

Overview of Knitting

Knitting 101 Online

a pdf handout by Annie Modesitt

Just about any activity we participate in has it's own "language", a shorthand which allows folks to act smug among the non-participants. Knitting is NO exception!

Knitting

A recreational, activity whereby loops are formed on one needle with a second needle.

When a new row of loops is created, the old loops are released from the needle and form fabric. *Usually one loop is created from each existing loop unless there is increasing or decreasing happening.*

There's really only ONE technique in knitting; ***Pulling a new loop through an existing loop.*** The old loop is dropped off the needle and becomes fabric. Rows of stitches (loops) stack up to create knitted fabric.

Knitted Fabric

The names for the two most common forms of knitted fabric come from Elizabethan Hoisery: Garter Stitch & Stockinette Stitch

Garter Stitch

Garter Stitch is not a **stitch**, it's a name for a specific knit fabric. It's perhaps the easiest fabric to knit.

Garter Stitch looks like a series of "ridges." It lays flat, it doesn't roll, so it

makes a good stocking top.



Garter Stitch is created by working every stitch in every row as a knit stitch¹.

Terminology: When you knit every stitch in a row, it's called knitting a row. When you purl every stitch in a row, it's called purling a row.

Stockinette Stitch

The most common knit fabric is called Stocking (UK) Stockinette Stitch (US), it's abbreviated St st

This is Stockinette Stitch. I prefer to think of it as **Stockinette Stitch Fabric** because it's not just ONE single stitch. Stockinette stitch tends to

roll, which allows it to wrap around a leg nicely - great for stockings!



Reverse Stockinette Stitch

The flip side of Stockinette Stitch is **Reverse Stockinette Stitch**. This is Reverse Stockinette Stitch I prefer to think of it as

Reverse Stockinette Stitch Fabric because it's not just ONE single stitch. Reverse Stockinette Stitch is abbreviated Rev St st



¹ You could also work every stitch as a purl to form Garter Stitch, but it's a bit harder.

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The Knit Stitch



A knit stitch looks like a "V" when seen from the Right Side. In Stockinette Stitch each "V" you see is a stitch

When knitting, the yarn is held away from you (behind the work) The needle (being a hopeless romantic) follows the yarn anywhere.



The Purl Stitch



The inverse of a knit stitch is a Purl Stitch.

A Purl is simply the back side of a knit stitch, it's in two parts, and looks like a smile

and a frown. Think of a Purl as the teensiest bit manic depressive.

When purling, the yarn is held toward you. The needle (madly in love with the yarn) follows it & also points toward you



The Act of Forming a Stitch

Stitches on the needle are like a group of mommies sitting around having a cup of coffee.

1. The Right needle enters a mommy stitch.
2. Wrap the yarn around the working needle.
3. A new baby stitch is formed!
4. Pull the new stitch out of the mommy...
5. Kick off the Mommy so she can take a nap.

Knitting teaches us that

*Everything will be fine
If mommy gets a nap!*

When pulling the loop in one direction the new loop is called a "Knit Stitch"

When pulled in the inverse direction, it's called a "Purl Stitch"

Working on Needles

Often knitting is worked on straight needles. For Right Handed knitters*, when a row of knitting or purling is finished, transfer the needle with the stitches from the Right hand to the Left hand.

At the start of any row, your right hand should be holding a *naked needle*.

Once you've worked one row of purling, here's how to follow it up:

To create Stockinette Stitch fabric:
Purl the next, *and every*, wrong side row.
Knit the following, *and every*, right side row.

To create Garter Stitch fabric:
Knit the next *and every* subsequent row

Yarn Used in Photographs
Hammand BFL Aran Weight
www.laughingrooster.com

Needles Used in Photographs
Signature Needles, stiletto point
www.signatureneedlearts.com

*Left Handed Knitting could be an entire class in itself, there's such variety among left handed folks. I apologize that I can't cover it in this short intro to knitting.