

Tubular Cast-on

This method of casting on is absolutely perfect for ribbed brims and edges – the cast-on merges into the ribbing seamlessly, and creates the ideal stretchy edge.

There are a number of different ways to work a tubular cast-on, and different varieties of each. The one we're focussing on here is quick, doesn't need waste yarn, and works well for patterns knit in the round. This method is sometimes known as the long tail tubular cast-on, or the two strand tubular cast on.



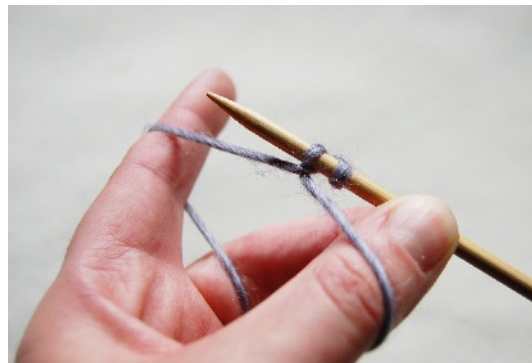
1. Using a size smaller needle than required, make a slip knot and slip it onto your needle, leaving a free end that's approximately 3.5 times the length of the desired piece. You want to keep both yarns in one hand, and the ends will be tensioned by your first finger and thumb, as shown in this photo. Ideally, the loose tail end should be around your thumb, and the ball end over your first finger.



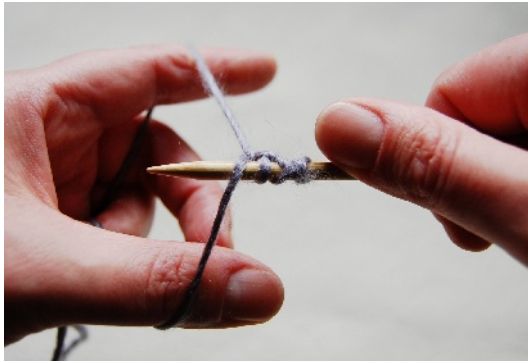
2. Using your wrist to move the needle whilst keeping the yarns under tension, gently swing the needle up, over and then back under the top yarn.



3. Next, bring the needle over, down then under the lower yarn and bring it under the top yarn



4. The first stitch has been created!



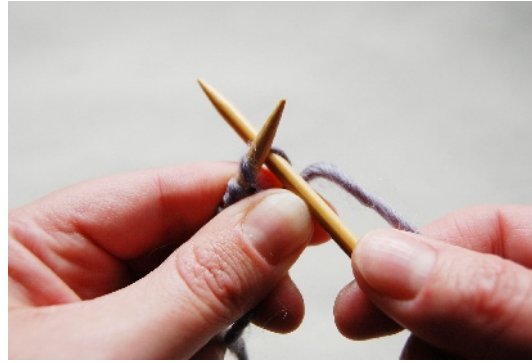
5. To create the 2nd stitch, we'll start with the bottom yarn - this time the movement will be the opposite way round. Swing the needle over and in front of the bottom yarn, then under and up again.



6. In the same swing of the needle, take the needle over, behind then under the top yarn and bring it under the bottom yarn – the 2nd stitch has been made. Continue in this manner, working steps 2 to 6 to create the desired number of cast-on stitches. I use a little mantra: "over, under, under, over" to help me keep the rhythm.



7. Once you have cast on the required number of stitches, tie a gentle knot with the two yarn ends – don't make it tight because you'll want to undo it later – it's there simply to stop the stitches unravelling when you work the first row.



8. Starting with a knit stitch, work 1 x 1 rib across the stitches. You'll want to straighten the stitches, so if your knit stitches look twisted, knit into the back of them.

Many tutorials recommend slipping the purl stitches (with the yarn in front) for the first row or two – the point of using a smaller needle than desired is to keep the edge tight and springy, rather than loose and saggy, and slipping the purl stitches has the same effect as using a smaller needle. If you know your yarn has little natural elasticity and stretches a lot, you could slip the purl stitches on the first row as well as using a smaller needle. If you don't have a smaller needle, slipping the purls will keep the edge neat.

When you have completed the 2nd row, this method of tubular cast-on is ready to join in the round. If you find you have one extra stitch than desired (the slip knot counts as a stitch!) knit it together with the first stitch of the next round, to help close the gap.

Contact:

All information included is accurate to the best of my knowledge, and is gained through my own experimentation and development.

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