

TIPS FOR BECOMING AN INDEPENDENT KNITTER

Elizabeth Zimmerman: *“Most people have an obsession; mine is knitting ... Properly practiced, knitting soothes the troubled spirit, and it doesn’t hurt the untroubled spirit either.”*

Alice Starmore: *“The only way to become a great knitter is to knit, knit, knit until you produce perfect, even stitches; learn a basic cast-on and how to make knit and purl stitches, then practice until you make perfect fabric.”*

Little things make a difference – and often make the knitted fabric more attractive. Joining yarns properly can be achieved several ways and the method will depend on the nature of the yarn. If the yarn is wool – **SPIT-SPLICE** works – it doesn’t require anything special.

Ends of the wool yarn to be joined should be feathery, not blunt cut, moistened, overlapped, rubbed between your hands until felting occurs. The length of time this takes will depend upon the yarn.

Other methods are used for non-wool yarns and for those designs where felted overlaps might make an unattractive join. You will need to experiment with your yarn.

RESOURCES

The Internet is a gold mine of knitting related information. Do a **Google** search for the technique or issue for which you need help. Typing **Spit Slice** into the Google search will provide thousands of sites to explore – more than you’ll want to read. www.YouTube.com (where I found 627 entries) will provide a visual tutorial. If you’re a passionate knitter/lover of fiber, you may want to join an online group, www.Ravelry.com. There you will find thousands of members sharing their experiences with modern day knitting – information can be found by searching through files, patterns, designers, yarns, etc. It is a wonderful place to spend more time than you intended when you signed in to find a bit of information about a particular design or yarn.

Magazines/Periodicals: reading all you find will extend your general knowledge and help you become a thinking knitter. Some of my favorites, readily available and diverse for a variety of tastes, include the following: **Interweave Knits; Knitter’s Magazine; Vogue Knitting; Knit N Style;** and many others.

Books to recommend for general information helping you to become more independent:

Knitting Without Tears, Elizabeth Zimmerman – any book by EZ is worthwhile.

Knitting in the Old Way, Priscilla A. Gibson-Roberts and Deborah Robson

Design It, Knit It, Debbie Bliss

Knit, Purl, Color (3 volumes of basics published by XRX), Sally Melville

Knitwear Design Workbook, Shirley Paden

Sweater Design in Plain English, Maggie Righetti

Reference Books:

Knitting On the Edge; Knitting Over the Edge, Knitting Beyond the Edge, Nicky Epstein. These are excellent books for instructions for edge finishes.

Stitchionary volumes 1, 2, 3, – books by Vogue Knitting, well illustrated and categorized for easy use.

The Harmony Guides by Interweave Press provide basic stitch dictionaries including volumes on cables and arans, and knit edgings and trims.

Alice Starmore is one of the major designers in the knitting world, one of my favorite authors who has provided several volumes of patterns featuring Fair Isle knitting, Aran designs, and also provides beautiful wool yarn from her home island, the Hebrides. Her website is rich with designs and stories, and I recommend it to you: www.virtualyarns.com. After you have a good look/read there, carefully type in this address: www.virtual-yarns.com where you will find some extra designs and her tips for knitting. If you're a knitter who wants to continue to learn more, you'll probably enjoy what she has to say. I especially liked her last two tips: "If you make a mistake – don't delay – rip! Enjoy – you have a choice – knit because you love to knit and everything will fall into place."

Millie Payne

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