

# The Knit Stitch

Knitting 101 Online  
a pdf handout by Annie Modesitt

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 KNIT STITCH

The knit stitch looks like a V. When you think of knitted fabric you've seen; sweaters, socks, hats, you've probably seen a lot of "V's"



On the needle a knit stitch looks like a loop with both legs coming together to form a V. It's common to talk about the "front leg" or "front loop" and "back leg" or "back loop" of a stitch, this is because a stitch always sits on the needle cheated to one side or the other.

### Knitting Mechanics

When knitting, the yarn is held away from you, to the back of the knitting, and the needle follows the yarn. It moves through the stitch away from you, toward the yarn.

Once the needle is in the stitch, the yarn is wrapped around it to form a "baby loop", which is drawn back out through the stitch. The original stitch is 'kicked off' the needle so that it can become part of the fabric, the loop you just created becomes a new stitch on the Right needle.

Most folks find making a knit stitch easier than making a purl. I don't know why this is - it's not

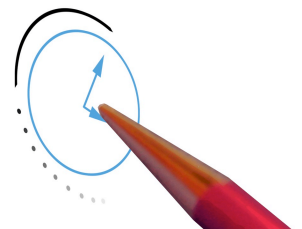
true for me - but I've heard it from enough folks that I know it must be true for many.

The main wisdom I can impart about knitting is to allow yourself to enjoy the imperfections of hand knit fabric. If you want perfect, you should probably go buy a machine knit sweater. There will be differences in stitches, odd glitches, tension errors - it's all part of anything that's hand made.

Yes, you'll get better over time. NOTHING takes the place of practice, but in order to become a better knitter, you have to embrace the 'unattractive adolescent' stage of your knitting journey.

The more you knit, the better you'll get. Period.

*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.*



# Western & Combination Stitch Mount

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There are 16 different ways to form a knit 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 the two different stitch mounts (Western and Combination) 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!

## Knit Mechanics

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

### WESTERN KNIT



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

*Form the Western Knit like this:*

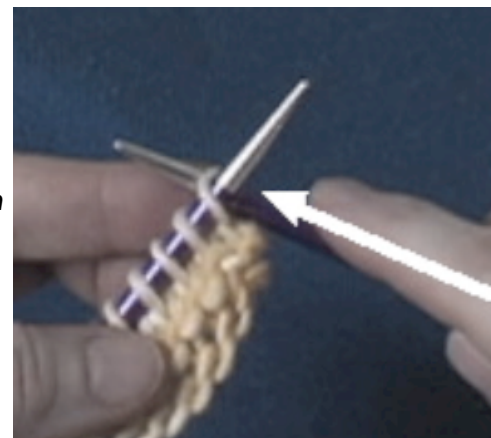
1. The yarn should be away from, you, the working (Right) needle enters the stitch through the "front leg," pointing from Left to Right.
2. Wrap the yarn around the working needle in a clockwise direction.
3. Form a new loop on the working needle.
4. Pull the new loop out of the "mommy"
5. Kick off the Mommy, the new knit stitch now sits on the working (Right) needle.

### COMBINATION KNIT (*aka Eastern*)

*A more uncommon form of knitting, some folks find it has less wrist strain..*

*Form the Combination Knit like this:*

1. The yarn should be away from, you, the working (Right) needle enters the stitch through the "back leg," pointing from Right to Left.
2. Wrap the yarn around the working needle in a 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 knit stitch now sits on the working (Right) needle.



### Finishing A Knit 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"

# Make Your Stitches HAPPY!

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Each stitch has a direction it “wants” the needle to enter it. For a Western knit stitch, it’s through the Front “Leg” - otherwise known as the Leading Edge. For the Combination knit stitch, it’s through the Back “Leg” - also known as the Leading Edge.

The “Leading Edge” is edge through which the stitch WANTS to receive the needle. If you enter a stitch through the Leading Edge, the stitch will be “happy” - untwisted.

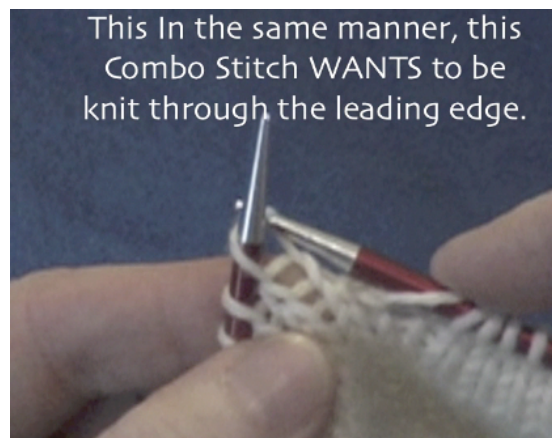
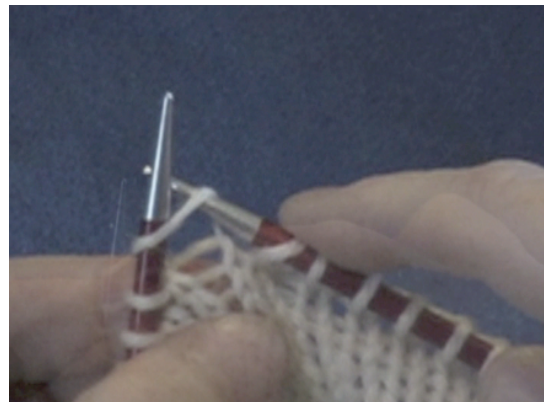
## Happy & Unhappy Stitches

This Western stitch WANTS to be knit through the front leg, what some folks call the *leading edge*.

In the same manner, this Combination stitch wants to be knit through its leading edge (which in this case is the back leg).

However, by knitting through the back leg - its *trailing edge*, the stitch is twisted.

But by knitting through the trailing edge (the front leg for a Combo stitch) it **twists**.



For beautiful non twisted knit fabric, you must always make your stitches happy. However, if you want your stitch to twist, simply make the stitch unhappy. Work through the trailing edge and the stitch will be twisted.

### 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)