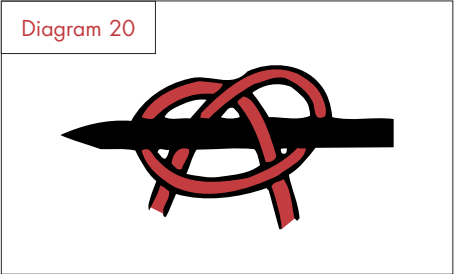
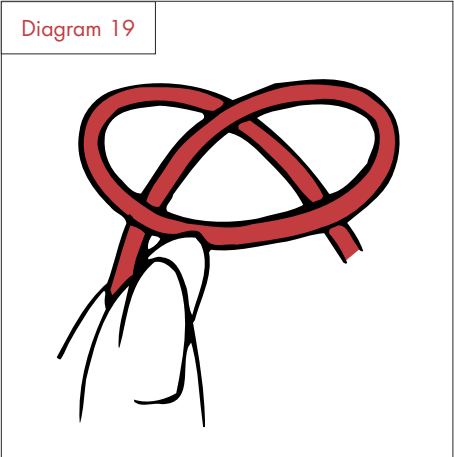


Beginning To Knit

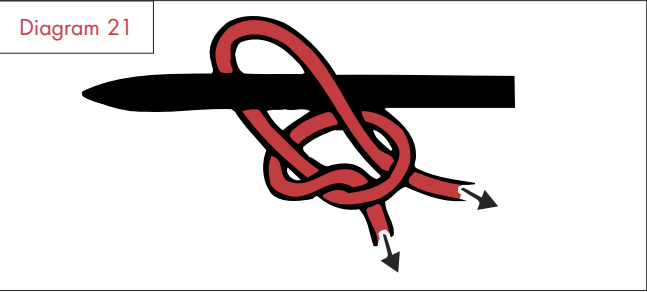
This Lesson is reprinted by permission of TNNA and contains portions of the “How to Knit” book published by The National NeedleArts Association (www.TNNA.org). Find full details for the new knitter in the complete “How to Knit” book available at your local yarn shop.

Casting On - Double Cast On Method

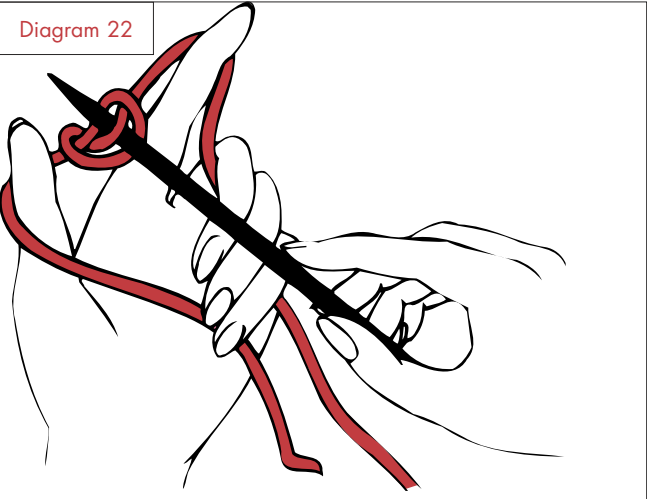
Measure off a length of yarn allowing one inch for each stitch you will cast on. Your pattern instructions will indicate this number. Make a slip-knot, it will be your first stitch. To make a slip-knot, make a pretzel shape with the yarn and slip the needle into the pretzel as shown. **Diagrams 19 & 20.**



Pull down on both ends of the yarn to tighten the knot. **Diagram 21.**

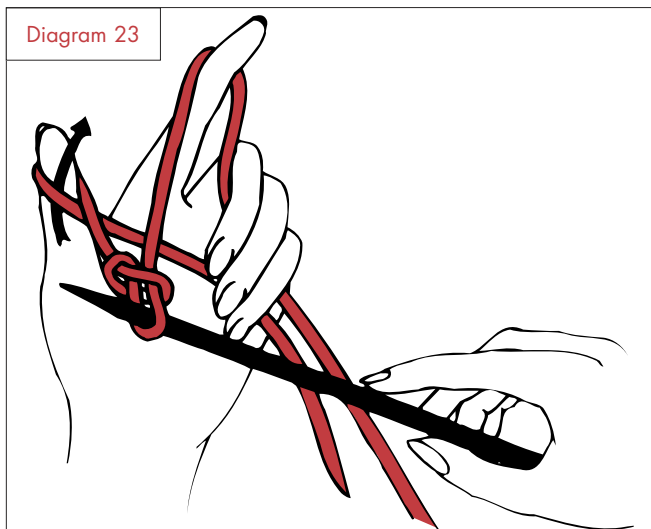


To cast on the second stitch, and all subsequent stitches, hold the needle with the slip-knot in your right hand. Drape the short end of yarn over the thumb and the yarn from the ball over the index finger. Gently pull the two ends of yarn apart to tighten the loop. Take care not to tighten it too much. The stitch should glide easily over the needle. Both strands of yarn should rest in the palm of the left hand, with the last two fingers holding them down. **Diagram 22.**



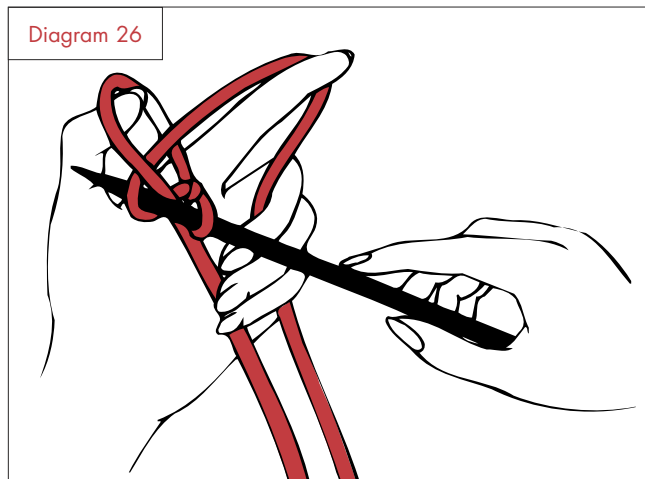
Pull the needle downward, then insert the point of the needle up through the loop that is on your thumb.

Diagram 23.

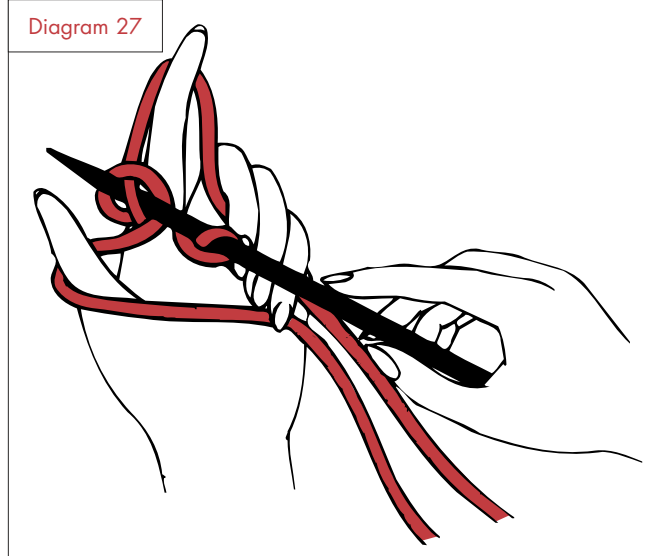
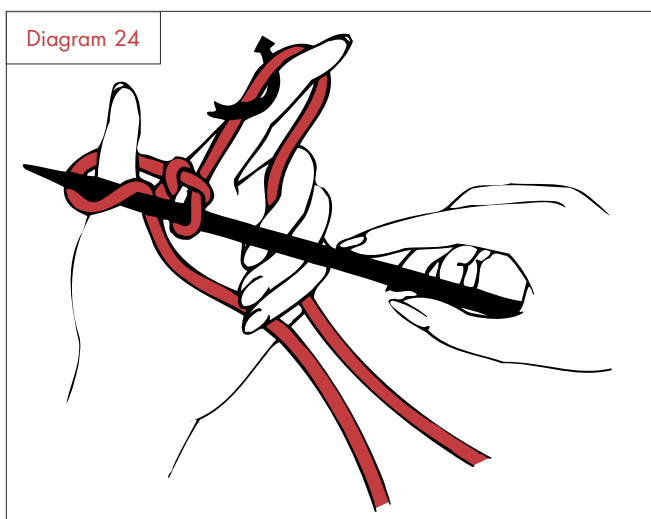


Drop the thumb loop, then pull on the short end of yarn with your thumb. This will tighten the stitch. You now have two stitches on your needle.

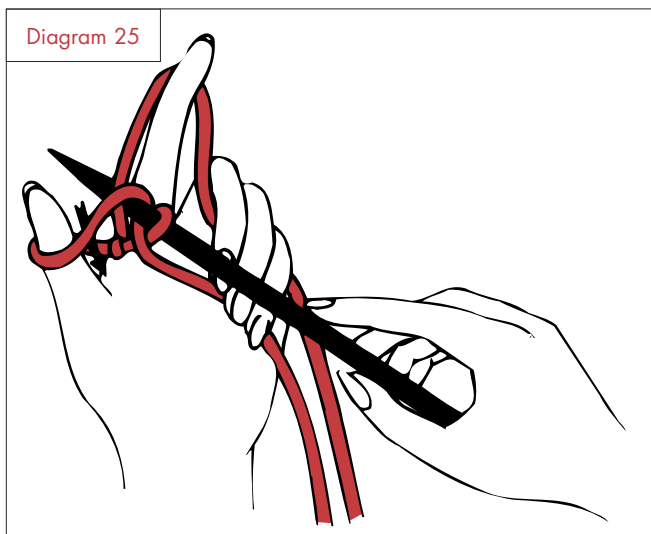
Diagrams 26 & 27.



Move the point of the needle over, then around the "index-finger" strand of yarn. **Diagram 24.**



Bring the point of the needle back down through the thumb loop. **Diagram 25.**



Repeat this process until the desired number of stitches have been cast on.

NOTE: Remember not to pull your foundation row stitches too tightly. They should glide easily over the needle and be elastic. If you find that you cast on too tightly, go up a needle size for your cast on row.

Holding the Yarn and Needles

At first, the knitting needles will feel awkward in your hands. Here's a comfortable way to hold them and the yarn.

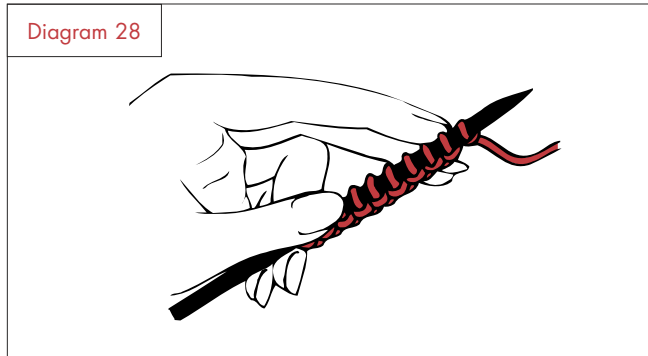
Hold the needle with the cast on stitches in your left hand supporting the needle with your fingers and palm. **Diagram 28.**

Holding the Yarn and Needles

At first, the knitting needles will feel awkward in your hands. Here's a comfortable way to hold them and the yarn.

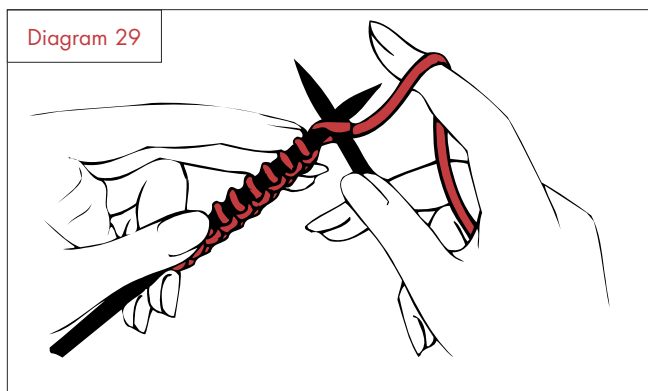
Hold the needle with the cast on stitches in your left hand supporting the needle with your fingers and palm.

Diagram 28.

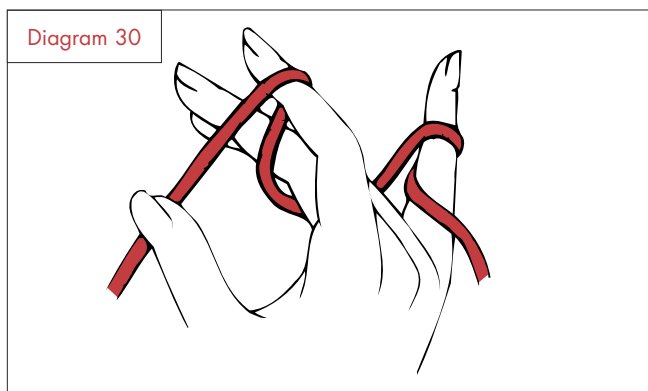


Insert the right needle into the first stitch as shown.

Diagram 29. Hold it there with your left hand.



Wind the yarn that comes from the skein through the fingers of your right hand. Drape the yarn over your index finger, under the middle and ring fingers and around your pinky. This creates the proper tension in the yarn which is necessary for creating stitches that are not too loose or too tight. **Diagram 30.**



It is important to learn good habits early, so they will stay with you. Try to use this method of holding your work from the very beginning.

Left-Handed Knitting

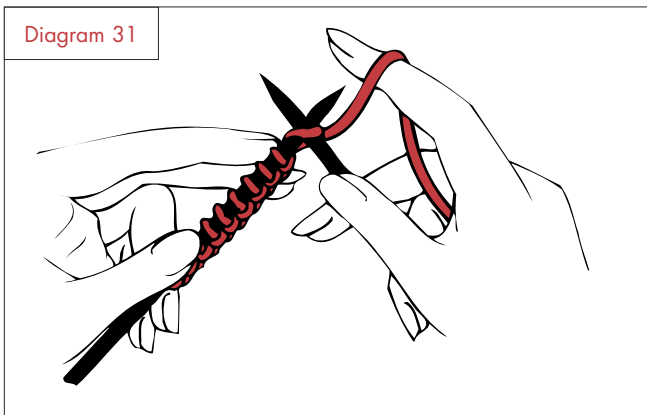
Many left-handed knitters have learned to knit the right-handed way. However, if you are not comfortable, and are having difficulty interpreting illustrations, place them facing a mirror. This will reverse the pictures. If you are following word instructions, substitute the word right for left and the word left for right.

The Stitches

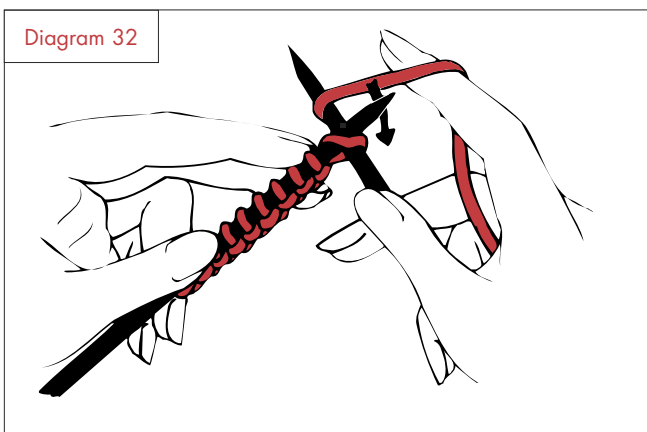
Knit Stitch (K)

Knitting uses only two basic stitches – the knit stitch and the purl stitch. It is the variations and combinations of these two stitches that create all the different stitch patterns which are possible in knitting. First you will learn the knit stitch.

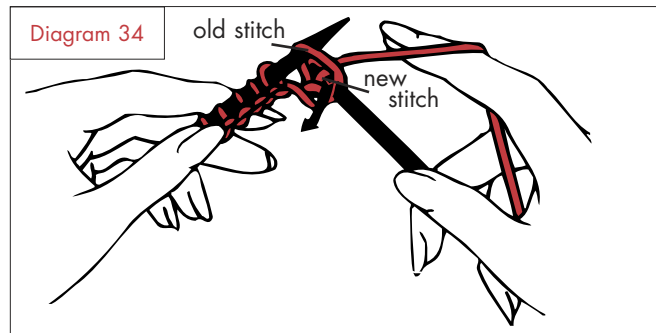
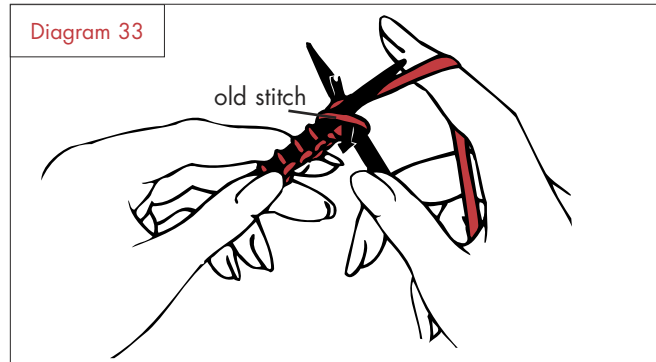
Holding the needle with the stitches in your left hand, insert the right needle into the front of the first stitch from left to right. The needle tip points towards the back, and the yarn should also be in the back of your work. **Diagram 31.**



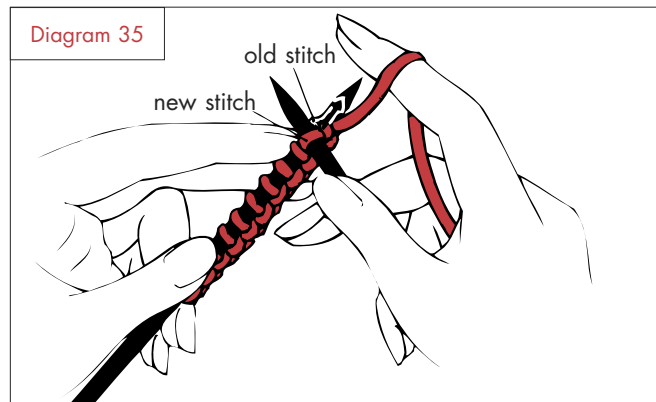
Wrap the yarn around the right needle from back to front, so that it rests between the two needles. **Diagram 32.**



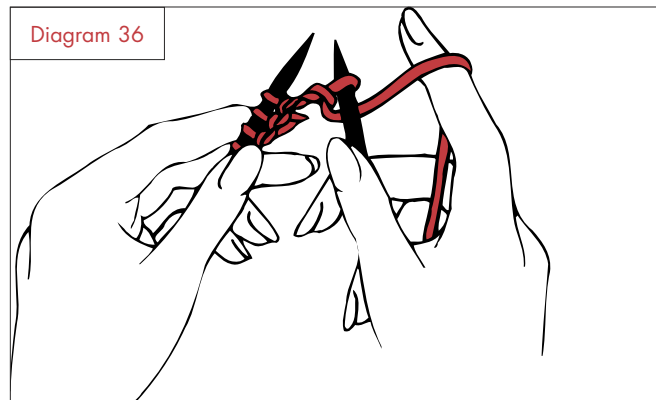
Slide the right needle down, then bring the point forward through the stitch, bringing the yarn with it. **Diagrams 33 & 34.**



Slip the old stitch off the left needle. Be careful to slip only the one stitch that was worked off the left needle. Do not allow any others to slip off. **Diagram 35.**



The new stitch is now on the right needle. **Diagram 36.**



Repeat the above steps for each stitch on the left needle. Notice that at the beginning and end of each stitch, the yarn is at the back of the work. At the end of the row, all the new stitches will be on the right needle, and the left needle will be empty.

Now count your stitches. It is a good idea to count your stitches at the end of each row while you are learning, to catch mistakes early. Later on, as you gain experience, you will only need to count your stitches every few rows. After the first few rows, if you make a mistake, you can correct it, following the instructions in the section of this book titled CORRECTING MISTAKES.

As you work, you are actually transferring all the stitches from the left needle onto the right needle. To prevent the stitches from pulling or dropping off the needles while you are knitting, pull the stitches back onto the right needle using your index finger and thumb. To move the stitches forward on the left needle, push them up with the thumb, index and middle finger.

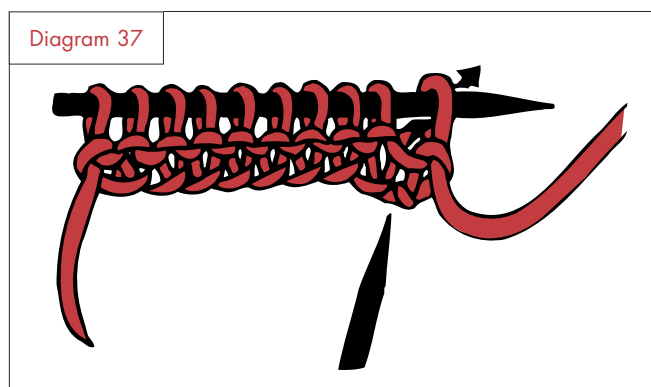
When you come to the end of a row on straight needles, all your stitches should be transferred to the right hand needle. For the next row, switch needles, transferring the “full” needle back to your left hand and start another row.

Second and All Other Rows

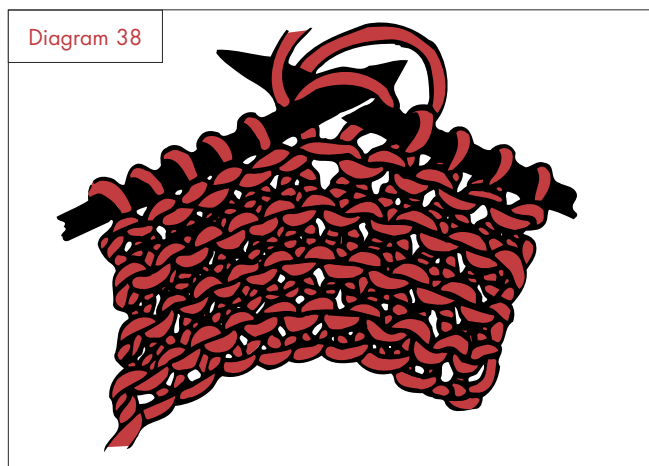
Switch the needles with the new stitches over to your left hand. Pick up the empty needle in your right hand.

Insert the needle into the first stitch as shown. (Sometimes the last stitch from the previous row is a little loose, and this may be confusing. Be sure to insert your needle into the new stitch, not the old one. The old one should remain beneath the needle.)

Diagram 37.



Work each stitch in the row as before. Additional rows are worked in the same way. **Diagram 38.**

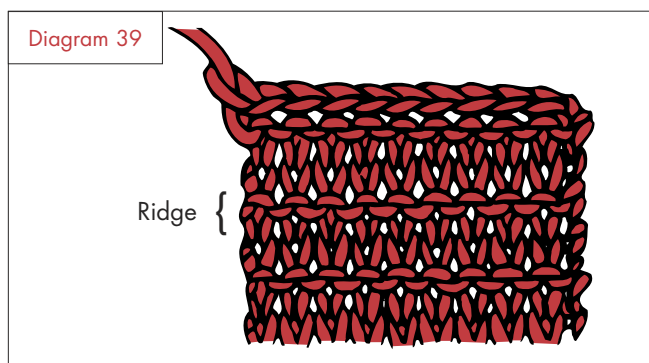


Garter Stitch

Knitting every row forms a pattern called garter stitch. It has a bumpy texture, looks the same on both sides, and does not curl along the edge, as some other stitch patterns do.

One ridge is equal to two rows of knitting. Written instructions will often tell you to work a certain number of ridges instead of rows when you are working garter stitch, because the ridges are easier to count.

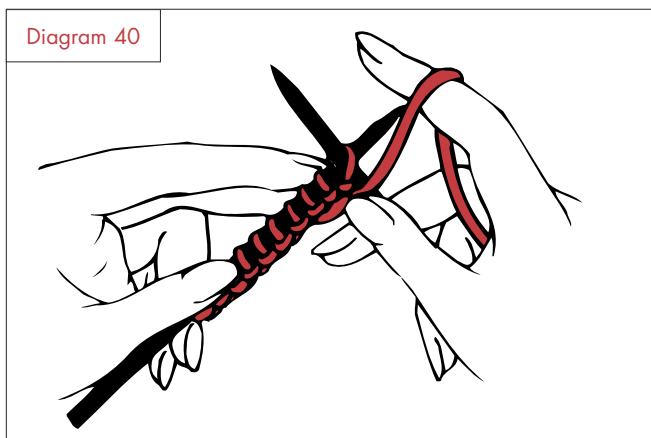
Diagram 39.



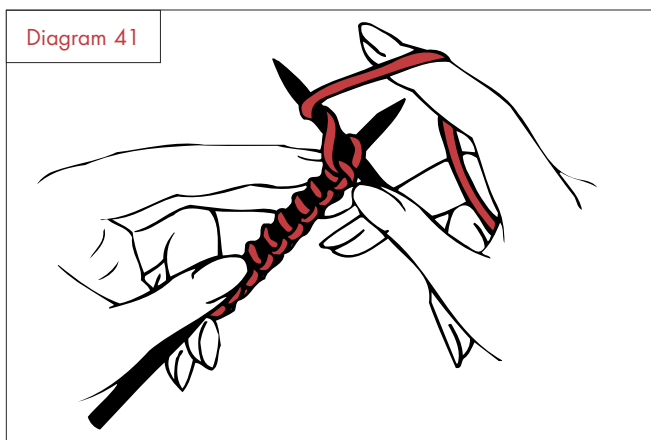
Purl Stitch (P)

A purl stitch looks just like the back of a knit stitch. If you purl every row, you get a bumpy texture which is exactly like a knitted garter stitch. (However, if your knitting instructions call for garter stitch, you can assume that you are supposed to knit every row, unless the instructions state differently.) Following are the step-by-step instructions and diagrams for creating the purl stitch.

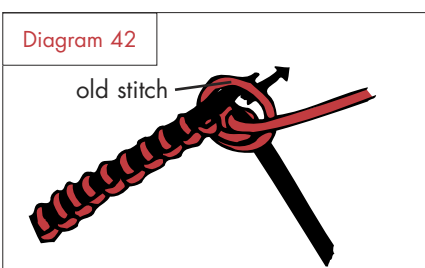
Hold the needle with the cast-on stitches in your left hand. Make sure the yarn is in front of the needle. Insert the right needle into the front of the first stitch from right to left. **Diagram 40.**



Wrap the yarn around the right needle. The yarn will still be at the front of your work. **Diagram 41.**

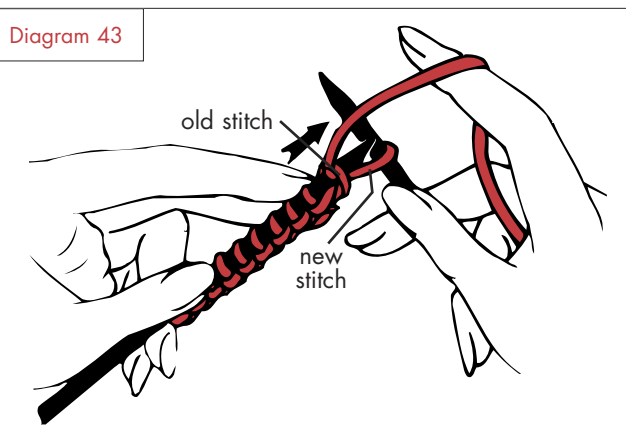


Slide the right needle down, then bring the tip from front to back through the stitch, bringing the yarn with it. **Diagram 42.**



Slip the old stitch off the left needle. You now have a purl stitch on the right needle, and the yarn is in front. Continue purling across the row, following the above steps. Notice that at the beginning and end of each stitch, the yarn is at the front of your work. **Diagram 43.**

Diagram 43.



Work additional rows by switching the needle with the stitches to your left hand, then beginning to purl the new stitches.

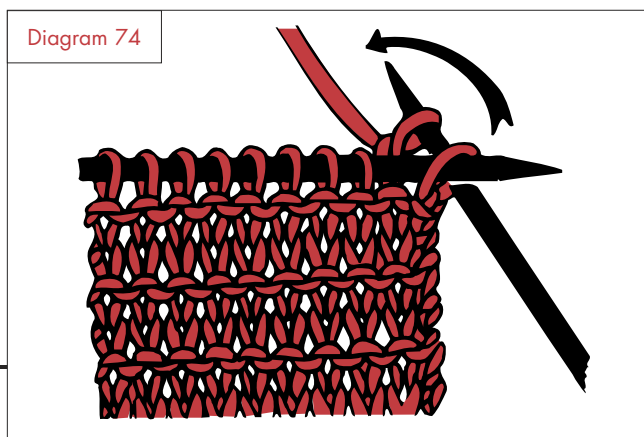
Stockinette Stitch (St st)

Stockinette stitch is one of the most common stitches. It is created very simply by knitting one row, purling the second, knitting the third, purling the fourth and so on. In a finished piece of stockinette fabric, one side is smooth. It is called the “stockinette” or **knit side**. The other side is bumpy and is known as “reverse-stockinette” stitch. It is also called the **purl side**. As you are working stockinette stitch, if the purl side (horizontal ridge) is facing you, you should work purl stitch to maintain the pattern. If the knit side (vertical rows of “V”) is facing you, you should knit the stitches.

Binding Off Stitches

When you have finished knitting a piece, you will still have a row of loops on your needle. You must bind off (fasten down) these loops, or your work will unravel. There are several methods of binding off stitches, but the following method is the one used most frequently.

Knit the first two stitches of the row. Using the point of the left needle, lift the first stitch up and over the second stitch and off the end of the right needle. **Diagram 74.**



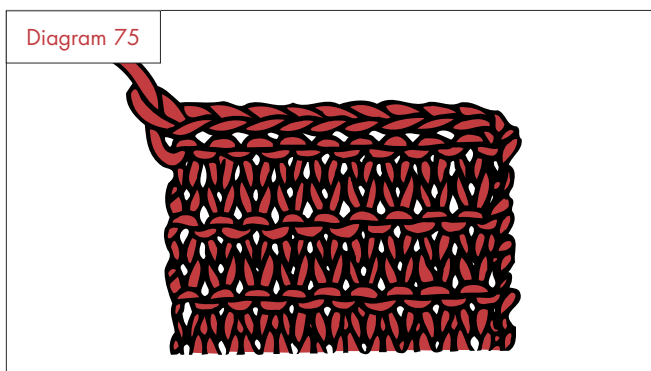
One stitch has been bound off and one stitch is remaining on your right needle.

Work the next stitch in the row. You will now have two stitches on your right needle. Lift the first stitch over the second and off the needle. Continue in this way across the row.

NOTE: It is very important to work your bind-off row loosely. It needs to be elastic, just like your knitting. If you have difficulty keeping your bind-off row loose, you may wish to use a larger size needle only for the bind-off row.

Finishing Off the Yarn

At the end of the row, you will have one stitch remaining on your right needle. Cut the yarn (leave at least three inches) and pull the tail of yarn through the last stitch. You can leave a longer tail if desired, for stitching together the finished project. This is called “finishing off” the yarn and will prevent the work from unraveling. **Diagram 75.**



The same procedure would be followed for binding off in purl, except that the stitches are purled instead of knitted. Always follow the stitch pattern of your work whenever you are binding off.