

Loom Knitting Common Instructions

by Ruth Volk 2015

Yarn: For the knitting looms, you will always want two strands of worsted weight yarn, or a combination of strands to equate to about the same thickness as two worsted strands. I use whatever yarn is available. If you have baby or sport weight yarn, you may need 3 strands. Or pair one lighter weight yarn with a heavier yarn. On the smallest flower loom, you can get by with a little less weight than the bigger looms.

General Instructions: I learned to knit on the loom by working from left to right (counter-clockwise) on the round looms. After doing lots of research and searching for patterns and instructions, I see that some people do the opposite – work clockwise from right to left on the round looms. This can be really confusing, but you should know that my patterns all assume you are working from left to right. I think this all happened because the looms came out before there were many patterns or instructions available, so people just did their own thing (no standards). My book that came with my looms instructs you to go from the front anchor peg, to the right around the loom, and back to the anchor peg.

1st Peg: The 1st peg, or Peg 1 is the peg to the right of the anchor peg.

Last Peg: The last peg is the peg to the left of the anchor peg. Or, if knitting a flat panel (back and forth instead of around in a circle), the last peg is the last working peg on the right edge of the panel.

Many books and instructions have you wrapping the working yarn around the anchor peg to keep it from sliding off as you work the lower loops up and over the top loops of each peg. I don't do this. I never use the anchor peg, except to visually keep track of the 1st and last peg, indicating I finished a round. To keep the yarn from slipping I wrap to the last peg the second time, then slip the lower loop off that last peg. This anchors the working yarn so I can work the remaining pegs. Work the yarn off the pegs by working backward from the last peg to the first peg. This is easier, trust me.

Cast On Methods:

E-Wrap method of cast-on: This method is used for the typical loom hat patterns, and works well when making a cuff. It is very loose, however, so doesn't work well for the edge of a garment. Start with peg one, which is the peg to the right of the anchor peg. Make a slip knot and place yarn loop onto peg one. Pull yarn snug. *Take yarn and wrap the next peg to the right, working around the back of that peg, to the right of the peg, around the front, left side and then to back of the peg again. The yarn should cross in the back of the peg. There should be a loop with 2 strands around the front of the peg. Continue to the next peg to the right. Repeat from * around to last peg (if working in the round) or to the last peg to be worked (if working a flat panel back and forth). Push the loops down on each peg. #Now wrap each peg a second time as described, all the way around to the last peg again. On that last peg, use the loom hook to lift the lower loop up and over the upper loop. This anchors the working yarn so it won't fall off the pegs. Now lift the lower loop off the next peg to the left, and work your way back around to peg one. Each peg now has one set of loops. Push these down on each peg.

Peg-at-a-time or Double E-Wrap method of cast-on: This method is better for garment edges, as it makes a tighter edge than the e-wrap cast-on.

Start with peg one, which is the peg to the right of the anchor peg. Make a slip knot and place yarn loop onto peg one. Pull yarn snug. *Take yarn and loosely wrap the next peg to the right, working around the back of that peg, to the right of the peg, around the front, left side and then to back of the peg again. The yarn should cross in the back of the peg. There should be a loop with 2 strands around the front of the peg. Push that loop down on the peg. Now wrap that same peg again. Using the loom hook, lift the lower loop up and over the upper loop. Pull yarn snug, but not too tight. Continue to the next peg to the right. Repeat from * around to last peg (if working in the round) or to the last peg to be worked (if working a flat panel back and forth). Push the loops down on each peg.

Stitches

E-wrap : Take the working yarn to the middle of the loom. Holding the working yarn, move it to the next peg to the right (peg 2), around the back of the peg, wrap to the front of the peg, then around to the back again. This results in one loop of yarn on the peg looking from the front of the loom, and looking from the back, the yarn crosses itself on the back of the peg.

Knit: I often call this straight knitting, since you hold the yarn in a straight line. To do a straight knit, do not wrap each peg, but instead hold the working yarn over the front of the pegs while you pull the lower loops over the working yarn on each peg. Think of it as though you are going to wrap the yarn around the entire loom on the outside. Hold that working yarn firmly in place as you slip each stitch up and over it. The e-wrap and knit stitch cannot be substituted for each other. The knit stitch makes a much tighter weave than the e-wrap and looks exactly like it was knitted on knitting needles. Because their gauges are so different, substituting one stitch for the other will give you the wrong dimensions for your work.

Cast Off Methods:

Cast off begins after you have fully worked each peg, so that only one loop remains on each peg. For flat panels, the last pattern row should leave you with the working yarn positioned at the last peg (not the first peg), to be properly positioned for cast-off. I always cast off working from the last peg to the first peg (backwards), or from the last working peg to the first working peg (right to left) for flat panel work. Be sure not to make your cast-off stitches too tight. The work should lay flat and be no tighter than the cast-on row.

Knit Off method of Cast-off: Make sure your working yarn is positioned at the last peg, not the 1st peg. (NOTE - This method is tricky and difficult to manage the appropriate tension – it takes work to keep your cast-off from getting too tight. You want your cast off edge to be about the same as your cast-on edge. With each cast-off stitch, loosen the yarn a bit so it doesn't get too tight.)

Take the working yarn and wrap the last peg once, then lift off the lower loop. *Take the working yarn and wrap the peg to the left. Lift off the lower loop. Take the remaining loop off that peg and move it to the peg on the right (the last working peg). Lift off the lower loop. Take the remaining loop off that peg and move it to the peg on the left, which now becomes the last working peg. Continue from * to the last

peg. Work the last peg as above, then cut the yarn leaving a yarn tail long enough to sew seam later (if needed). Lift last loop off the peg, pull the yarn tail through the loop and pull tight.

Crochet Off method of Cast-off: Make sure your working yarn is positioned at the last peg, not the 1st peg. Do not cut yarn! Using a size I or J crochet hook, take off the loop on the last peg and insert crochet hook. Hook the yarn and pull through the loop on the hook. *Lift the stitch off the next peg to the left and place on hook. Hook the yarn and pull through both loops on hook. Repeat from * to last stitch. Finally, yarn over and pull through the last loop on your hook, cut yarn (leave a tail for sewing as needed) and pull through that last loop. When working in the round, you will want to slip stitch into the very first castoff stitch. Finish off and pull yarn tight.

Be sure not to make your cast-off stitches too tight. The work should lay flat and be no tighter than the cast-on row.

Special Instructions

Flat Panels: Normally you wrap and work every peg when working in the round. But when making a flat panel on a round loom, the 1st and last pegs are used for turning. The first and last pegs will be wrapped and worked off only every *other* row as you work back and forth along the loom. This makes a nice tidy side edge.

Helpful Hints:

When working pieces that need to be sewn together later, I find it helpful to leave a long yarn tail at the beginning and/or end of the work to use for stitching the seam. Then I don't have extra yarn tails to hide. When sewing a long seam, use stitch holders or large safety pins to attach the two pieces at key points that need to line up. For example on this sweater, pin at the underarm. Sew the underarm seam from the wrist to the pin, then from the pin down to the bottom edge. This helps keep the two sides lined up as you sew. For the shoulder seams, pin the work at the 7th stitch so you know where to end and can space the stitches evenly.

Blocking: To block the pieces that have curled edges, you can either do each piece separately before sewing together, or wait and block at the end once all pieces are assembled. I prefer to block at the end, and only block what needs to be flattened to prevent it from rolling. I like to use the steam from my steam iron, but be sure NOT TO PRESS DOWN. Just lightly run the iron over the piece, holding it slightly above the garment, not touching. Let the steam release the fibers until they lay flat. Sometimes it helps to steam from the back side rather than the front.