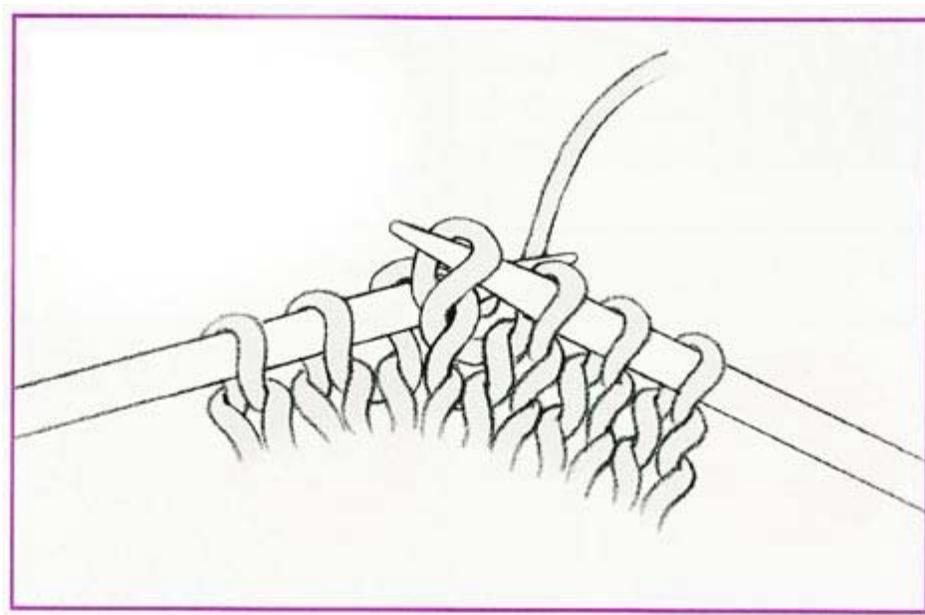
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## 10. Unraveling Stitch by Stitch

Sometimes a mistake is too many rows down to fix with a crochet hook. Instead, you need to unravel your work in order to fix the error. As painful as it may sound, any good knitting teacher will tell you that "Ripping is part of Knitting."

Unravel your knitting by following the directions below. This is a slightly slower but a very safe method to fix your knitting.



On a knit stitch, holding the yarn in the back, insert the left needle into the stitch one row below the first stitch on the right needle.

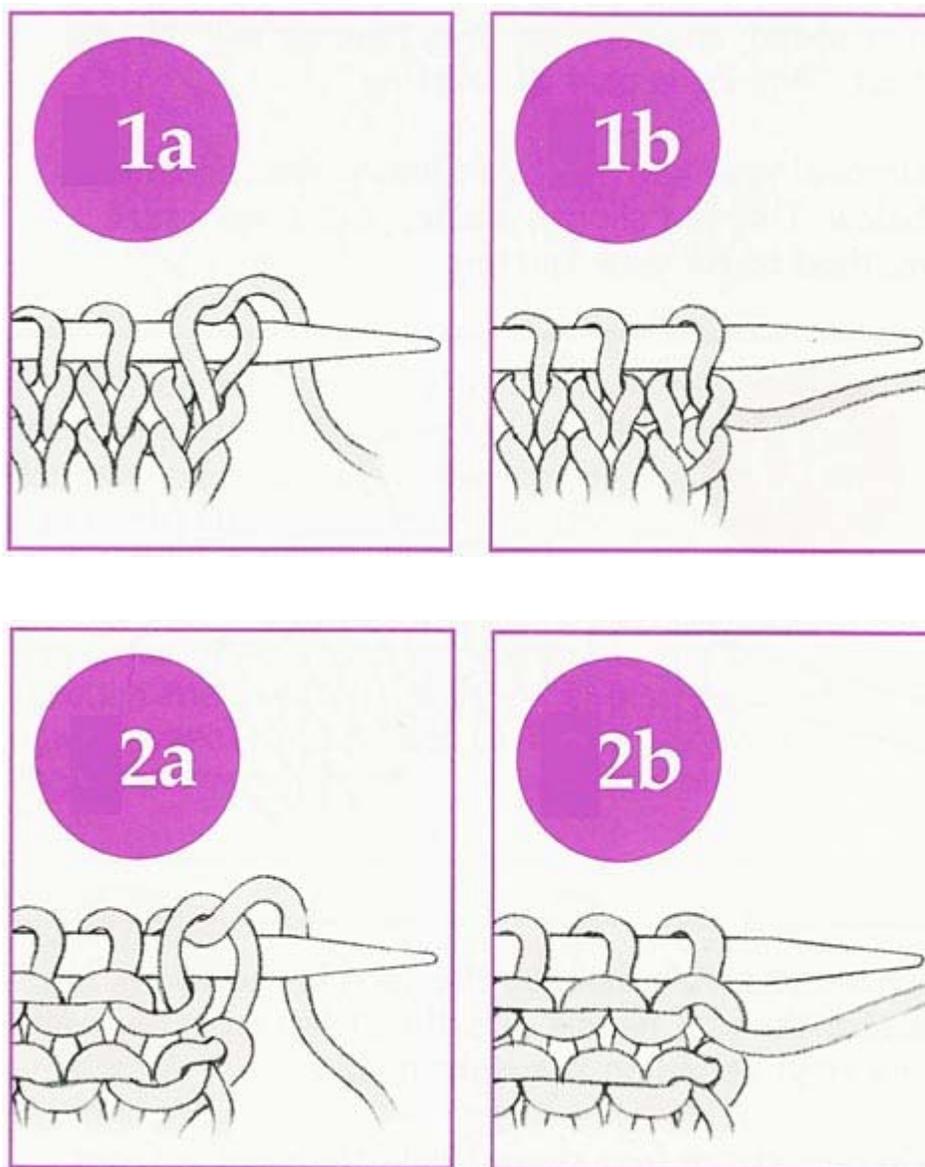
On a purl stitch (not shown), hold the yarn in front and insert the needle from the back of the work.

Slip the stitch onto your left needle, gently pulling the yarn out of the stitch above it. Continue in this way until you have reached your mistake.

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## 11. Avoiding Extra Stitches



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Sometimes an extra stitch is formed at the beginning of your needle. This happens when you begin to work a row and you take the yarn over the top of the needle.

To prevent this, bring your yarn underneath your knitting when moving it from front to back for a knit stitch or from back to front for a purl stitch.

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## 12. Increasing

Increasing is the process of adding one or more stitches to a piece. Adding stitches to a knit piece makes it a bigger size. For example, when you knit a sleeve, you increase stitches from the cuff to the shoulder.

Please check the FAQ for information and examples of

1. [The Simple Increase](#)
2. [Increasing Between a Stitch \(Make One\)](#)
3. [The Yarn Over Increase](#)

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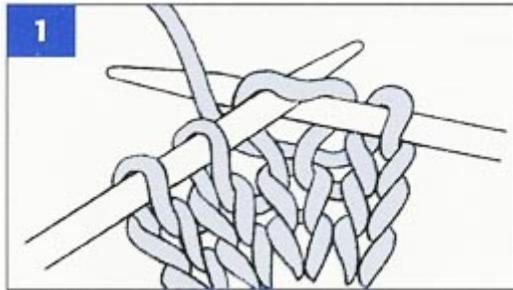
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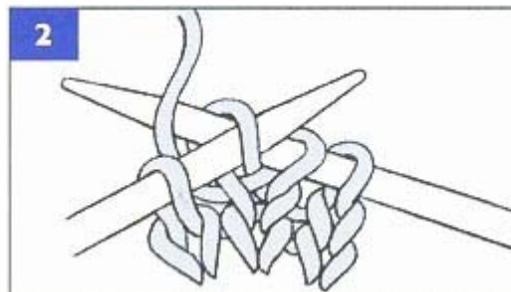
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### 13. Increasing - Making a Simple Increase



An easy way to add a stitch is to use an existing stitch. Insert the right needle into the stitch, wrap the yarn around the needle and pull through as for a normal knit stitch, elongating the loop slightly. Don't pull the stitch over the left needle yet.

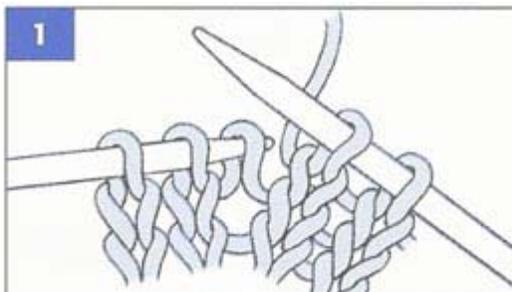


Bring the top of the right needle around to the back and knit into the back loop of the stitch as shown (see the FAQ on knitting into the back loop for more detail). You now have two stitches on the right needle.

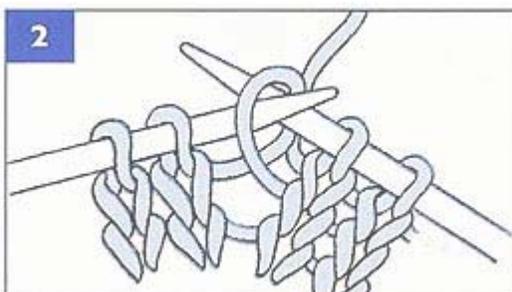
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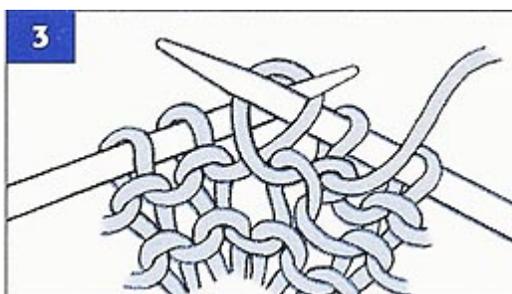
## 14. Increasing Between a Stitch ('Make One')



This increase is also called 'Make One'. Work to the place where the increase is to be made. Insert the left needle from front to back into the horizontal strand between the two stitches:



Knit the stitch through the back loop as shown.



On the purl side, insert the needle from front to back and then purl the stitch through the back loop.

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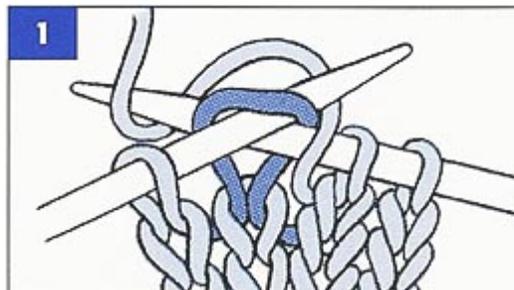
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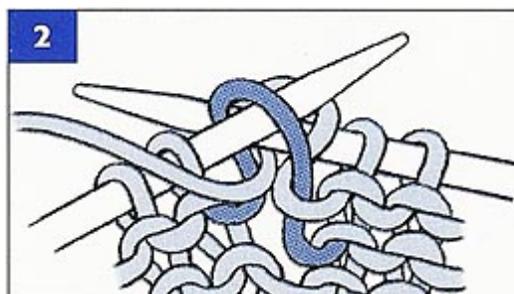
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## 15. Increasing - The Yarn Over Increase



To work a yarn over increase, bring the yarn to the front and knit the next stitch in the normal way. This leaves an extra loop (new stitch) on the needle.



On the next purl row, purl the loop in the normal way as shown.

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## 16. Decreasing

Decreasing is the process of removing one or more stitches from a piece.

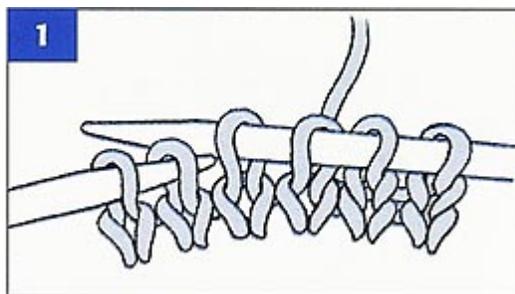
There are a number of ways to decrease and the choice of decrease used is most often determined by the desired slant of the stitches. Two common decreases are:

- [Knit two together](#)
- [ssk \(slip, slip, knit\)](#)

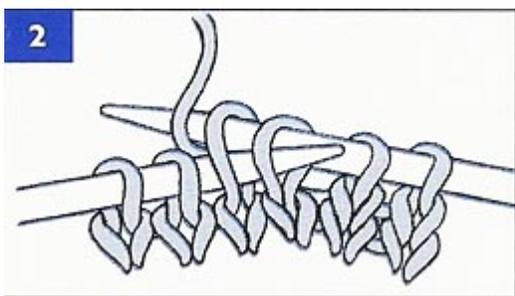
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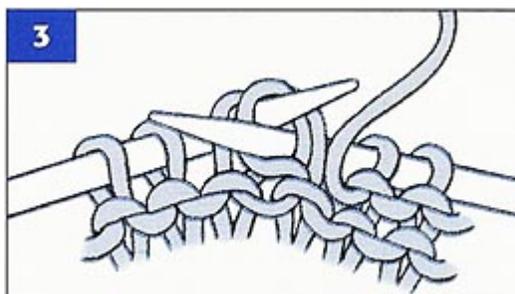
## 17. Decreasing - Slip, Slip, Knit (SSK/SSP)



Work to the place where the decrease is to be made. Slip the next 2 stitches, one at a time as if to knit, to the right needle.



Insert the left needle into the fronts of these two stitches and knit them together. One stitch is decreased. This decrease slants to the left.



On the purl side of the work, the decrease is called slip, slip, purl (ssp). In the same way as ssk, slip the 2 stitches on at a time as if to knit to the right needle. Purl them together through the back loops (see the FAQ on purling through the back loops for detail). This decrease slants to the left.

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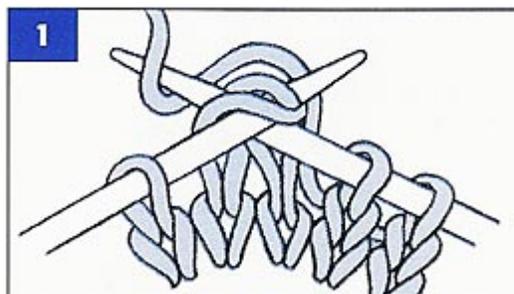
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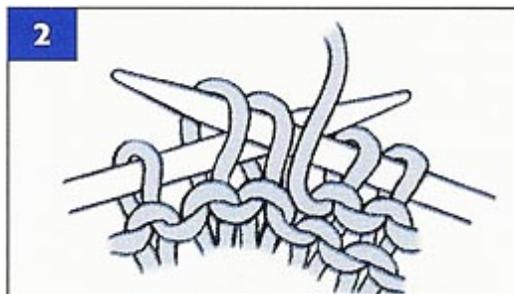
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## 18. Decreasing - Knit/Purl Two Together



Work to the two stitches to be decreased and then knit the two stitches together as shown. The stitches slant to the right.



Purling two stitches together is done in the same manner. This decrease slants the stitches to the right.

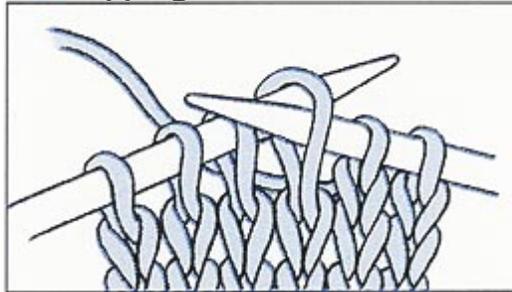
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## 19. Slipping Stitches Purlwise and Knitwise

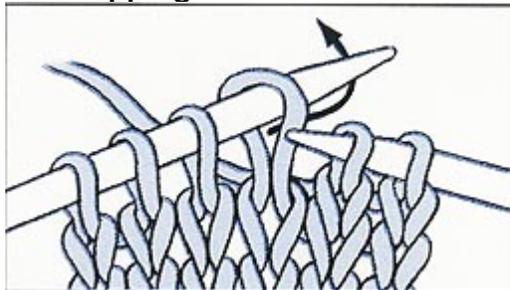
Sometimes stitches are slipped without working from the right needle to the left needle. They can either be slipped purlwise or knitwise. If you are asked to slip stitches and the instructions don't specify which way, slip the stitch or stitches purlwise.

**Slipping Stitches Purlwise**



Insert the right needle (from back to front) into the next stitch on the left needle and place it on the right needle without working it.

**Slipping Stitches Knitwise**



Insert the right needle into the next stitch on the left needle as shown and place it on the right needle without working it.

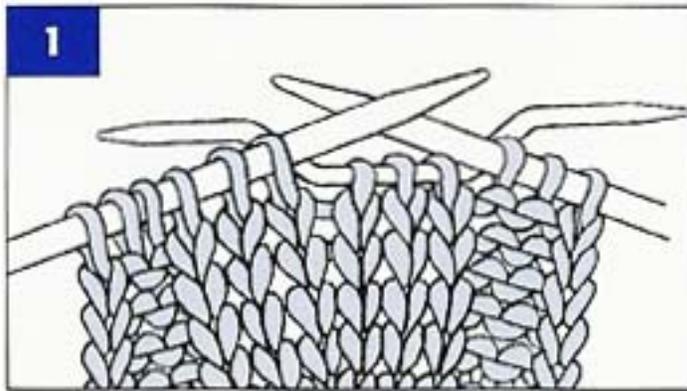
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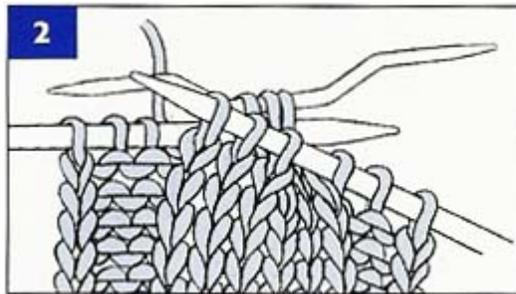
## 20. Making a cable

**Cables** are easy to make. They are simply worked by transferring a number of stitches to a third needle and knitting them in a different sequence. The examples shown here are worked over 6 stitches. Cables can be made over any even number of stitches (for example, 4-stitch, 8-stitch or 10-stitch cables.) A cable row is normally worked on right side rows as indicated in the pattern. A cable needle is used to hold the stitches in place as the stitches are being transferred.

**Right (back) 6-stitch Cable**

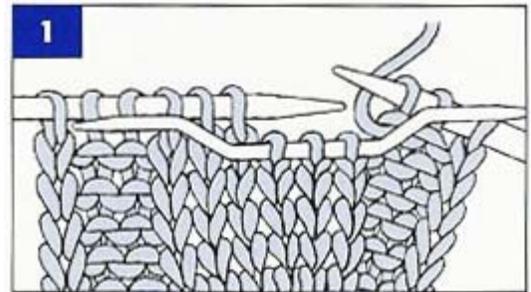


On the cable row, work to the cable and then slip the next three stitches onto a cable needle and hold them to the back of the work.

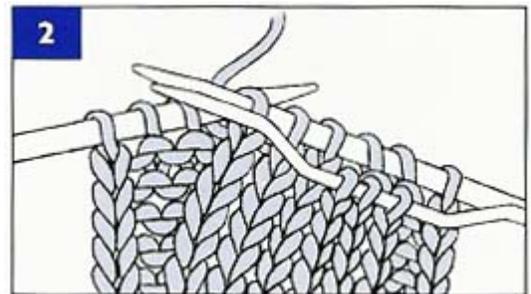


Leaving the stitches on the cable needle, knit the next three stitches.

**Left (front) 6-stitch Cable**



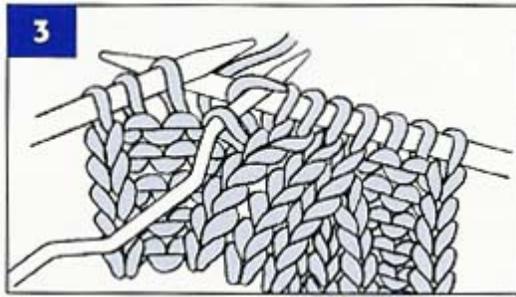
On the cable row, work to the cable and then slip the next three stitches onto a cable needle and hold them to the front of the work.



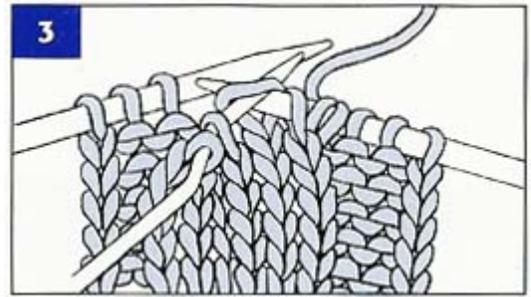
Leaving the stitches on the cable needle, knit the next three stitches.

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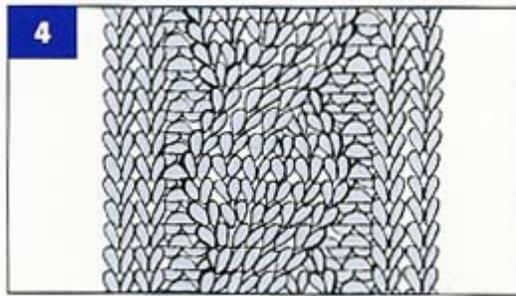
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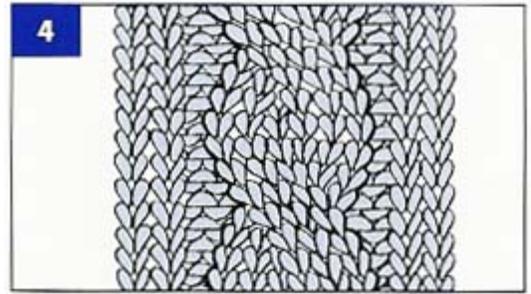
Knit the 3 stitches on the cable needle without twisting them.



Knit the 3 stitches on the cable needle without twisting them.



A completed cable with two cable rows.



A completed cable with two cable rows.

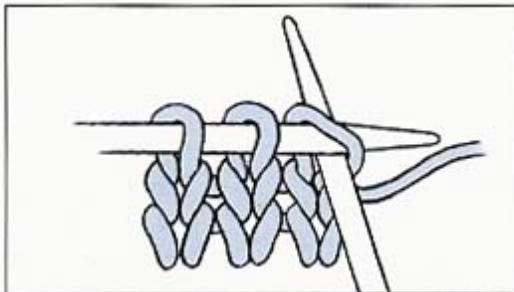
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## 21. Knitting into the Back Loop/Front Loop

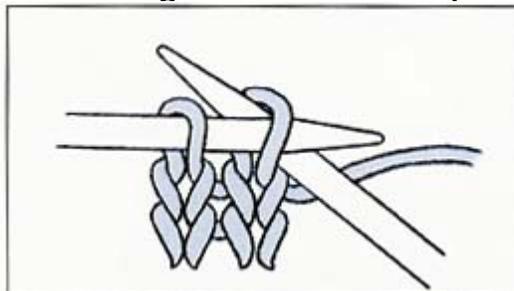
Knitting into the front loops is the normal procedure and is used unless otherwise specified. Knitting through the back loop twists the stitch.

### Knitting Into the Front Loop



Insert the right needle into the front of the stitch from front to back and continue to knit the stitch.

### Knitting Into the Back Loop



Insert the right needle into the back of the stitch from the front to back and continue to knit each stitch.

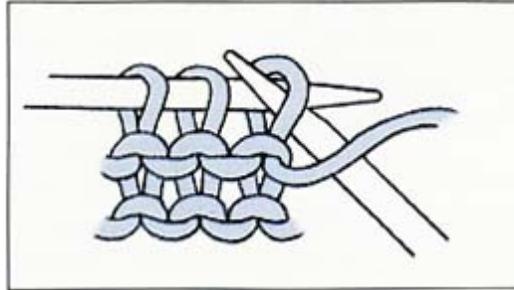
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## 22. Purling into the Back Loop/Front Loop

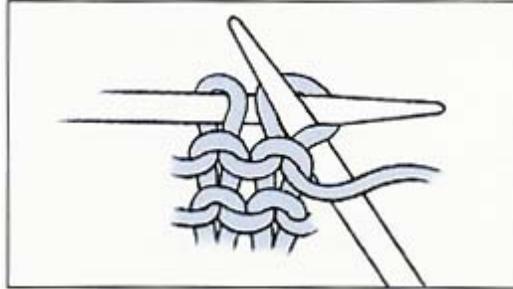
Purling into the front loops is the normal procedure and is used unless otherwise specified. Purling through the back loop twists the stitch.

**Purling Into the Front Loop**



Insert the right needle into the front of the stitch from right to left as shown and continue to purl the stitch.

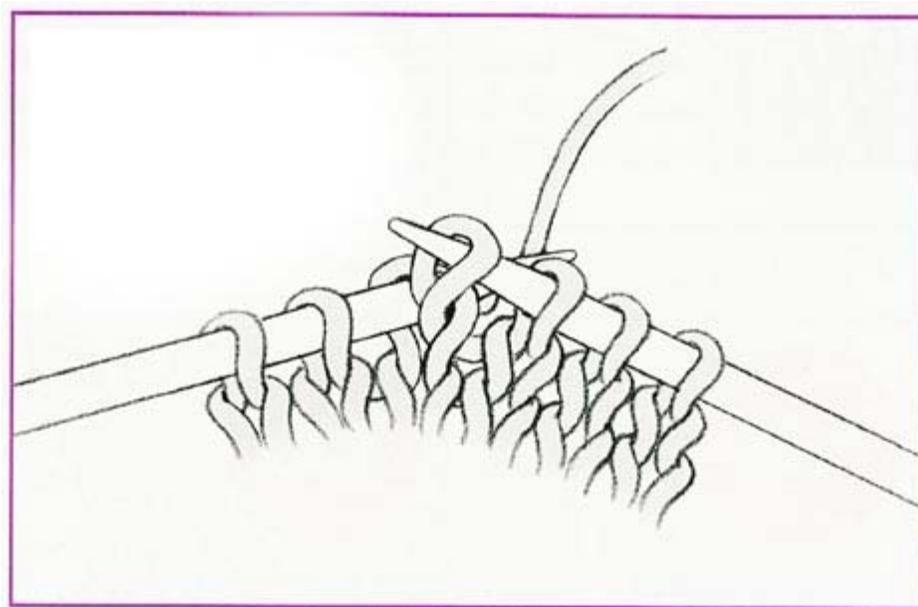
**Purling Into the Back Loop**



Insert the right needle into the back of the stitch from back to front and continue to purl the stitch.

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On a knit stitch, holding the yarn in the back, insert the left needle into the stitch one row below the first stitch on the right needle.

On a purl stitch (not shown), hold the yarn in front and insert the needle from the back of the work.

Slip the stitch onto your left needle, gently pulling the yarn out of the stitch above it. Continue in this way until you have reached your mistake.

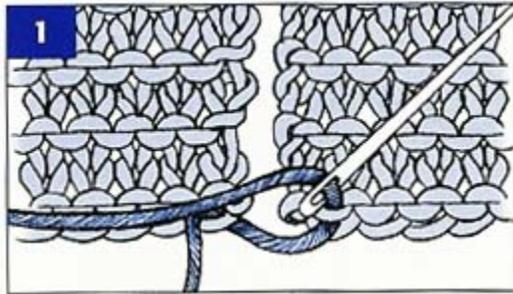
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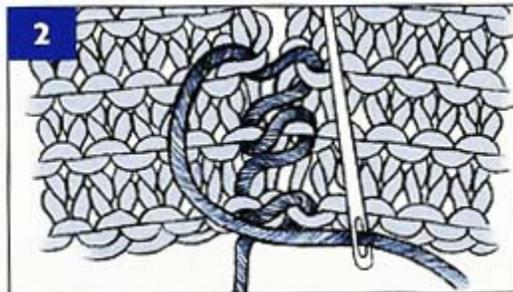
## 23. Finishing

Once you have your knit pieces finished, assemble them by sewing them together. The seaming technique used depends on the type of stitch used in the piece and whether you are making a vertical or a horizontal seam.

### JOINING GARTER STITCH



To join two pieces together, thread a darning needle with the same yarn used to make the garment. Place the edges of the garment side by side with the right sides (the sides that people will see) **FACING OUT**.



Stitch up the sides as shown, alternating from side to side.

### JOINING STOCKINETTE STITCH

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With the right sides (knit sides) facing you, begin seaming as for the beginning illustration of joining garter stitch. Working from side to side, go under the horizontal bar one stitch in from the edge as shown.

### **JOINING SHOULDER SEAMS**

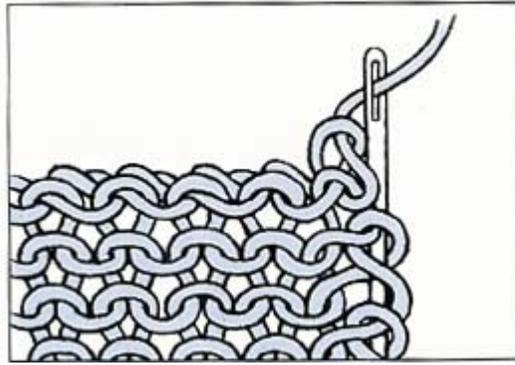


With the right sides facing you, align the shoulders and insert the yarn needle under one complete stitch as shown. Work inside the bind-off edge for a seamless look.

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## 24. Weaving in Ends

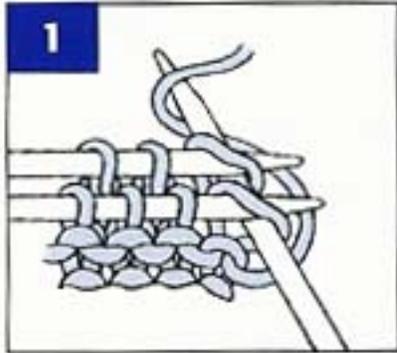


Ends of yarn can be woven directly into your knitting. Thread a darning needle with the end of the yarn and run it in and out in an inconspicuous place for an inch or two. Clip remaining excess yarn.

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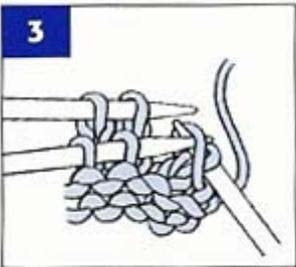
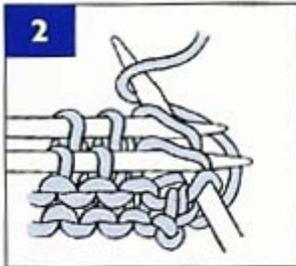
## 25. 3-Needle Bind Off



With right sides together, hold in one hand two needles with equal number of stitches on each.

With third needle, knit together one stitch from each needle, \*knit together one stitch from each needle, pass first stitch worked over second to bind off, repeat form \* across to last stitch.

Cut working yarn and pull through last stitch to secure.



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