

FREE GUIDE TO KNITTING NEEDLES

Plus Bonus Knitting Needle Conversion Chart



INTERWEAVE
KNITS®

Free Guide to Knitting Needles

PLUS BONUS KNITTING NEEDLE CONVERSION CHART



When a project and knitter find their perfect needle match, stitches slip by effortlessly. Like knitters, needles come in all shapes and sizes, and somewhere on that wall of needles at your local yarn store, there's a set perfect for you. But is it wood? Metal? Plastic? Straight or circular? Fixed or interchangeable? Short of buying every pair and trying them all out, how do you find your needles, the ones that create a seamless transition between your hands and your project? We tested dozens of needles to help you find your knitting soulmate.

Cheers,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eunny Jang". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Eunny Jang
Editor, *Interweave Knits*

INTERWEAVE
KNITS[®]

FREE GUIDE TO KNITTING
NEEDLES PLUS BONUS KNITTING
NEEDLE CONVERSION CHART

*An Interweave Knits eBook edited by
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Wood Needles

- A Knitter's Pride Basix
- B Brittany C Crystal Palace
- D Addi Natura E Knitter's Pride Symfonie Dreamz
- F Knit Picks Harmony Wood
- G Blue Sky Alpacas

MATERIAL

Most knitting needles are made from some variety of wood, metal, or plastic. Which material you prefer will depend on how you knit and how you want your knitting process to feel.

WOOD

Common varieties: birch, laminated birch, bamboo, ebony, rosewood

Needles we tried: Addi Natura, Blue Sky Alpacas, Brittany, ChiaoGoo, Clover Takumi and Takumi Velvet, Crystal Palace, HiyaHiya Bamboo, Indian Lake Artisans, Knit Picks Harmony Wood, Knitter's Pride Basix and Symfonie Dreamz, Lantern Moon, Pony Rosewood, Tulip

The wood used to make quality knitting needles is typically hardwood. It's strong, fairly rigid but not brittle, and splinter-free. It can be dyed, stained, polished, and/or finished to a high gloss. Both solid and laminated woods are found in high-quality needles; laminated wood needles may feel denser and more substantial in the hand.

Wooden needles feel warm to the touch, yield slightly with hand movement, and produce soft, dull clicks as the needles brush against each other. Depending on the surface treatment, wooden surfaces tend to be subtly "sticky," which prevents stitches from slipping off accidentally but sometimes requires manual manipulation to move stitches along. All the wooden needles we tried use carefully selected raw materials and precise manufacturing processes for finished products that are,

without exception, a pleasure to hold and to behold.

Pros: Good-looking, warm to the touch, quiet, light (especially bamboo)

Cons: Can be delicate; smaller sizes vulnerable to breaking or warping under stress

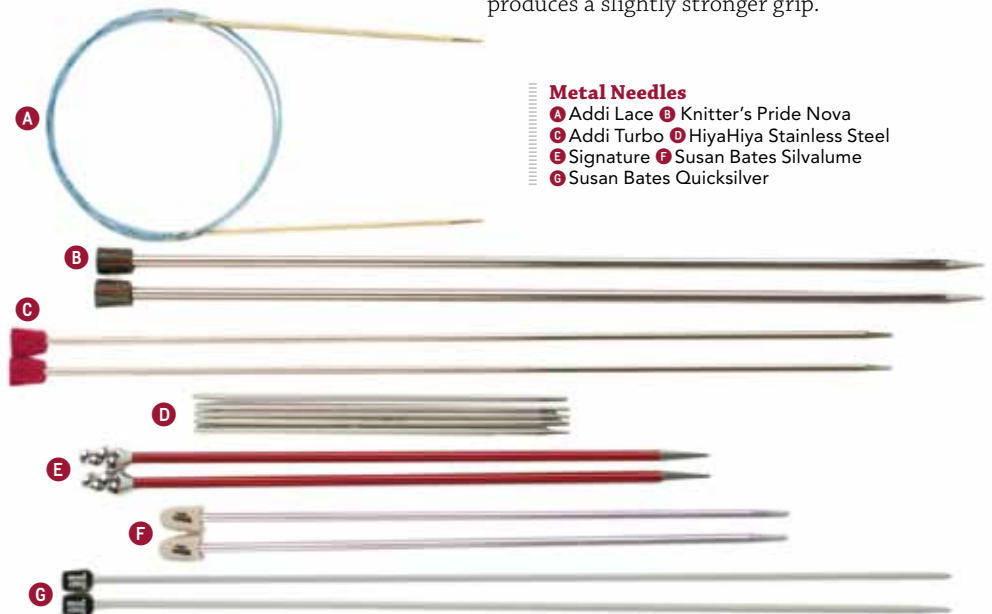
Good for: Lace knitters and beginning knitters, who will appreciate the way stitches stay put; knitters with arthritis or repetitive stress injuries; any knitter who craves a tactile, sensory knitting experience

METAL

Common varieties: aluminum, brass, nickel-plated brass, stainless steel

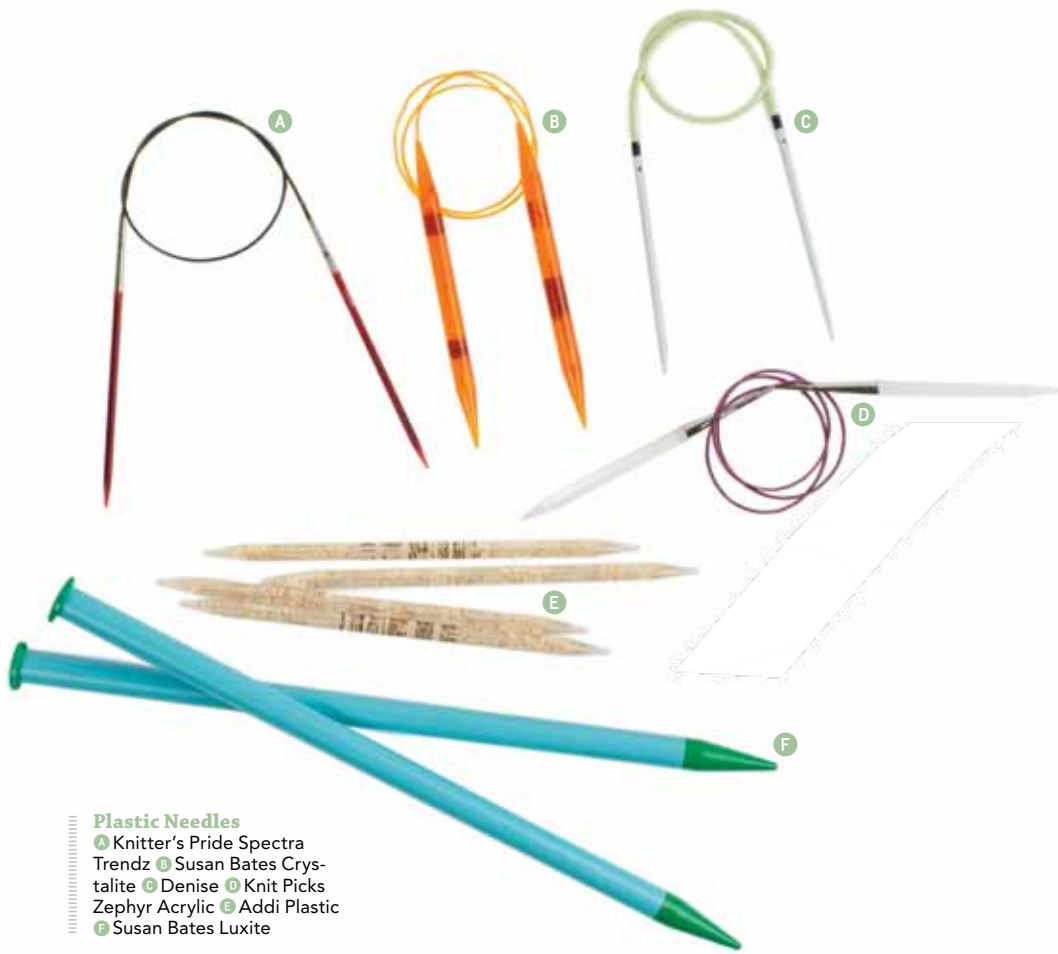
Needles we tried: Addi Lace and Turbo; ChiaoGoo RED, HiyaHiya Sharp and Stainless Steel; Knit Picks Nickel-Plated; Knitter's Pride Nova; Pony and Pony Total, Signature; Susan Bates Quicksilver, Silvalume, and Velocity

Metal for knitting needles is selected for strength, corrosion resistance, and ability to take a smooth, durable finish. Metal needles can take and hold a sharp point and are strong, allowing for very fine diameters. The finish on a metal needle will affect the grip it has on stitches and its overall appearance, though stitches will tend to glide quickly and smoothly on most metal needles. Nickel-plated metal needles have the lightest stitch grip, facilitating fast, smooth knitting. The surface treatment of anodized aluminum needles produces a slightly stronger grip.



Metal Needles

- A Addi Lace B Knitter's Pride Nova
- C Addi Turbo D HiyaHiya Stainless Steel
- E Signature F Susan Bates Silvalume
- G Susan Bates Quicksilver



Plastic Needles

- A Knitter's Pride Spectra Trendz
- B Susan Bates Crystalite
- C Denise
- D Knit Picks Zephyr Acrylic
- E Addi Plastic
- F Susan Bates Luxite

Point Styles

- A Signature Stiletto
- B Addi Lace
- C HiyaHiya Sharp
- D Knit Picks Nickel-Plated
- E Knitter's Pride Symfonie Dreamz
- F Susan Bates Quicksilver
- G Brittany
- H Crystal Palace

Metal needles are cool to the touch and click more loudly than wooden needles.

Pros: Strong, rigid, promote smooth, fast knitting

Cons: Cool to the touch; heavy if made of solid metal

Good for: Knitters who want stitches that flow quickly and smoothly; lace and sock knitters who need strong, small-diameter needles

PLASTIC

Common varieties: acrylic

Needles we tried: Addi Plastic; Denise; Knit Picks Zephyr Acrylic; Knitter's Pride Spectra Trendz; Pony Pearl, Children's, and Total; Susan Bates Luxite and Crystalite

Plastic needles fill the performance gap between wood and metal. They have a moderate grip on stitches and a cool hand that warms quickly. The sounds they pro-

WHAT DO WE RECOMMEND?

FOR THE TRADITIONALIST: Straight needles and double-points in rich hardwoods and bamboo or pastel-colored anodized aluminum with early twentieth-century vintage appeal. Try Brittany, Blue Sky Alpacas, Clover Takumi, Crystal Palace, Lantern Moon, Pony Rosewood, and Susan Bates Silvalume needles.

FOR THE EFFICIENCY EXPERT: Nickel-plated fixed-length circulars, lace-point or stiletto-point tips. Try Addi Turbo, ChiaoGoo RED, Knit Picks Nickel-Plated, Knitter's Pride Nova, Susan Bates Velocity, and Clover Takumi Velvet needles for speed, and Addi Lace, ChiaoGoo RED Lace, HiyaHiya Sharp, and Signature Stiletto-point needles for accuracy.

FOR THE CUTE ONE: An affordable assortment of sizes and shapes in plastic and acrylics, from sparkly double-points

to jumbo Size 35 plastic straight needles to mix and match with abandon. Try Addi Plastic, ChiaoGoo I Love Knitting, Pony Pearl, and Susan Bates Crystalite and Luxite needles.

FOR THE ORGANIZER: Interchangeable circular needle sets and double-pointed needle sets organized by color. Try Addi Click, Clover Takumi, Denise, HiyaHiya, Knit Picks, Knitter's Pride, Lantern Moon, Pony Rosewood, and Tulip interchangeables. Also try Knitter's Pride Symfonie Dreamz and Susan Bates Silvalume double-pointed needles or Pony Total.

FOR THE AESTHETE: Beautiful wooden and metal straight needles with elegant endcaps and exotic wood double-pointed needles. Try Brittany, Blue Sky Alpacas, ChiaoGoo Blue Flower, Crystal Palace, Lantern Moon, Signature, and Tulip needles.

[continued on page 4]



Knitter's Pride



Addi Turbo

interchangeable needles

Sets of interchangeable knitting needles provide an assortment of needle tips and cables of varying lengths to mix and match, saving you money and space. Each of the several different methods for connecting needles to cables has its own quirks.

Every interchangeable set has a more noticeable join than its fixed-length circular needle equivalent. The key is to pick the join style that works best with your knitting style.

THREADED

Needles we tried: *Clover Takumi, HiyaHiya, Knit Picks, Knitter's Pride, Lantern Moon, Tulip*

Needle tips and cables have threaded ends that screw together. The tight fit makes the transition between cable and tip very smooth, but the join can loosen while knitting. Different manufacturers remedy this issue by including tightening tools to secure the connection (Knit Picks, Knitter's Pride) or using swivel cables (HiyaHiya, Tulip) that move the twist action away from the connection point. The cables of all these needles are comparable to those on high-quality fixed-length circulars.

Good for: Knitters who knit with minimal twisting motions or wrist movement

TWIST AND LOCK, OVERLAPPING

Needles we tried: *Addi Click*

Needle ends fit over the cables and lock in place with a slight twist. This system is less prone to

loosening during knitting, but the join between cable and needle tip is slightly more noticeable. In our test, the join was perceptible but did not impede the flow of the yarn over the needle, though knitters with tight stitches or thinner yarns may notice the join more. The cables are comparable to those on high-quality fixed-length circulars.

Good for: Knitters who work primarily with fingering-weight and larger yarns; knitters with average-to-loose tension

TWIST AND LOCK, ABUTTING

Needles we tried: *Denise, Pony Rosewood*

Needle tip and cable abut and lock in place with a slight twist. The transition on Denise cables feels smooth and secure. Cables are a little thicker than on other sets, but are supple and cooperative. Needle tips are only available in high-quality, durable plastic. Pony Rosewood sets include thin and thicker cable widths, with corresponding gold and black connectors.

Good for: Switching needle sizes with ease; the twist-and-lock method is quick and easy to customize.

NOT SURE HOW TO PROCEED?

Most interchangeable needles can be purchased individually as replacement components or in sample sets that contain a handful of needle tips and a cable. Buy one set of needle tips and one cable and try them out before committing.



Knit Picks



HiyaHiya



Tulip



Denise



Double-Pointed Needles

- A HiyaHiya Stainless Steel
- B Knitter's Pride Symfonie Dreamz
- C Addi Natura
- D Blue Sky Alpacos
- E Addi Aluminum

duce are quiet and neutral. Although there are many proprietary formulas for plastic, most plastic knitting needles are made from hard acrylic. Most are rigid but will flex, particularly at smaller diameters.

Plastic needles range from clear to opaque, and many are boldly colorful and fun to knit with. In addition, hollow-core plastic can make larger needles both lightweight and affordable.

Pros: Strong, lightweight, affordable, attractive; circular needles molded as one piece without a join

Cons: Not a natural material

Good for: Knitters who need large-size needles; knitters who need a variety of needles at a modest price; knitters who need a completely smooth join in a circular needle; knitters with arthritis or repetitive stress injuries

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS NEEDLE TIPS

All needles have at least one end that tapers to a point. This is the working end of the needle. Every brand of needle has a different degree of sharpness in its tips, from fine and narrow to rounded and blunt.

Sharp points are good for getting into tight stitches and for manipulating several stitches at once. On the other hand, finer points can more easily penetrate and split a strand of yarn, requiring more attention as you knit. Because large decreases are common in lace knitting, sharper-pointed needles are often labeled as “lace needles.”

Blunt points are less prone to splitting yarn strands, making them ideal for knitting quickly, by feel, and in less-than-ideal light.

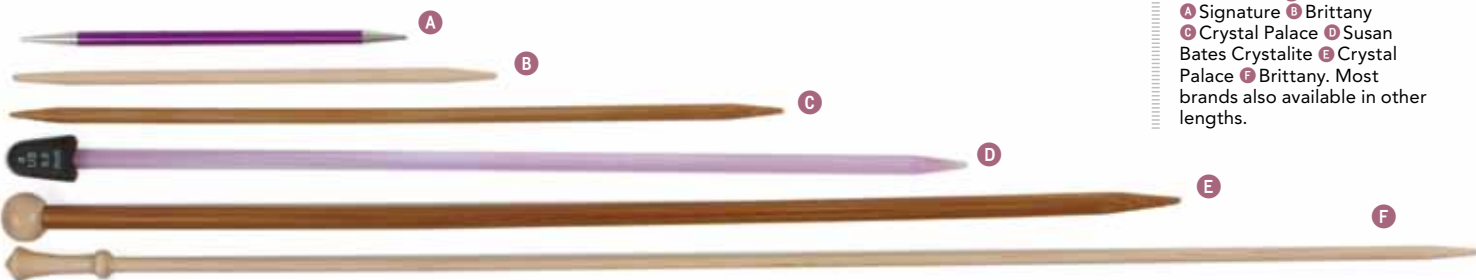
Taper length refers to the distance from the full needle diameter to the point. A lon-

ger taper will make the tip seem sharper and can be an aid when you work with several stitches at once. However, a longer taper can also lead to tighter stitches if you wrap the yarn too close to the point and not over the full needle diameter.

The ideal point sharpness and taper length depend on the knitter, the project, and the yarn being used. There is no standardized way to describe the relative sharpness of needle tips, but we found that Addi Lace, ChiaoGoo RED Lace, HiyaHiya Sharp, Knit Picks Nickel-Plated, Knitter's Pride Nova, and Signature Stiletto all had reliably sharp points.

NEEDLE STYLE

Straight, or single-pointed, knitting needles are straight sticks with an endcap that prevents the knitting from falling off



Needle Length

- A Signature
 - B Brittany
 - C Crystal Palace
 - D Susan Bates Crystalite
 - E Crystal Palace
 - F Brittany
- Most brands also available in other lengths.

the nonworking end. The endcaps also counterweight the needle, improving its balance and feel in the hand.

In general, longer straight needles that can accommodate more stitches make sense for larger projects. Consider, though, that longer needles are heavier, and that the growing work will add weight farther from the hands, which can make knitting difficult. You can, on the other hand, brace longer needles under an arm or in a belt for fast, sheath-style knitting.

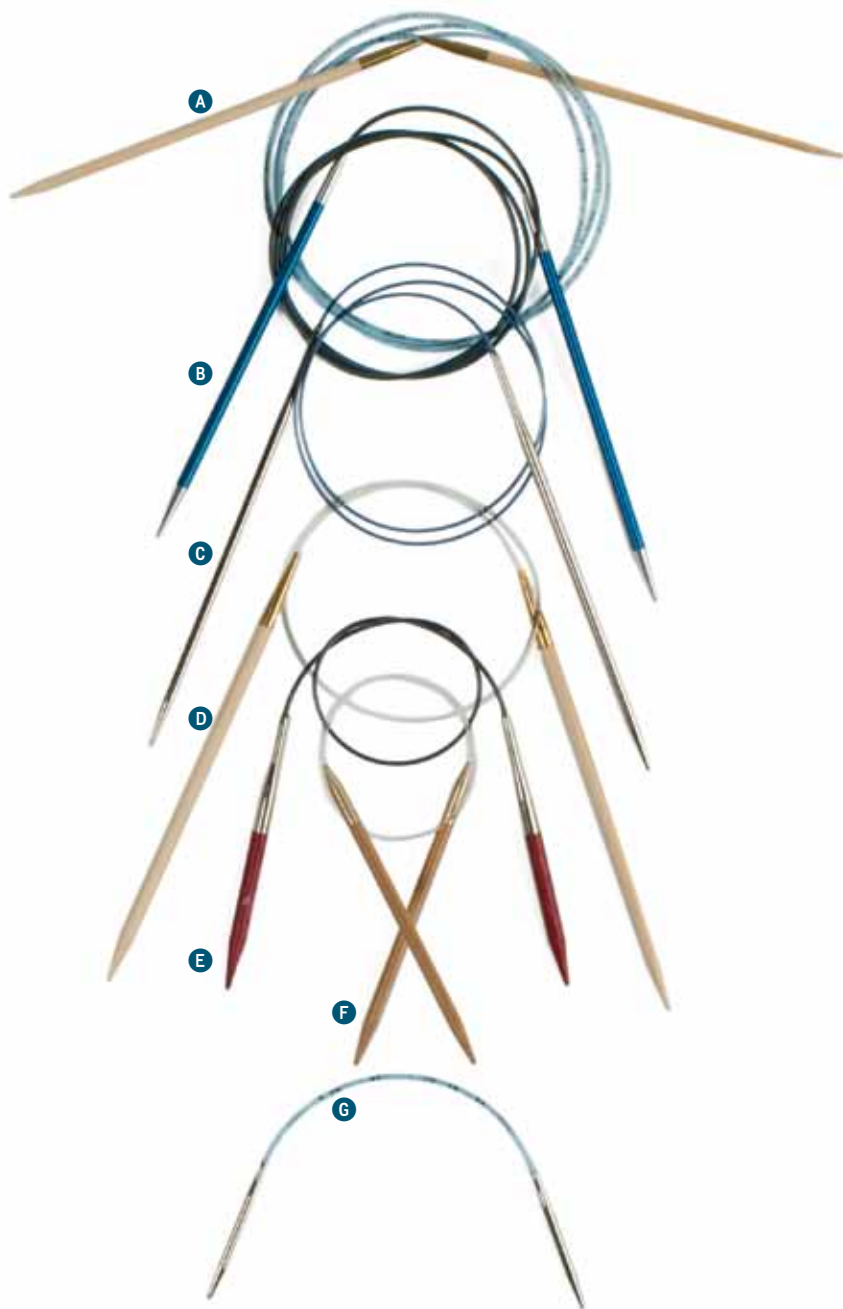
Shorter needles are lighter and more compact, but they may not comfortably accommodate all the stitches you need. As a general rule, choose a needle that will accommodate at least seventy-five percent of the full project width.

Double-pointed needles are straight needles with another tapered point instead of an endcap. They're usually used in sets of four or five when working in the round on small circumferences (such as socks and sleeves) but can also be used for making I-cord, as cable needles, or any time stitches need to come onto the needle from one end and come off the other.

Double-pointed needles are available in many lengths. Although you can work small circles with double-pointed needles of any length, short lengths (5" or less) are ideal for very small circumference areas, such as glove fingers. Very long double-pointed needles, or "knitting pins," can be used to work whole sweaters in the round.

Circular needles are the most versatile of all knitting needles. Originally intended for knitting in the round, they can be used for all kinds of knitting. When you work in the round, the full length of the needle (from tip to tip, including the cable) should be a little shorter than the circumference of the knitting, so the work can be distributed around the needle without stretching or crowding. When you knit back and forth in rows, simply ignore the cable and knit as if each end were an independent needle. The weight of the knitted piece will settle between the two needle tips (and right in your lap!), making circulars a good choice when you work on a large project in a limited space.

You can use circular needles instead of double-pointed needles to work on small-circumference areas by using the magic-loop or two-circular-needles technique.



Circular Needles

- A Addi Natura B Signature
- C Susan Bates Velocity D Tulip
- E Knitter's Pride Symfonie Dreamz
- F Crystal Palace G Addi Turbo

THE NEEDLE GUIDE

Brand	Make	Material	Available As				Notes
			DPN	Straight	Circular	Interchangeable	
Addi	Turbo	Nickel-plated brass		●	●	●	Very smooth surface
	Aluminum	Aluminum	●	●			
	Lace	Brass			●	●	Sharp tips; grippy surface
	Natura	Bamboo	●	●	●	●	
	Plastic	Acrylic	●	●			Slightly flexible
Blue Sky Alpacas		Rosewood	●				Storage tin included
Brittany		Birch	●	●			
ChiaoGoo		Bamboo	●	●	●		
	RED	Stainless steel	●		●		Available with lace tips and with or without bend in cable
	Blue Flower	Lacquered bamboo		●			Available in gift sets or individual pairs
	Find a Cure	Bamboo		●			
	I Love Knitting	Bamboo		●			
Clover	Takumi	Bamboo	●	●	●	●	
	Takumi Velvet	Polished bamboo	●	●	●		Extra-smooth surface
Crystal Palace		Bamboo	●	●	●		
Denise		Plastic				●	Thick but flexible cables
HiyaHiya	Bamboo	Bamboo	●		●	●	
	Sharp	Stainless steel	●		●		Sharp tips
	Stainless Steel	Stainless steel	●		●	●	
Indian Lakes Artisans		Wood	●	●			Handmade in the U.S.
Knit Picks	Nickel-Plated	Nickel-plated brass	●		●	●	Very smooth surface; sharp tips
	Harmony Wood	Dyed laminated birch	●	●	●	●	Sharp tips
	Zephyr Acrylic	Clear acrylic				●	Slightly flexible
Knitter's Pride	Nova	Nickel-plated brass	●	●	●	●	Very smooth surface; sharp tips
	Symfonie Dreamz	Dyed laminated birch	●	●	●	●	Range of colors; also available with square profile
	Spectra Trendz	Acrylic				●	Range of colors
	Basix	Birch	●	●	●		Large sizes
Lantern Moon		Ebony, blonde wood, rosewood, slate	●	●	●	●	Smooth surface, contrasting endcaps; Interchangeables only available in rosewood and ebony
	Sox Stix	Ebony, blonde wood, rosewood, slate	●				Available in 5 or 6" lengths
Pony	Pearls	Cellulose acetate	●	●	●		Available in a range of colors
	Rosewood	Coated rosewood	●	●	●	●	
	Straight	Anodized aluminum		●			
	Children's	Plastic		●			
	Total	Aluminum, plastic		●			Straight needles with flexible cables and built-in row counters
Signature		Anodized aluminum	●	●	●		Available in Blunt, Middy, and Stiletto points; Stiletto points are very sharp
Susan Bates	Velocity	Nickel-plated brass			●		Very smooth surface
	Quicksilver	Aluminum alloy	●	●	●		
	Silvalume	Anodized aluminum	●	●	●		Range of colors
	Luxite	Plastic		●			Hollow core; only available in large sizes
	Crystalite	Plastic		●	●		Range of colors
Tulip		Bamboo	●	●	●	●	

NEEDLE SIZES

Knitting needles are labeled in different ways depending on where they are manufactured and sold. This conversion chart will help you make sure you choose the right needles every time. *Note that some manufacturers may use nonstandard sizes; when in doubt, check the metric measurement of the needle against that called for in the pattern.*

Metric Needle Size (mm)	U.S. Needle Size	U.K./Canadian Needle Size	Japanese Needle Size
2.0	0	14	
2.1			0
2.25	1	13	
2.4			1
2.7			2
2.75	2	12	
3.0		11	3
3.25	3	10	
3.3			4
3.5	4		
3.6			5
3.75	5	9	
3.9			6
4.0	6	8	
4.2			7
4.5	7	7	8
4.8			9
5.0	8	6	
5.1			10
5.4			11
5.5	9	5	
5.7			12
6.0	10	4	13
6.3			14
6.5	10½	3	
6.6			15
7.0		2	7mm
7.5		1	
8.0	11	0	8mm
9.0	13	00	9mm
10.0	15	000	10mm
12.0–13.0	17		12mm
15.0	19		15mm
19.0	35		
20.0			20mm
25.0	50		25mm