

rows of knitting (Figure 1). If you have a chain stitch selvedge, pick up two stitches into every third chain. If you have a stockinette stitch selvedge, you may need to skip some of the selvedge stitches as you pick up. Skip stitches at regular intervals for a smooth pick-up edge. If you're unsure about the number of stitches to pick up, measure the length of the pick-up edge and calculate what your cast-on number would be for length. Or place a vertical pin every inch along the edge, then pick up your gauge per inch between the pins.

To pick up stitches along a backward-loop cast-on edge, pick up one stitch in each cast-on loop (Figure 2). The pick-up row is nearly invisible on the front of the work.

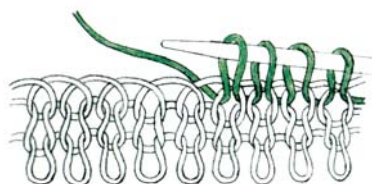


Figure 2

Seams

Crochet Chain Stitch Seam

Also called the “crochet slip stitch seam,” this technique makes a very sturdy seam. It's a good choice for fragile yarn because only small amounts of yarn are pulled through the fabric at a time. I like to use the crochet chain stitch seam to decoratively join chain selvages on the outside of sweaters. The technique is the same whether you're working along selvedge edges (as for the side seams of sweaters worked up and down) or bind-off edges (as for the shoulder seams of sweaters worked up and down).

Before you begin, lightly steam the edges to make them easier to handle. Hold the pieces to be seamed parallel to each other with their right sides together if you want the seam on the inside of the garment; hold the pieces with their wrong sides together if you want a decorative seam on the outside of the garment. Be careful not to work too tightly as this will cause the seam to pucker.

Insert the crochet hook under the first chain on each piece, draw a loop of yarn through the fabric and onto the hook, *insert the hook into the next pair of chain stitches to the left as illustrated, and draw a loop of yarn through the fabric and the loop on the hook. Repeat from * for each stitch, pulling the loops to match the tension of the fabric. At the end, cut the yarn and pull the tail through the last loop on the hook.

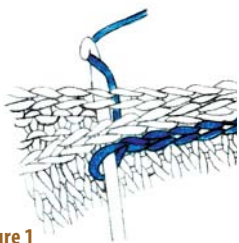


Figure 1

Fishbone Stitch

The fishbone stitch is very fluid and moves with the fabric. It is nearly invisible when sewn with the working yarn. For a decorative laced-up look, use a contrasting color yarn. For an invisible flat seam, use it with a garter stitch or seed stitch selvedge.

Lay the pieces to be seamed side by side on a flat surface with their right sides facing up. Anchor the tail of the seaming yarn to one piece. Make a simple whipstitch (page 139) at the base of the two fabric pieces—this will serve as the first horizontal stitch.

If you're working along selvedge edges, begin on the right side of the seam and * insert the needle under one-half selvedge stitch from back to front, then insert the needle under one-half selvedge stitch directly opposite on the left side of the seam, under the head of the newly made stitch (Figure 1). Gently pull the working yarn to pull the two sides together. Repeat from * for each stitch.

If you're working along two bind-off edges, *insert the tapestry needle between the bound-off loops of one stitch on the far side (Figure 2), pull yarn through. Bring the yarn over the bound-off edges to the near side and insert needle under both loops of the adjacent bound-off stitch on the near side. Gently pull working yarn to pull the two sides together. Repeat from * for each stitch. You can also make the seam by working under both loops on both sides or under single loops on both sides.

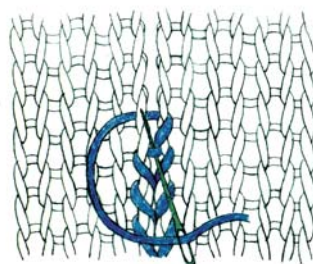


Figure 1

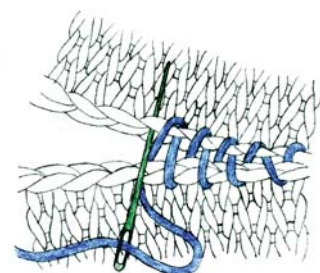


Figure 2

Kitchener Stitch

The Kitchener stitch provides a seamless join for live stitches by mimicking a row of knitting. You'll need to have the same number of stitches in the two pieces to be joined, and each set of stitches needs to be on a separate needle. Thread a tapestry needle with yarn four times the length of the row to be worked. I prefer to use the tail of the yarn I've been working with so that I don't have to work in extra ends, but this isn't always possible.

Hold the needles parallel to each other with the right sides of the knitting facing up. For stockinette stitch, work from right to left as follows:

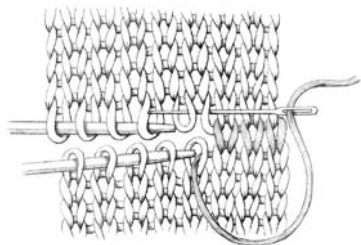
Step 1: Bring threaded needle through the first front stitch as if to purl (purlwise).

Step 2: Bring threaded needle through the first back stitch as if to knit (knitwise).

Step 3: Bring threaded needle knitwise through same front stitch, then through next front stitch purlwise.

Step 4: Bring threaded needle through the back stitch as if to purl, then through the next back stitch knitwise (as illustrated).

Repeat Steps 3 and 4 until all stitches have been joined.



Step 1: Bring threaded needle through the first front stitch as if to purl (purlwise).

Step 2: Bring threaded needle through the first back stitch purlwise (Figure 1).

Step 3: Bring threaded needle as if to knit (knitwise) through the same front stitch previously entered, then through the next front stitch purlwise.

Step 4: Bring threaded needle knitwise through the same back stitch previously entered, then through the next back stitch purlwise.

Repeat Steps 3 and 4 (Figure 2) until all stitches have been joined.

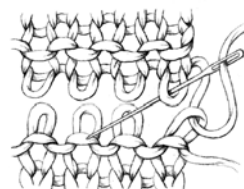


Figure 1

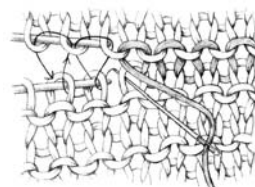


Figure 2

Tip Kitchener Stitch

I prefer to work the Kitchener stitch on flat fabric pieces by removing the stitches from the needles and placing them on firm, smooth waste yarn, such as cotton warp yarn or nylon string, that won't be easily caught up in the sewing process.