

LEARNING MADE EASY



# Knitting & Crocheting

ALL-IN-ONE

for  
**dummies**<sup>®</sup>  
A Wiley Brand



Pam Allen, Tracy L. Barr,  
Marly Bird, Susan Brittain  
Karen Manthey, Shannon Okey,  
Kristi Porter





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**Pam Allen  
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Susan Brittain  
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Kristi Porter**

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## Knitting & Crocheting All-in-One For Dummies®

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# Introduction

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**K**nitting and crocheting are no longer considered something your grandmother did while sitting on the porch in her rocking chair. Knitted and crocheted designs are everywhere, from the racks in your favorite clothing store to fashion catalogs — even to the runways in Paris and Milan. These crafts even show up in movies and television shows. The reasons for this comeback are many, and by reading this book, you can discover some of those reasons and begin to enjoy a lifelong affair with the fiber arts.

Although knitting and crochet are time-honored crafts, that doesn't mean they are behind the times. Advances in technology have made yarns softer and more colorful, with wonderful new textures appearing every time you turn around. No longer are knitters and crocheters limited to solid or variegated colors; yarn is now hand painted and space dyed. Although worsted-weight yarn is still a staple in every yarn cache, so many varieties of weights and textures are available today that it's a challenge to categorize them all.

You're never too old or too young to discover crochet. The skills that you master, the benefits that you receive, and the beautiful heirlooms that you create can last a lifetime and, ideally, be passed on to future generations.

## About This Book

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*Knitting & Crocheting All-in-One For Dummies* gives first-time knitters and crocheters hands-on experience with new skills and serves as a reference tool for those who already have some basic know-how. The book takes you step by step through the process of gathering your materials, creating your first stitches, and finishing off a piece of knitted or crocheted fabric. If that sounds somewhat overwhelming, relax. You find detailed written instructions and easy-to-follow illustrations throughout this book.

Each minibook in *Knitting & Crocheting All-in-One For Dummies* contains chapters full of information relevant to each other, with successive parts adding more building blocks to your knowledge. If you already have some experience and are looking to refine and expand your techniques, then the later chapters are for you.

There, you can find advanced stitches and techniques, along with many tips to guide you. Finally, the projects throughout this book help you practice your new-found skills on fun and useful designs while feeling a sense of accomplishment for a job well done.

This book uses the following conventions to make the world of knitting & crocheting even easier for you to dive into:

- » When a new stitch or technique is introduced, you see its abbreviation in parentheses to help you become familiar with the shorthand used in knitting and crochet patterns. The abbreviation also appears the first time a stitch is mentioned in a set of numbered steps.
- » The specific part of an illustration that relates to the step you're working on is shaded dark gray. For example, if you're inserting your hook into a certain stitch, that stitch is shaded so you can see exactly where to go.

## Foolish Assumptions

How does that saying about assuming something go? Well, never mind about that. Each step is explained as clearly and concisely as possible, so you don't need any prior experience to understand the concepts introduced in this book.

The only assumption in this book is that you have a desire to learn the art of knitting and crochet. Beyond that, you only need to give it your best shot and don't give up.

## Icons Used in This Book



REMEMBER

This icon highlights important points. You should remember them and apply them when dealing with the skills shown.



TIP

This icon clues you in to some tips of the trade that more experienced knitters and crocheters have discovered over time.



WARNING

When you see this icon, read carefully. It marks potential pitfalls and helps you steer clear of frustrating and time-consuming mistakes.

## Beyond the Book

In addition to all the great information and step-by-step instructions included in this book, you can find even more online! Head to [dummies.com/go/knitcrochetAIO](http://dummies.com/go/knitcrochetAIO) for tutorial videos and full color images of some of the projects in this book.

You can also find a handy online Cheat Sheet with a list of international knitting and crochet symbols and stitch abbreviations and abbreviations for common terms. Go to [dummies.com](http://dummies.com) and search for “Knitting & Crocheting All in One For Dummies.”

## Where to Go from Here

Now that the introductions are over, it’s time to begin. The fun part is that where you start is entirely up to you! *Knitting & Crocheting All-in-One For Dummies* is written so you can start reading whatever section best fits your skill level.

- » If you’re an absolute beginner, start with Books 1, 2, and 3. They have all the essential information that you need to get started.
- » If you already have some experience with the basics and want to expand your knowledge, then look ahead to Books 4, 5, and 6, where you find advanced stitches and techniques and related projects. Whenever you need to know something that was covered in a previous chapter, you see a reference to that chapter.
- » If you used to knit or crochet and are coming back to it (sometimes life just gets too busy for fun stuff like this), skim through the chapters to reacquaint yourself with the techniques. The stitches themselves haven’t changed, but the materials have, and you may come across some useful info.





# 1

## Getting Started

# Contents at a Glance

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- » Choosing knitting needles
- » Picking the right crochet hook
- » Getting other tools you'll need

## Chapter **1**

# Needles, Hooks, and Other Tools

**A**s with any new project that you decide to undertake, you first have to figure out what tools and materials you need to get the job done. For knitting or crocheting, your needs are pretty simple. Grab a set of needles or a crochet hook and some yarn, find a comfortable seat, and you're ready to go.

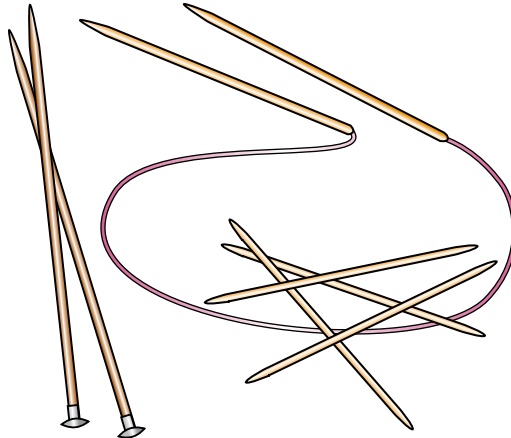
In this chapter, you discover the different types of knitting needles and crochet hooks and when to use them. You also find out about other tools that aren't necessary all the time but can be useful when you're knitting or crocheting different types of designs.

## Selecting Knitting Needles

Knitting needles come in a stunning assortment of materials, styles, and sizes to mesh with your knitting style, the particular project you're working on, your aesthetics, and your budget.

## Exploring needles

You can choose from three kinds of knitting needles: straight, circular, and double-pointed (see Figure 1-1 and the following sections).

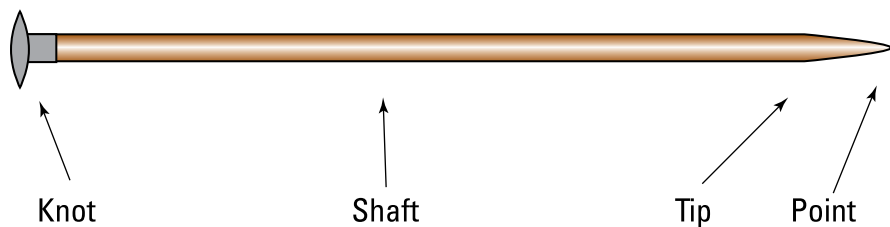


**FIGURE 1-1:**  
Three kinds of  
knitting needles.

*Illustration by Wiley, Composition Services Graphics*

## Telling it straight

*Straight needles* are generally used for *flat knitting* — knitting on the right side and then turning and knitting on the wrong side. Straight needles come in many standard lengths, ranging from 7-inch “scarf needles” to those that are 10, 13, and 14 inches. The larger your project, the longer the needle you need. (You also can knit flat with a circular needle for wide projects; see the next section for details about circular needles.) Figure 1-2 shows the various parts of straight needles.



**FIGURE 1-2:**  
Straight knitting  
needle anatomy.

*Illustration by Wiley, Composition Services Graphics*

## Going in circles

A *circular needle* is simply a pair of straight knitting needle tips joined by a flexible cable. You can use a circular needle to *knit in the round* — knitting in a continuous, spiral-like fashion without turning your work. This technique creates a seamless tube large enough for a sweater body or small enough for a neckband. You also can use a circular needle as you would straight needles to work back and forth. This approach can be particularly handy for lengthwise-knit scarves, blankets, and other very wide pieces.

Circular needles are available in many different lengths, most frequently 16, 24, 29, and 36 inches, although they're also available as long as 60 inches! For smaller circumferences, some knitters find that double-pointed needles, described in the next section, are more comfortable to work with.



TIP

When you buy a circular needle, check to make sure the spot where the needle tip meets the cable (called the *join*) is smooth to prevent stitches from snagging. Several manufacturers now make circular needles with interchangeable needle tips and various cable lengths. These interchangeable needles are useful for a wide variety of projects and make it very easy to swap needles when you're attempting to find the right gauge for your chosen yarn.



REMEMBER

The needle size appears on the package (which you can use as a storage case), but it doesn't always appear on the needle itself, which can be a bit of a pain. To keep track of needle sizes, invest in a small metal or plastic needle gauge (discussed in "Collecting Gizmos and Gadgets" later in this chapter). A needle gauge has graduated holes to help you determine the size of your needle.
















## Doing rounds with double-pointed needles

*Double-pointed needles* (abbreviated *dpns*) have a point at each end and are sold in sets of four or five needles. They work the same way as a circular needle — in rounds. You use them to make small tubes when your knitting has too few stitches to stretch around the circumference of a circular needle — for such things as sleeve cuffs, tops of hats, socks, mittens, and so on. They come in 7- and 10-inch lengths and have even shown up in 5-inch lengths — a great boon to those who enjoy making socks and mittens.

## Sizing them up

A needle's size is determined by its diameter. The smaller the size, the narrower the needle and the smaller the stitch it makes. Figure 1-3 shows needle sizes and their US and metric equivalents.

## Popular Knitting Needle Sizes

	US	Metric
	0	2 mm
	1	2¼ mm
	2	2¾ mm
	3	3¼ mm
	4	3½ mm
	5	3¾ mm
	6	4 mm
	7	4½ mm
	8	5 mm
	9	5½ mm
	10	6 mm
	10½	6½ mm
	11	8 mm
	13	9 mm
	15	10 mm

**FIGURE 1-3:**  
Chart of needle  
sizes.

*Illustration by Wiley, Composition Services Graphics*



**TIP**

If you aren't sure what needle sizes you'll need in the future, try a circular knitting needle set with interchangeable tips. Even though the needle is designed for circular knitting, you can also use it to knit back and forth. Some sets feature plastic needle tips, some metal. These sets allow you to combine different-sized needle tips with different connector cords to make a very large range of needle sizes on the fly. An interchangeable circular needle is especially handy when you're unsure which needle size to use for a given yarn. If the current size isn't giving you the right gauge, simply switch the tip up or down one size instead of starting over on another needle.