

17 Replies to Ten Great Knitting Tips

Crafts & Hobbies

Ten Great Knitting Tips ([karma: 8](#)) [en>fr fr>en](#)

By [jazzstar87](#) Comments: 1131, member since Tue Aug 02, 2005

On **Sun Jan 14, 2007 11:13 PM**

Edited by jazzstar87 (137628) on 2007-01-14 23:27:08

Made sticky by hyIndlas (107168) on 2007-01-16 12:26:27 Great Thread for another knitter!

Made sticky by hyIndlas (107168) on 2007-01-16 12:26:29 Great Thread for another knitter!

In the past couple of months I've gotten back into knitting. I tend to be a winter knitter; I'll go through phases during which I'll knit like a fiend, and those phases generally tend to happen during winter. So, I've been knitting lately, and I figured I would add my own tips and tricks about knitting. Here are my ten tips for a fun and easy knitting experience. Oh, and for your convenience, I've bolded the main advice of each section, just so you don't have to read through all of my explanations!

1. You'll notice that on almost all patterns, one of the first pieces of information given is the size needle you should use, and the thickness of the wool. The advice usually associated with this info is "Take the time to check your gauge." This means that in order for the finished work to fit together, it should be a specific size. This size will depend on your needle size, wool thickness, and your tension. Your tension is the tightness or the looseness of your stitches. So, my first piece of advice is to **take some time to establish your tension**. Don't get frustrated, because I am promising you right now that your tension will take quite a while to even out. Mine took me a few months. The best advice I can give you to perfect your tension is to knit a blanket. Yup, that's what I said: knit a blanket. It will take you a while to complete, and by the time you've finished the thousands of stitches, you'll have developed a fairly even tension. Also remember that your tension will be slightly different from anyone else's, so try not to compare your work to another person's when you're first beginning, because chances are it will be different.

2. Now, I know that I just told you to go and knit a blanket, which is quite a huge undertaking for a first time knitter. But I'm about to completely contradict myself. **When you are very, very first beginning to knit, begin with something small**. I know that a lot of first time knitters begin with a scarf, which is recommended because it's pretty much straight back and forth knitting in garter stitch. The reason I would suggest starting with something other than a scarf is because it will take quite a while to complete. In my personal experience, I get very, very bored when I'm stuck doing the same, repetitive project for a lengthy period of time. Now, if you're the type of person who has a lot of patience for stuff like that, then go ahead and make a cute scarf. But if you're more like me, and you think you might get bored doing the same thing, then try something that is just as easy, but that will go a little more quickly. I would



suggest finding someone who knows how to knit, and have them suggest something quick and simple for you to start with. I can promise you that when you finish your very first project, you'll be so excited that you'll probably have the energy to go ahead and finish that scarf.

3. My previous point brings me to this one: **find someone (in real life, not on DDN), that knows how to knit**. Yes, we all know that DDN is a great place to come for advice and questions, but it is incredibly difficult to explain how to fix a problem over the internet. In fact, it's quite difficult to explain how to fix something in person; oftentimes corrections are made by the show and learn method. So, find a "knitting mentor", someone around you who knows how to knit. This may be a mother or a grandmother or a friend or a teacher or anyone else. Whoever it is, let them know you're interested in knitting and ask them if they'd be willing to help you if ever you're having some difficulty. I know that it's very convenient having my mom around. She's been knitting since she was about four or five, so she can fix every single mistake I make in my work.

4. My next piece of advice is to watch your knitting mentor very carefully when they're fixing your mistakes. Basically, **learn how to fix your own mistakes**. This will come in handy when you're knitting by yourself, and there's no one around to help you. I can't even begin to tell you how frustrating it is to be absorbed in a project when all of a sudden you drop a stitch or miss a stitch, and you have no idea how to fix it. As soon as you can, learn how to fix these mistakes for yourself. Ask your knitting mentor to show you in explicit detail how to do this. Now, if you make a mistake that you absolutely cannot fix by yourself, put the knitting aside until you can get someone to fix it for you. In times like this, it is helpful to stick a point protector at the end of each needle so that your work doesn't fall off, and put it down. Also, if your mistake includes a dropped stitch, take a safety pin and loop it through the stitch so that it cannot unravel any further than it already has.

5. Make sure you **know the lingo**. It can be annoying to read through a pattern and not be able to complete a project because you don't know what stocking stitch, ribbing, or garter stitch are. Know these terms, and others.

6. **Build up your knitting supplies**. If you're serious about knitting, or if you think that you may enjoy completing different types of projects, you're going to need several different needle sizes and types, as well as other supplies. Needles go from very small (US size 0) to very large (US size 50). You'll want to start out with a few average size needles. I would personally suggest US size 5, 6, and 7. However, you should check the pattern of whatever it is you're going to be making. It should tell you exactly what size you'll need. In addition to different size needles, there are also different types of needles. Most people are familiar with the average needle that has a pointy end that you knit with, and the other end has some sort of stopper to keep your work from falling off. There are also double pointed needles and circular needles. As their name suggests, double pointed needles are pointed on both ends. This means that you can knit from either end of the needle, as opposed to just one side. Circular needles are shorter than average needles, but they are connected by a length of plastic wire. Both double pointed and circular needles are usually used to knit in the round, a style that allows you to knit a circular tube, instead of in a flat plane. Also, there are other supplies you'll need for more intricate work. For example, you'll probably need to have a couple of different size yarn needles. These are very thick needles that you'll use to sew together the edges of that teddy bear you're working on. And of course, you'll want to have various colors of yarn to work with.

7. **Put together a knitting bag**. You can either buy a cute little tote bag, or buy a simple canvas bag from a craft store and decorate it yourself. This bag will be a life saver. In it you'll keep all of your needles, wool, patterns and other accoutrements, as well as the next item on

the list....

8. Keep a small bottle of baby powder or talcum powder in your knitting bag. It may sound like a strange thing to have around, but it will come in very handy when you've been knitting for a while. As you knit, your hands will probably become fairly warm and start to sweat. This makes it uncomfortable to work with both the needles and the wool. By shaking a little bit of powder onto your hands, it will keep them soft and dry. Also, sprinkle some of the powder in one hand and carefully run both of your needles through them, so that they are finely dusted in powder. This will keep the stitches from sticking to the needles, especially if you are a beginner whose tension is quite taut.

9. At the same time that you're learning how to fix your mistakes, find out a bit more from your knitting mentor. Specifically, **ask them to explain a little about how patterns work. From this information, you'll be able to adapt patterns that you find to your own specifications, and eventually you'll be able to create patterns all by yourself.** This will be a lot of fun, especially when you find a pattern that you particularly enjoy, but would like to customize to your own tastes. For example, I found a very simple teddy bear pattern online, and with a few quick adjustments, I was able to create an equally simple, but tons cuter version of the bear.

10. Knitting is supposed to be a fun hobby. If it ever becomes boring or frustrating, but it down for a little bit and go do something else. I know that in my own experience, if I start having problems with a pattern or a project, I tend to just give up and never finish it. Instead of doing that, just put it away for a while. Go for a walk, call up a friend, or go take a dance class. Whatever you want to do. If you need to take a break of just a few minutes or even a couple of days, it doesn't matter. The knitting will still be there when you get back. Just make sure to stick those point protectors on the ends of your needles, and you'll be fine.

Well, there you have it. My handy dandy tips and tricks for knitting. Go forth and have some knitting fun. To encourage you, here are a few pictures of the projects I've been working on lately. Sorry I can only include the links, but this post is already way too long, and DDN won't let me display the pictures.

The harlequin style blankie my mom and I knitted for a friend who is pregnant. We're not sure yet if the baby is a boy or a girl, so we went as gender neutral as we could with the colors we had lying around. i2.photobucket.com ...

The teddy bear I was telling you about. I did it entirely in stocking stitch, which made it really soft and snuggly. You can't really tell from the picture, but it's only about four inches tall, so it's very cute and little. i2.photobucket.com ...

The same teddy with the tiny little leotard I knitted for it. It didn't fit as perfectly as it could have, because I designed the pattern all by my lonesome. I think it still turned out pretty well, though. i2.photobucket.com ...

A tube dress that I did for a Barbie doll. I wanted to knit something really quick, and this dress only took me about fifteen minutes. i2.photobucket.com ...

And last but not least, the title picture, which is what I'm working on right now. I'm putting together a pair of leg warmers that I just started. Again, this pattern is entirely mine, so who knows how it's going to turn out. I did a 1.5 inch k2p2 ribbing section to start it off, and now I'm working on the stocking stitch main section. I hope it works. I'll post some more pics once I finish them. i2.photobucket.com ...

These are some great websites for patterns and such.

www.knittingpatterncentral.com

knitting.about.com ...

knitting.about.com ...

knitting.about.com ...

re: Ten Great Knitting Tips [en>fr fr>en](#)

By [dancetomusic05](#) Comments: 398, member since Tue May 09, 2006

On **Mon Jan 15, 2007 04:39 PM**

That's awesome! Karma for you!

-dtm-



re: Ten Great Knitting Tips [en>fr fr>en](#)

By [Poshoeda](#) Comments: 1774, member since Fri May 12, 2006

On **Tue Jan 16, 2007 12:13 PM**

It must have taken you a while to type this up! Those are great tips! I wish I had the baby powder one when I was first learning because my hands would get sweaty and my tension was very, very tight. You teddy bear is so cute! Where did you get the pattern for him(or her)? I also love you leg warmers. How did you figure out how many stitches to do across?



I gave you karma for this post because it was very informative and I'm sure it took you a while to type up.

Poshoeda



re: Ten Great Knitting Tips [en>fr fr>en](#)

By [balletsfriend](#) Comments: 5768, member since Thu Aug 30, 2001

On **Tue Jan 16, 2007 05:26 PM**

Don't forget Knitty! It's a great website. It has TONS of free knitting patterns and a really helpful board. I'm a member there!





re: Ten Great Knitting Tips [en>fr fr>en](#)

By [jazzstar87](#) Comments: 1131, member since Tue Aug 02, 2005

On **Tue Jan 16, 2007 08:40 PM**

Edited by jazzstar87 (137628) on 2007-01-16 20:41:11



Wow, my first sticky. Of course, I'd like to thank hylndlas who made it happen. And my mother for teaching me everything I know about knitting. And to all the little people out there who



Oh, do I not get an acceptance speech? *shrugs* Okay.



Poshoeda, I adapted the teddy bear pattern from one I found online. I'll post it later, as I don't have much time now. I'm glad you think it's cute, though. My three year old cousin demanded that I make one for her, because she loved it so much! As for the legwarmers, I just measured how big my calf was, and guesstimated how many stitches I would need. Then I knitted until it was the right length. I actually finished making both of them the next day. The first one was a bit too big, so I made the second one a few stitches smaller, and it was perfect. They're also a little bit too short, so I'm going to make another pair, and those should be just right. I'll post pics when I'm done.



re: Ten Great Knitting Tips [en>fr fr>en](#)

By [Poshoeda](#) Comments: 1774, member since Fri May 12, 2006

On **Wed Jan 17, 2007 12:11 AM**

Congratulations on your first sticky! I would love it if you would post the teddy bear pattern when you have time. If you could post it soon though I would appreciate it because I was thinking I could make that for my little sister's birthday (it's the 24th of this month) but if you can't that's **totally** fine and I completely understand. After all, you do have a life outside of DDN. *shock!*



I really like the word guesstimated, I'm going to start using that now!



Poshoeda





Teddy Bear Pattern ([karma: 1](#) [en>fr](#) [fr>en](#))

By [jazzstar87](#) Comments: 1131, member since Tue Aug 02, 2005

On **Wed Jan 17, 2007 02:12 PM**

[members.tripod.com](#) . . .

I basically used this pattern, but I did stocking stitch instead of garter. I also did the ears and head a little differently, but the way given in the pattern works just as well. It's actually a bit easier than the way I did it. I hope your little sister likes it!



re: Ten Great Knitting Tips [en>fr](#) [fr>en](#)

By [Poshoeda](#) Comments: 1774, member since Fri May 12, 2006

On **Wed Jan 17, 2007 04:34 PM**

Thank you so much! I hope she likes it too. She likes playing with her stuffed animals a lot (she has a great imagination) so I think this will be a great gift for her!

Poshoeda



re: Ten Great Knitting Tips [en>fr](#) [fr>en](#)

By [DancinQueen2](#) Comments: 96, member since Fri Dec 06, 2002



On **Tue Jan 23, 2007 12:46 PM**

Knittinghelp.com is another great website to learn from, they have video of almost any technique you can think of. They also have a whole lot of free patterns also.



Good work putting this together



re: Ten Great Knitting Tips [en>fr fr>en](#)

By [aezelle_angel](#) Comments: 56, member since Tue Jul 06, 2004



On **Fri Jan 26, 2007 03:51 AM**

Thats great advice! I wanted to start knitting as well and your advice gave me a good starting point. Thanks! =)

re: Ten Great Knitting Tips [en>fr fr>en](#)

By [aezelle_angel](#) Comments: 56, member since Tue Jul 06, 2004



On **Fri Jan 26, 2007 03:52 AM**

Thats great advice! I wanted to start knitting as well and your advice gave me a good starting point. Thanks! =)

re: Ten Great Knitting Tips [en>fr fr>en](#)

By [pointeytoes7791](#) Comments: 1143, member since Sun Oct 31, 2004

On **Tue Jul 03, 2007 09:10 AM**

This is an awesome sticky. I wish I would have been able to use this when I started! I had to learn from websites and books. Sad. But then I started talking to other people and getting ideas. Knitting is so much fun. And it gives you something to do when you're not...you know....dancing.



re: Ten Great Knitting Tips [en>fr fr>en](#)

By [nicholam](#) Comments: 25, member since Tue Mar 07, 2006

On **Fri Jul 11, 2008 05:12 PM**

Some Great tips thanks

Nxx

re: Ten Great Knitting Tips [en>fr fr>en](#)

By [undercoverdancer](#) Comments: 214, member since Fri May 02, 2008

On **Mon Jul 28, 2008 06:36 PM**

Thanks for the tips! I find the talcum powder tip very helpful. If only they could do something about crampy hands...

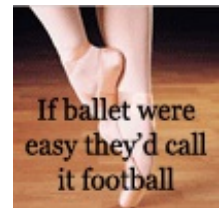


re: Ten Great Knitting Tips [en>fr fr>en](#)

By [veganwarrior](#) Comments: 216, member since Fri Apr 17, 2009

On **Sun Apr 26, 2009 12:46 PM**

Thank you so much. I've been knitting for 6 years off and on, and some of this stuff never occurred to me. I never had someone to teach me how to knit or fix my mistakes and it would have helped a lot.



re: Ten Great Knitting Tips [en>fr fr>en](#)

By [shamupops](#) Comments: 39, member since Fri Nov 13, 2009

On **Mon Nov 30, 2009 12:22 PM**

I'm a knitter! I love to knit, I never sit still without a project in my hands! Glad to know so many DDN members are knitters too! Just think, we can knit our own legwarmers



re: Ten Great Knitting Tips [en>fr fr>en](#)

By [lzy2009](#) Comments: 54, member since Tue Dec 08, 2009

On **Sat Jan 16, 2010 05:46 AM**

Thankyou. You really helped. These were brilliant tips!
X





re: Ten Great Knitting Tips [en>fr fr>en](#)

By [pointeprincessSD](#) Comments: 218, member since Wed Jun 23, 2010

On **Fri Sep 02, 2011 12:22 PM**

So nice to see other knitting enthusiasts!! That was really helpful! I'm always looking for new things to do with my knitting - and this gave me some great tips! Thank you, JazzStar87!!!

