

# The Purl Stitch

Knitting 101 Online  
a pdf handout by Annie Modesitt

## Let's Review!

There's really only one technique in knitting;

### Pulling a new loop from an old loop.

The new loop becomes a new stitch on the needle, the old loop becomes a stitch in the fabric.

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*.

### Remember The Mommies

The stitches on the needle are like a group of mommies having 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.

## THE PURL STITCH

The purl stitch looks as though it's in two parts, a smile and a frown, and is the stitch you see when looking at Reverse Stockinette Stitch Fabric.

On the needle, a purl stitch looks as though it's wearing a little collar (*I like to think a "pearl necklace"*)

I like to teach the purl stitch *before* I teach the knit stitch, which is different than most knitting classes, but I feel it's the best way to comprehend knitted fabric.

Working a purl, you're able to see the 'inner workings' of a stitch.

### Purling Mechanics

When purling the yarn is held toward you. The needle, being in love with the yarn, follows it and **ALSO** enters the stitch moving toward you.

Once the needle is in the stitch, the yarn is wrapped around it to form a baby loop, the baby loop is drawn back out through the mommy stitch, the mommy is kicked off and you've created a lovely purl. Mazel Tov!

It sounds very simple, and it **IS!** My grandmother was knitting socks at age 5, my son was making knit fabric at age 3.

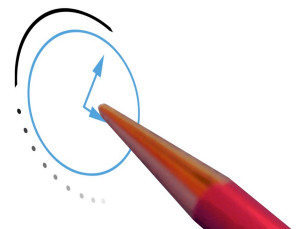
It's simple, but how **easy** it is depends on how much confidence you have, and how comfortable your hands are when moving in new ways. Nothing takes the place of practice.

*"Screw your courage to it's sticking place,"* and let's dive in. If you mess it up, it's no big deal! You will not

learn anything if you expect to do it perfectly from the first try - mistakes are the best teachers we have in life.

You CAN do this. You can.

*Note: When the term clockwise is used in this class it refers to the movement of the yarn as if the tip of the needle were pointing at a clock face. Counter Clockwise means wrap in the opposite direction.*



# Two Purls, One Love

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There are 16 different ways to form a purl stitch in the naked city, I will show you two: Western & Combination (aka Eastern Uncrossed).

Neither is better than the other, both are valid, but Western has been considered the standard for almost 100 years within the knitting world.

Why teach you both? Because when one is in the mindset for learning (as you are now - go on, admit it...), is the BEST time to show the horizons ahead.

By learning two different ways to form a purl (and what the repercussions of each purl will be) I allow you to better understand the grammar and architecture of your knitting.

However, if you feel overwhelmed, please know that you can just 'gloss over' the Combination stuff and concentrate on the Western stuff, and you'll be absolutely fine!

## Purl Mechanics

*I hold the yarn in my left hand, but you can hold in either hand. Discover this for yourself by practicing*

### WESTERN PURL

The most common form of purling, this is generally what is referred to in knitting books and magazines.



Form the Western Purl like this:  
1. The yarn should be toward, you, the working (Right) needle enters the stitch, tip toward you.  
2. Wrap the yarn around the working needle in a

- clockwise direction.  
3. Form a new loop on the working needle.  
4. Pull the new loop out of the "mommy"  
5. Kick off the Mommy, the new purl stitch now sits on the working (Right) needle.

### COMBINATION PURL (aka Eastern)

A more uncommon form of purling, some folks find it intuitive. It's a tighter purl than Western.

Form the Combination Purl like this:  
1. The yarn should be toward, you, the working (Right) needle enters the stitch, tip to you.  
2. Wrap the yarn around the working needle in a **counter** clockwise direction.  
3. Form a new loop on the Right needle.  
4. Pull the new loop out of the "mommy"  
5. Kick off the Mommy, the new purl stitch now sits on the working (Right) needle.



- clockwise direction.  
3. Form a new loop on the Right needle.  
4. Pull the new loop out of the "mommy"  
5. Kick off the Mommy, the new purl stitch now sits on the working (Right) needle.

### Finishing A Purl Row

When you finish a row, turn the work and transfer the needle with stitches to your Left Hand. At the start of any row, your right hand should be holding a "naked needle"

### Yarn Used

Hammand BFL Aran Weight  
[www.laughinghens.com](http://www.laughinghens.com)

### Needles Used

Signature Needles, stiletto point  
[www.signatureneedlearts.com](http://www.signatureneedlearts.com)