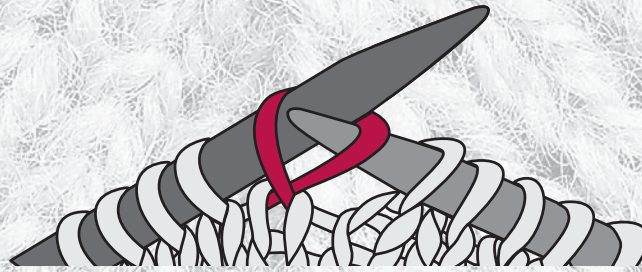


Ulla Engquist

# KNITTING DETAILS



## Start to Finish

A Handbook of Simple Tricks,  
Creative Solutions, and Finishing Techniques



*A big thank you to my family who put up  
with me when I was always knitting!  
Thank you, Karin and Gunnel.*

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## In the Knitter's Basket

Just so you'll always have all your knitting tools at hand, it's a good idea to assemble them in a basket. Here's what you need:

- \* Assortment of needle sizes and lengths—if there's room.
- \* Assortment of crochet hook sizes.
- \* Scissors.
- \* Notebook and pen.
- \* Sewing needles/sewing pins.
- \* Safety pins.
- \* Pointed tip tapestry needles.
- \* Blunt tip tapestry needles, preferably with a curved tip.
- \* Magnifying ruler.
- \* Measuring tape.
- \* Ruler or vernier caliper (there are digital versions).
- \* A hank of mercerized cotton yarn, for example size 8/4.
- \* Black and white cotton sewing thread.
- \* Mini-calculator.
- \* White towel.
- \* Assortment of stitch markers.
- \* Cork, rubber bands, or plastic beads to cap one end of short needles.

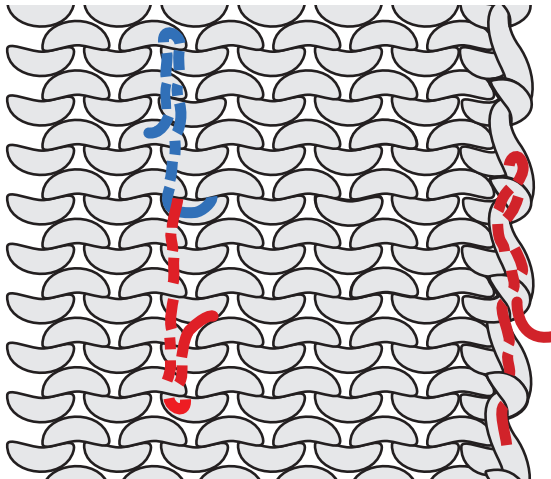




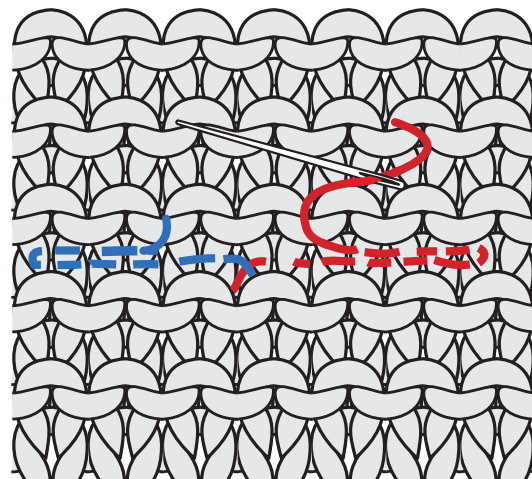
**PHOTO 1** Stockinette stitch, example of how to weave in on one “side” of circular knitting.

**PHOTO 2** Ribbing, example of how to weave in on one “side” of circular knitting.

**PHOTO 3** Garter stitch, example of how to weave in horizontally between two ridges.



Stockinette Stitch. The yarn is woven in through edge stitches and at the “side” on a circularly knitted piece into a vertical line of stitches. The ends are fastened off each in their own direction.



Garter Stitch. The yarn is woven in horizontally below a ridge on the wrong side. The ends are fastened off each in their own direction.







## Markers

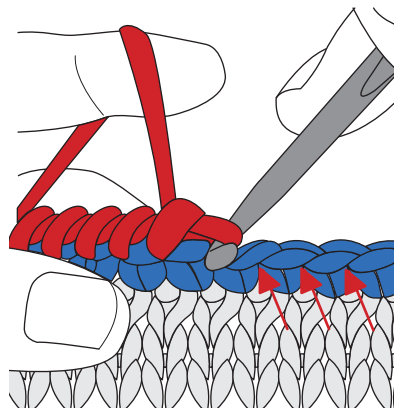
### MARKING ROWS

In your knitting, you should always count the rows so each of the pieces will be the same length. You may not always be in the same mood each time you are knitting and that will show! If you measure with a measuring tape, you'll get a different result each time. Measuring tapes can be used to quickly check, for example, the length and width of the various parts.

To make it easier to count rows, you can take a length of contrast color cotton yarn and weave it through the knitting all the way from the bottom to the top. Weave it in between two stitches, on, say, every fifth row or for every increase/decrease row—alternating on

The white marking thread on the front shows the increases on the side as well as the binding off for the armholes and neckline. The red marking thread on the body and sleeve indicate the number of repeats in the respective directions for fitting the sleeve stitches against the rows on the body—two stitches for every three rows.





Twisted bind-off

to have a noticeable bind-off to finish a ribbed neckband, you can use this method because it falls towards the right side with the fine chain edge visible.

**WORK AS FOLLOWS** • Knit one stitch. \*Slip the stitch back to the left needle and knit the first two stitches together through back loops\*. Repeat \* to \*.

You can produce a somewhat different chain effect on the bind-off edge if you twist the stitch as you slip it back to the left needle. That is, move the stitch to the left needle by twisting it a half turn, taking it from the front when you move it off the right needle. Try it—it's cool!

The bind-off row should be the same tension as the overall knitting after blocking, so sample to make sure you use the right needle size.

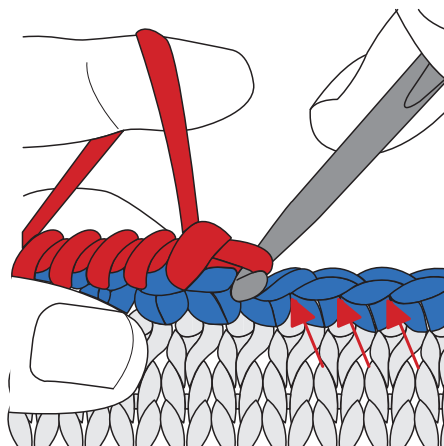
- This pairs well with the double long-tail cast-on.

### **CROCHETED BIND-OFF WITH SINGLE CROCHET**

This method of binding off produces a pretty beaded edge that is very firm and is a good finish on a neckband, for example. It's strong and can be redone if it happens to rip.

**WORK AS FOLLOWS** • Bind off with the standard bind-off method. On a circularly-knitted neckband, do not cut the yarn you knitted with but use it for the crocheted bind-off.

Use a crochet hook in the same size as the knitting needle used for



Binding off with single cro-  
chet worked forwards and  
then backwards.

the band. With right side facing, work a row of single crochet. Insert the hook directly under the bind-off row, through both loops. Make a chain stitch at the end of the row but *do not turn*. Working *backwards*, work a row of crab stitch (single crochet worked from left to right). Work firmly but make sure the edge is still flexible.

If you think that the edge is too clumsy, try omitting the first row of single crochet. Begin the crab stitch from left to right and insert the hook under the bind-off row as described above. Crocheting backwards takes a little patience at first but don't give up!

- This bind-off method pairs well with the Channel Islands cast-on.

### SEWN BIND-OFF

This bind-off method is used for k1, p1 ribbing. Work with the right side facing. Estimate a length of yarn four times the width of the finished piece, around, for example, the neckband, plus a little extra.

#### *Binding off with Kitchener Stitch*

Sew with the right side facing. Insert the needle through the back of the first (knit) stitch on the needle and then from the back through the second stitch (purl). Bring the yarn through and drop the stitches from the needle. (If you knitted in the round, you do not need to do these first two preparatory stitches but can begin directly with the instructions below.)

\*Insert the needle from the front into the knit stitch (1), past the





### Edge stitches joined at the sides

**PHOTO 1** Garter stitch. First and last stitch knitted on every row.

**PHOTO 2** Stockinette. First stitch purled, last stitch knit through back loop.

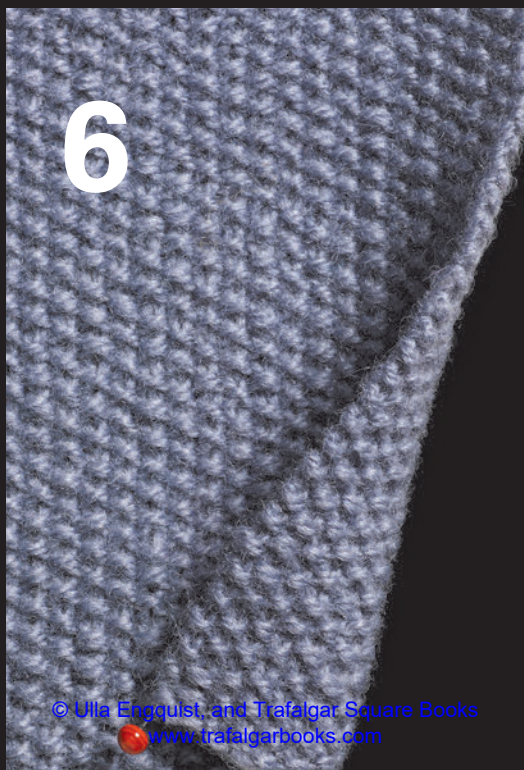
**PHOTO 3** Stockinette. Edge stitch knit at the beginning and end of every row.

**PHOTO 4** Stockinette. Edge stitch worked to match the pattern at the beginning and end of every row.

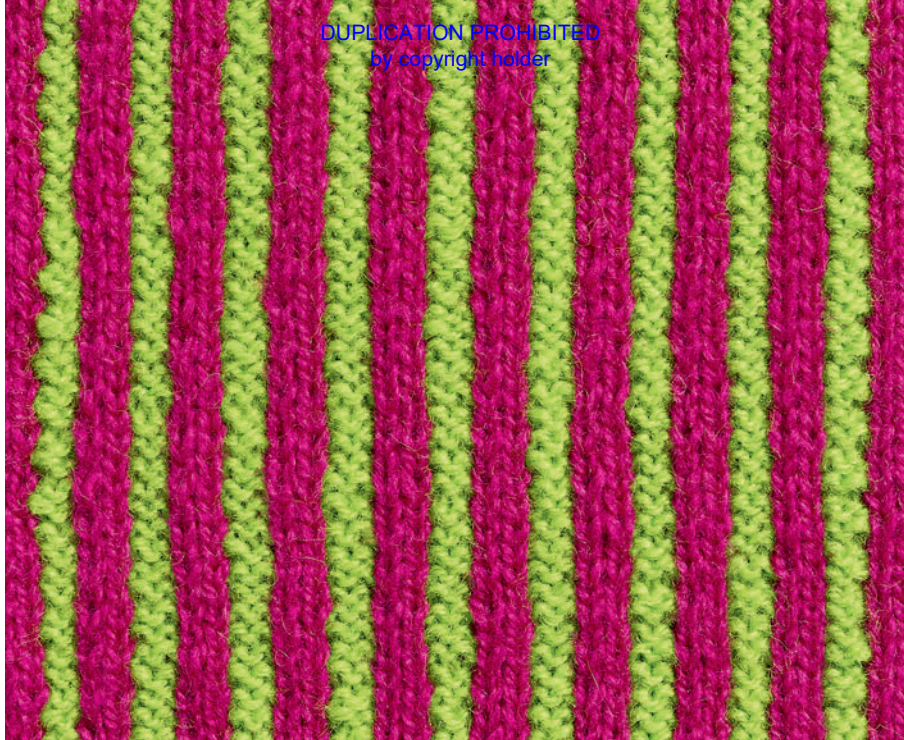
**PHOTO 5** K1, p1 ribbing. First stitch is purled, and the last stitch knit through back loop on every row.

**PHOTO 6** Seed stitch. Edge stitch worked at beginning and end of every row to match patterning.

**PHOTO 7** "Bird's Feet." Slip first stitch purlwise with yarn in front, knit last stitch. The edge stitches are worked on alternate rows to match the gauge of the knitting.







K2, p2 ribbing worked with two colors in standard two-color stranded knitting.

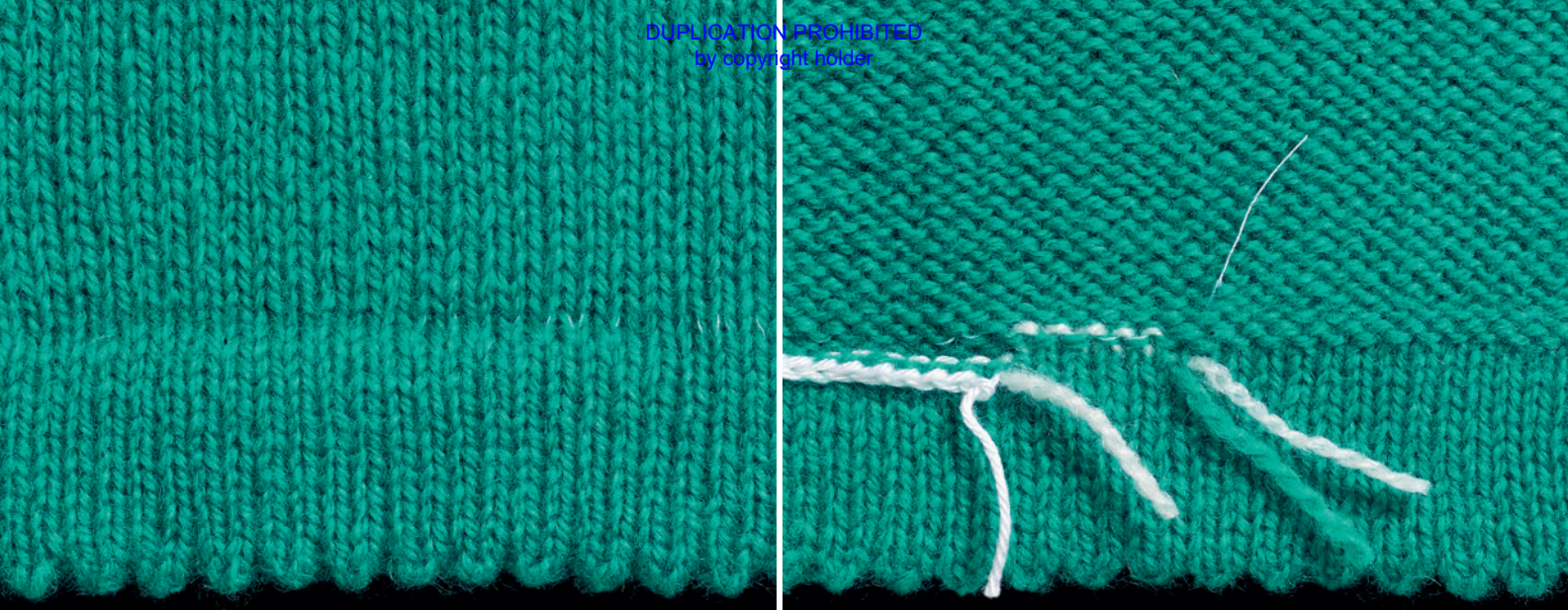
### TWO-COLOR RIBS

You can work either k1, p1 or k2, p2 ribbing with two colors. One color is used for the vertical knit stitch lines and the other color for the purl lines. Hold the strands as you usually do for two-color stranded knitting. The dominant color is placed over the index finger and under the middle finger and the other strand, nearest the fingernail, over both the index and middle fingers.

Two-color ribs will not have the same elasticity as regular ribbing but still produce a nice effect. After the cast-on row, you'll need to start with a set-up row (see page 125) with the two colors all worked as knit stitches on the right side. On the following row, you can begin the two-color ribbing. The knitted set-up row means that you'll avoid those unattractive dots of color that occur when you purl over a different color. To simplify matters, work the ribbing in the round.

### TWISTED RIBS

Twisted ribs are used, for the most part, with inelastic yarns. Twisted ribbing is worked back and forth as either single 1-1 ribs or double 2-2 ribs. A stitch is twisted when it's worked through the back loop. Usually every other *vertical* stitch line is twisted which means that the rib-



A doubled edge with a picot eyelet row for the foldline. Sewing thread is held alongside the yarn on the joining row to make it easier to see where to sew the stitches. **LEFT** Right side. **RIGHT** Wrong side.

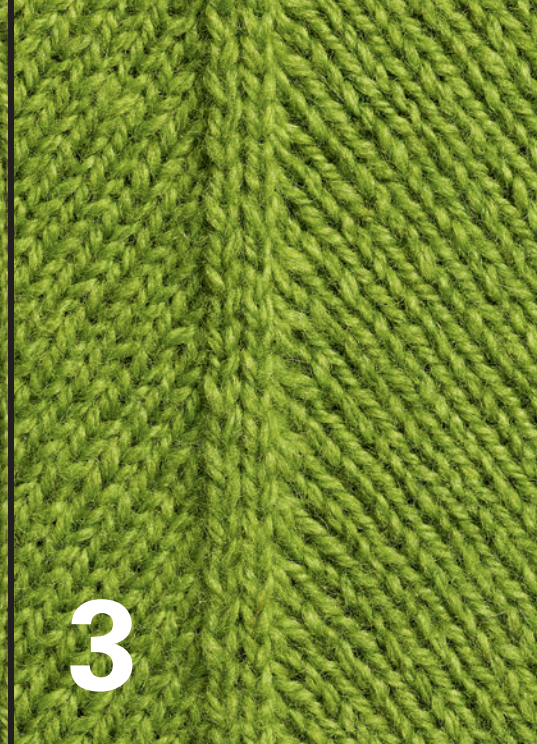
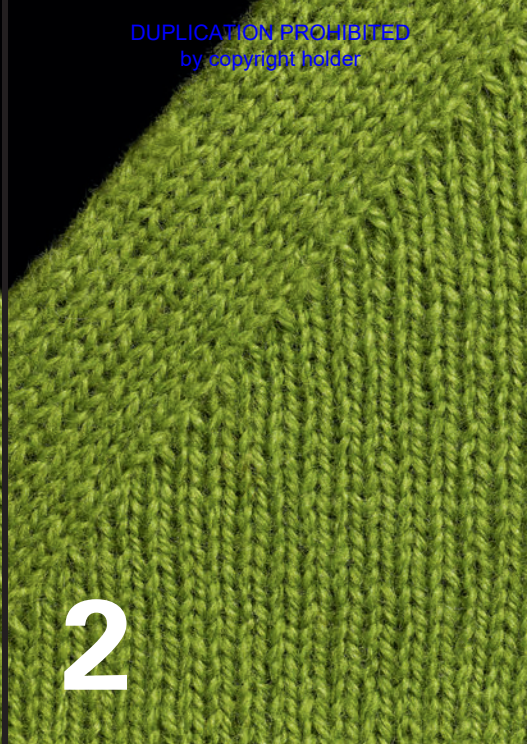
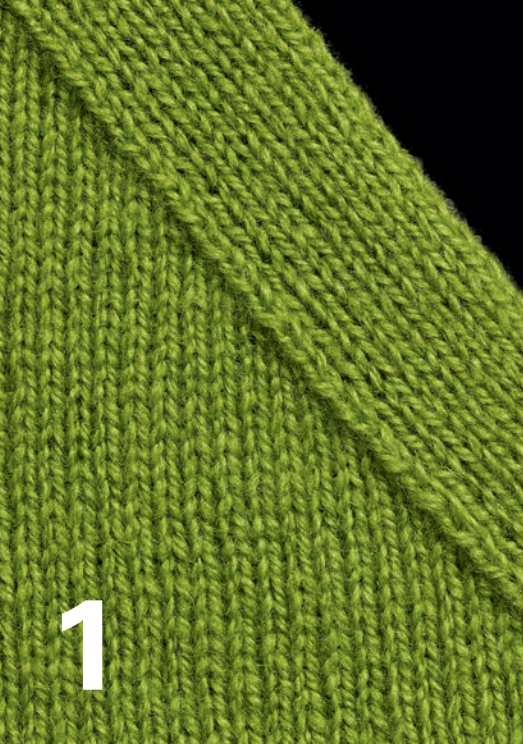
and sew it down after you've seamed the sides, work as follows: Cast on and work as described in the samples above, but, work the section of the edge that will be sewn to the wrong side with one less row. On the first stockinette row on the right side, corresponding to the row to be joined, carry a length of contrast-color sewing thread with the yarn. This will help you see where to sew when you sew the edge down with duplicate stitch during finishing. The sewing thread is then removed. The row you finish with on the inside of the edge will be the row that you'll sew the edge to. You should also sew so that each stitch lies on the lower edge of the joining row. Visualize how the edge should look as you sew the facing down.

#### Think about ...

- \* It's easier to sew the side seams if you fold and sew down the edge afterwards, although it will be a little trickier to do the sewing up.
- \* It's easier to join the edge while knitting. This also produces the best result.
- \* For all doubled edges, the stitches being joined should be centered on each other. The edge should not draw in on the bias, which can happen even with a half-stitch stagger. Make sure there's an equal space between by placing the needle straight through a stitch on the front, up to the edge, and then up through the same stitch row on the lower edge. Look on the back—that's where you'll see any half-stitch staggers.







### Decreases

All these decreases are worked on every other row = every right side row if you are working back and forth.

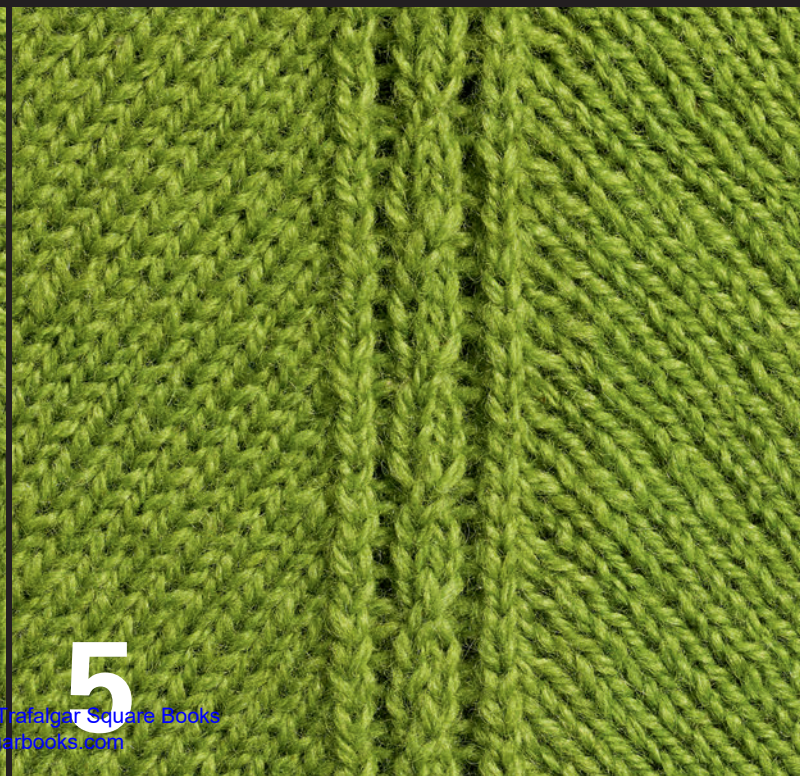
**PHOTO 1** Decrease that slants to the left made with ssk.

**PHOTO 2** Decrease that slants to the right made with k2tog.

**PHOTO 3** Decreases at the center of a knitted piece, the so-called band decrease. In this picture, the decreases are placed next to each other.

**PHOTO 4** Decreases as for Photo 3. In this case, the decreases have been used for a raglan sleeve where the body is joined with the sleeves.

**PHOTO 5** Band decrease with a cable between the decreases.





## Side Seams

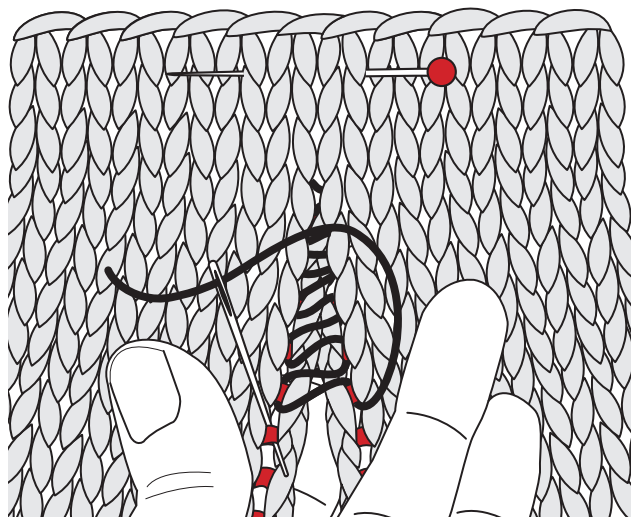
For most side seams, it's important that you have an edge stitch on every row (see Edge stitches, page 55). The exceptions are those techniques with rows that don't lengthen in proportion to the stitches and so would become wavy if an edge stitch is worked on every row.

Use the length of yarn hanging at the cast-on edge to sew with; the length should be three times the length of the seam. Use a blunt, bent tip, tapestry. If the yarn is too short, but is wool, you can splice the yarn by moistening it and rubbing the ends together. With any other fiber, you should fasten off the ends with a needle and start with a new strand.

Side seams are sewn together with the *right side facing*, from the bottom up. Lay the pieces edge to edge on your knee. Place your left hand, with the palm up, *centered* on the seam with the cast-on edge away from you. With your index finger under the left side and the middle finger under the right side, you can then simply use your thumb and the tapestry needle to open the edge stitches so you can then see where the bars between stitches are hiding.

It's easy to want to grip the whole piece with your left hand, but your hand isn't enough so train yourself to keep your hand centered on the seam. You'll see how easy it is after a little practice!

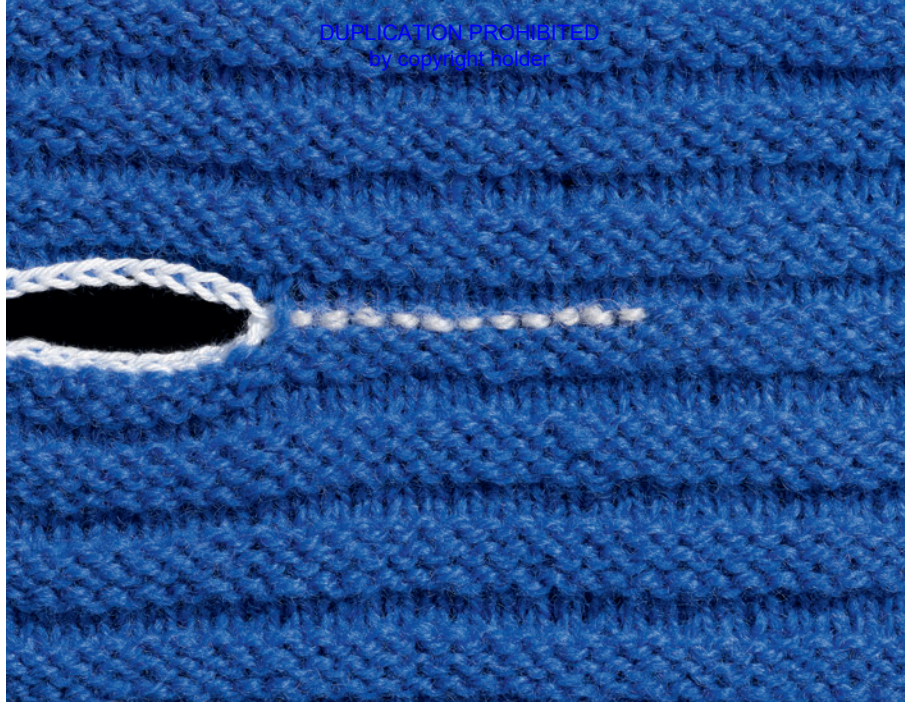
Begin sewing at the cast-on edge. Use the yarn hanging at the left side. Insert the needle from below and then up, inside the cast-on



The side seam in stockinette. The drawing shows how you should hold the pieces with your left hand as you sew the seam.

The work is pinned to a backing so it will stay well tensioned.

The drawing shows the seam pulled apart so you can see the stitching more clearly.



Stockinette and reverse stockinette welts—three rows of each technique. The live stitches of both pieces. Kitchener stitch is sewn into a “row change” so that the knitting will match. In this case, rows of the reverse stockinette is the part sewn.

into the edge stitch on the back. Bring the yarn through and do the same with the edge stitch on the front piece.

Now make a stitch from the top and down into the edge stitch of the back while at the same time inserting the needle from below and up into the adjacent stitch on the back; pull yarn through. Do the same on the front. Tighten the yarn at the same time as you are sewing so that the stitches form a row that will look just like the knitted rows. Continue sewing, alternately into the stitches on the back and on the front.

It’s important to make sure that you insert the needle into the *center* of a stitch. That way, the grafting will form stitches that will match the natural slant of the knitted stitches. If, instead, you insert the needle between two stitches, the grafting yarns will lie more parallel and “the row” of Kitchener stitch will not look very good.

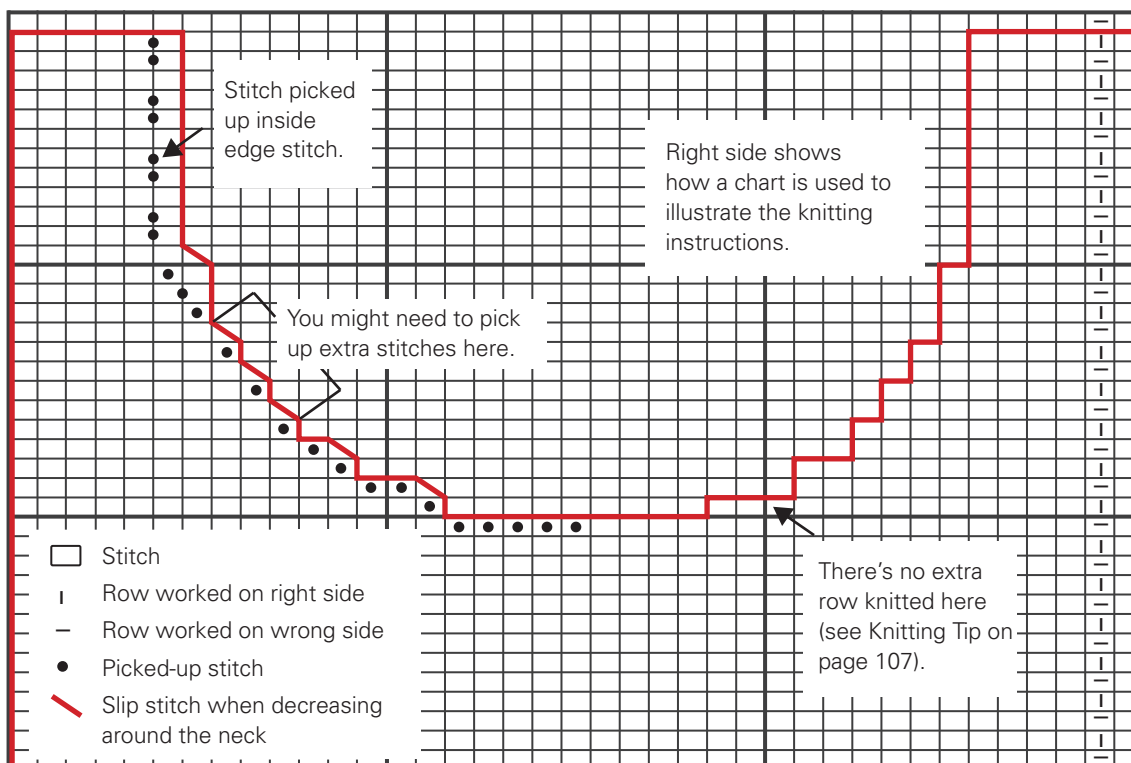
If you have the misfortune of sewing between two live stitches, you just have to re-start because when the yarn or bind-off is removed, the stitches will drop.

A good mantra to recite while you are working Kitchener stitch with stockinette is: “down into an old, up into a new, down into an old, up into a new. “Old” refers to the stitch you most recently inserted the needle up into.

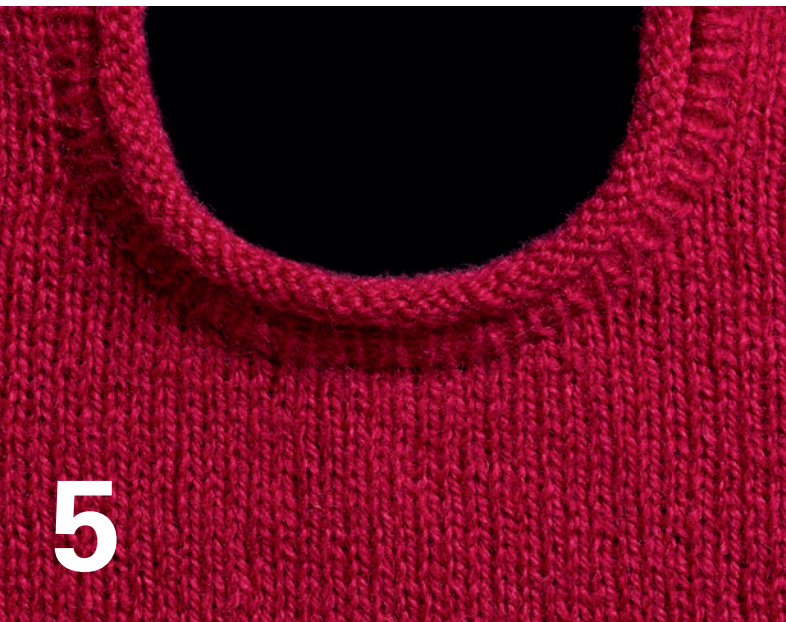
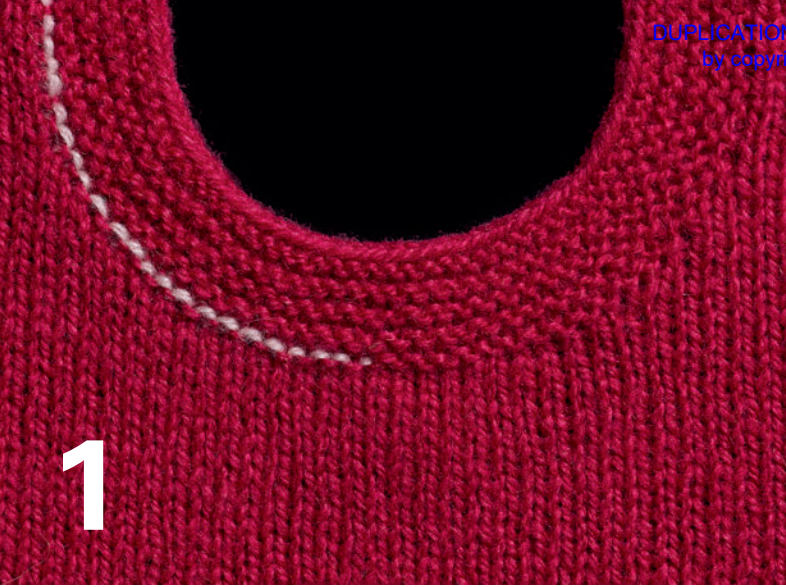


**TOP** Stockinette with a ratio of two stitches to three rows. The rows are marked in pairs of three and three. The stitches are picked up and knitted in the opposite direction and marked afterwards as two and two which exactly matches the rows.

**BELOW** Shaping around the neckline at the same time as picking up and knitting stitches (marked only on the left side). The vertical stitches are picked up inside the edge stitches. The horizontal stitches on the diagonal are picked up in the stitch below the bound-off edge.



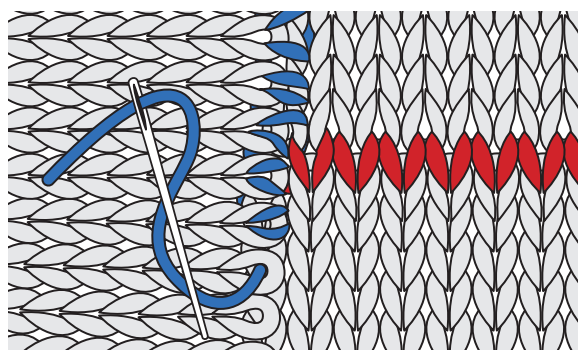




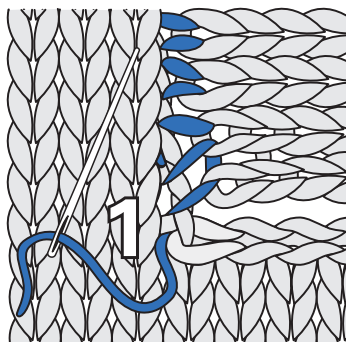


this means that you are sewing around all the bars and will produce an even and fine stitch line.

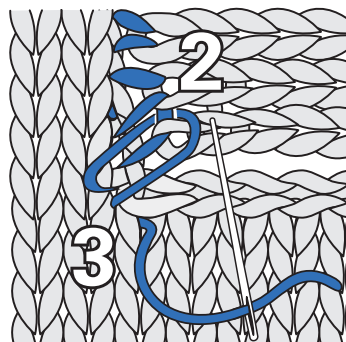
When you get to the corner of the armhole, you must make one stitch into the edge stitch on the sleeve, turn and, in the same way, sew the sleeve's rows to the bound-off stitches of the body. The rows and stitches now lie in another direction. Continue sewing into the edge stitches on the sleeve. The little stitch in the edge stitch are not visible but will secure it.



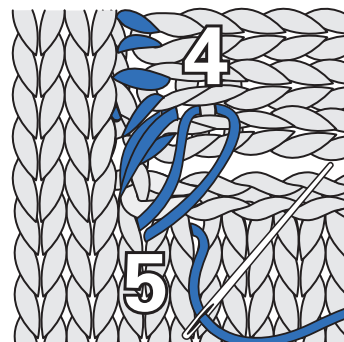
Attaching a drop shoulder sleeve. The seams are sewn with Kitchener stitch. There will be a half-stitch jog at the center of the shoulder seam.



Sew with Kitchener stitch to the corner of the underarm. The stitch catches the edge stitch and the bar at the bind-off row (1). Sew around the bar made by



the Kitchener stitch inside the edge stitch of the sleeve (2). Insert the needle into the same place on the body where it had



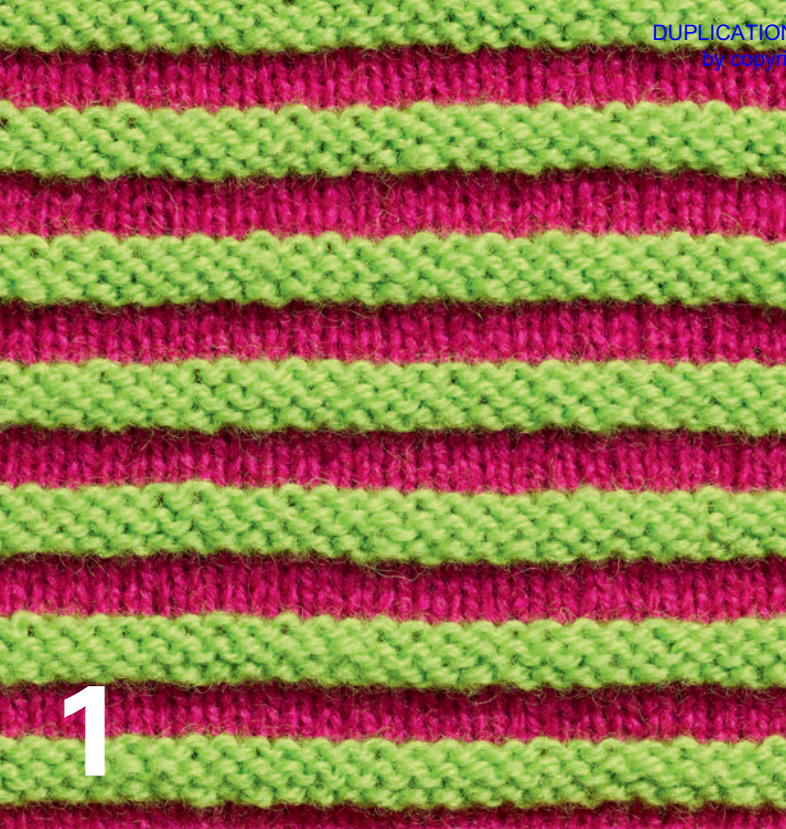
previously come up and continue up into the stitch on the body (3). Sew the same way along the armhole (4), (5).

#### Think about ...

- \* Always sew inside an edge stitch on both front and back.
- \* If it's hard for you to see where you made the most recent stitch, you can carry a strand of contrast color sewing thread with the yarn you are sewing with.







1



2

### Set-up row

**ABOVE** Stockinette, four rows of each color. **PHOTO 1** No dots at all on the right side thanks to the set-up row. **PHOTO 2** All the dots from the color changes have landed on the wrong side.

**BELOW** K2, p2 ribbing, four rows of the main color, two rows in contrast color. **PHOTO 3** No dots at all on the right side thanks to the set-up row. **PHOTO 4** All the dots from the color changes have landed on the wrong side.

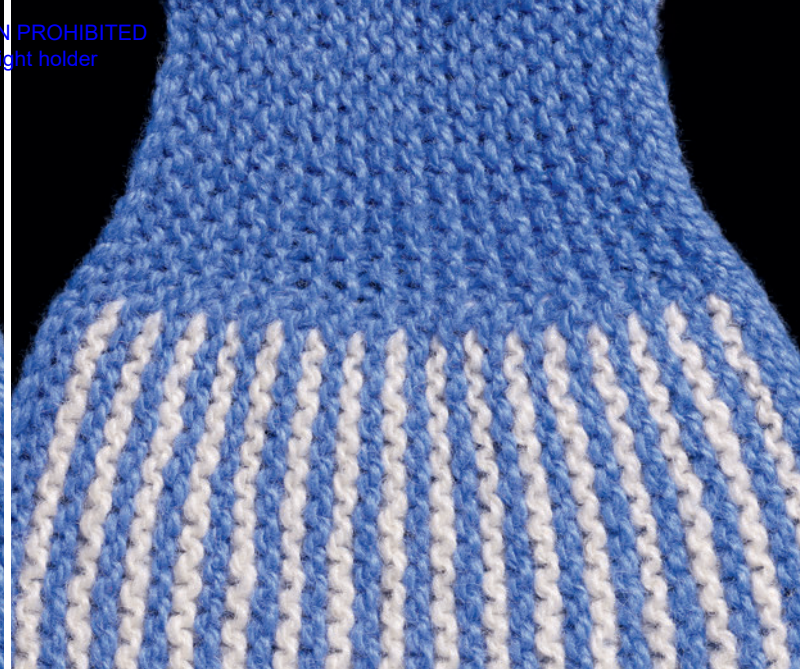
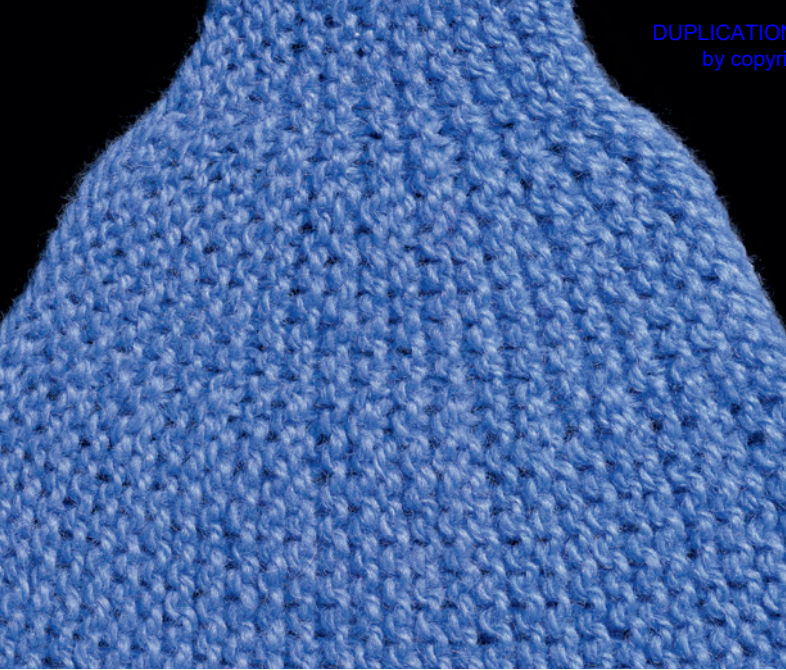


3



4

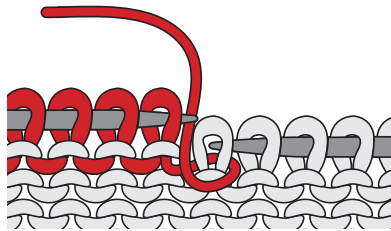




**LEFT** Garter stitch. Two turns. **RIGHT** Garter stitch with color effects. One turn.

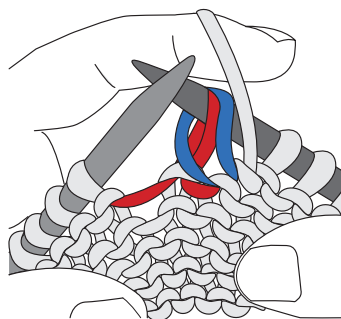
worked with short rows and several colors. Just remember that the wrap should always land on the wrong side.

Garter stitch with two colors has an obvious right and wrong side but each will be fine and either can be considered the right side. In that case, it won't look good to have the wraps showing on the wrong side. If you want to have a definite right side, choose which side you want as the right side from the beginning.

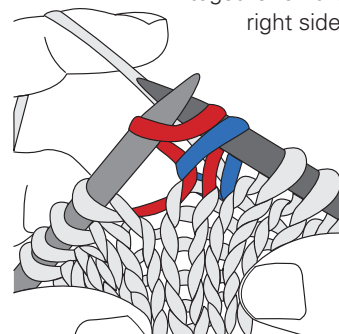


The yarn wraps around the turning stitch which stays open.

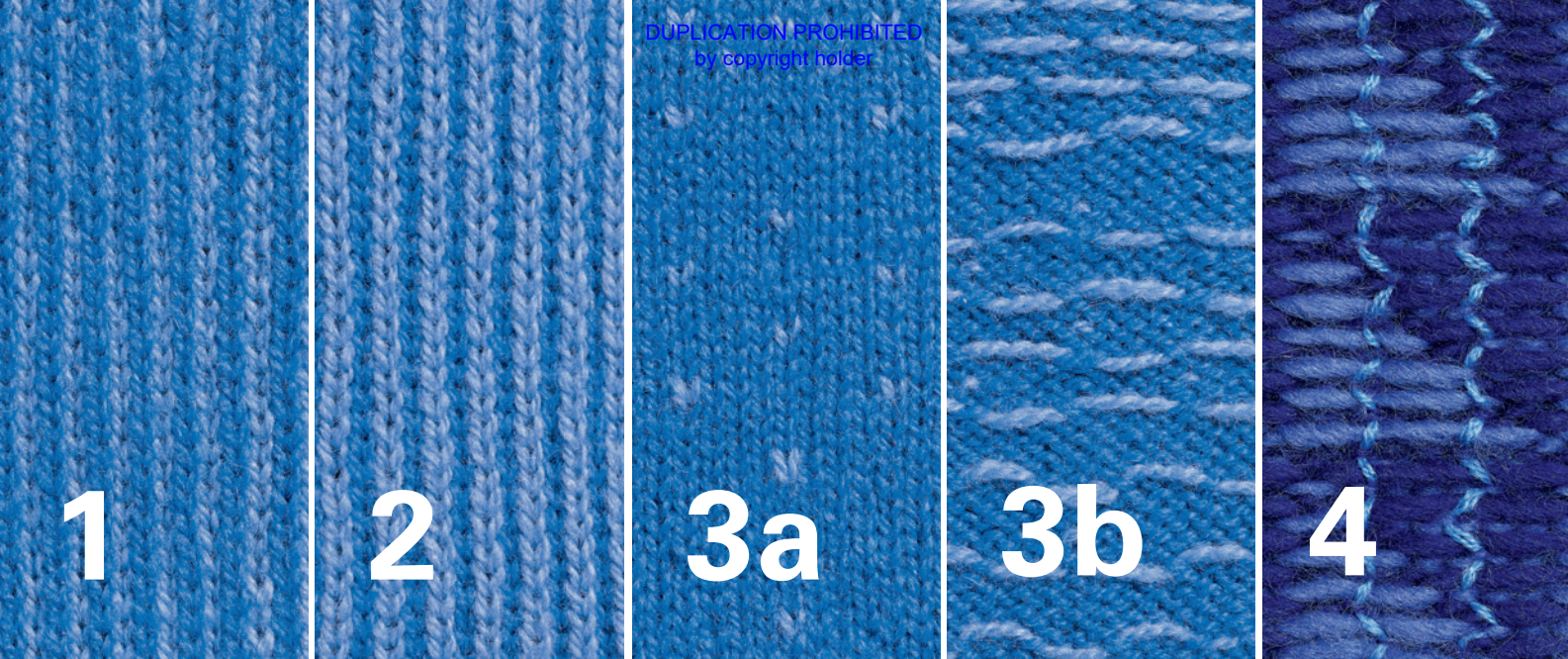
The turning stitch and the wrap are knitted together on the right side.



The turning stitch and the wrap are purled together on the wrong side.







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1

2

3a

3b

4

## Two-color stranded knitting

**PHOTO 1** Stockinette, one stitch main color, one stitch contrast color. The main color is dominant (see the arrangement of the strands on page 133). **PHOTO 2** Stockinette, one stitch main color, one stitch contrast color. The contrast color dominates (see the arrangement of the strands on page 133). **PHOTO 3A** Pattern knitting, right side. **PHOTO 3B** Pattern knitting, wrong side. The floats are caught on the wrong side in conjunction with the stitches. **PHOTO 4** Heavy knitted piece with the floats on the wrong side sewn down afterwards. The stitches are sewn loosely in zigzag so that they won't show on the right side.



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**PHOTO 5** An example of a sweater with the pieces knitted in different directions. Compare what happens with the pattern. The right sleeve is worked in the same direction as the body, from the bottom up. The left sleeve is worked from the top down.

The simple form of the pattern knitting has been combined with the edges worked in two colors and purl ribs. Cable cast-on. Neckband finished with one-over-two bind-off. The edges and the simple pattern combine well together and give the garment character. If a single-color ribbing were used for all the edges, the effect would be quite different and the garment would have less character.

**NOTE:** Half of the sweater; only the front has been worked.



## SWEATER 2

**Cast-on** Long-tail.

**Techniques** K2, p2 ribbing and stockinette.

**Increases** Make 1 (knit into back of strand between stitches).

**Edge stitches** For stockinette and ribbing: purl the first stitch and knit last stitch through back loop.

**Bind-off, Neckband** Standard bind-off in ribbing.

The stitches for the neckband are picked up and knitted and then first row bound off with the standard bind-off method. Stitches are then picked up and knitted through the back loops of the bound-off row and followed by k2, p2 ribbing.



# A Knitter's Guide to *Just Right*

Knitting can be such a fun, relaxing hobby—unless, of course, you meet the devil in the details! What kind of cast-on should you use—firm and stable, or flexible and stretchy? Will your edge stitches be hidden by seams or bands, or is the evenness of your cuffs at stake? How do you attach a sleeve without those “funny bumps” popping up at the shoulder? Here's a book that answers all your questions...even the ones you didn't know you needed to ask!

Learn how to plan out projects before beginning them, saving you headaches later.

Discover tips and tricks to help fix small mistakes during finishing.

Get familiar with your options: full-color photographs catalogue a variety of cast-on and bind-off techniques, edgings, and finishing strategies.

With clear illustrations and sample swatches, plus a sensible layout that helps you find exactly what you're looking for, *Knitting Details: Start to Finish* is the reference you want within reach, whenever your knitting needles call. In no time at all, you'll not only conquer the tricky and sticky bits that may have frustrated you in the past, you'll dare to challenge yourself in all new knitting ways.

**ULLA ENGQUIST** had learned to knit by the age of five. Her interest in finishing, as it applies to crafts and textiles, began in the 1970s when she worked for the Society for Swedish Lace in Linköping. She studied in the Advanced Handcraft Program at the Friends of Handcraft (Handarbetetsvänner) in Stockholm, and also worked at the Handcraft Association in Skaraborg before becoming a freelance textile preservation expert, taking commissions from churches in the region to assist with fabric care and maintenance plans for antique textiles. She is a well-respected knitting instructor and currently sits on the Swedish Handcraft Association's examination board for journeymen and masters. For the last ten years, she has also managed her own shop, Speciell, devoted to knitting, yarn, and leather.

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