

Woolly Wormhead

Provisional Cast-on

If you are knitting a sideways constructed Hat, and wish for a professional seam-free finish, then this is the cast-on for you. Working hand in hand with Kitchener stitch, this cast-on method allows you to cast-on with 'false' stitches, that are later removed and grafted.

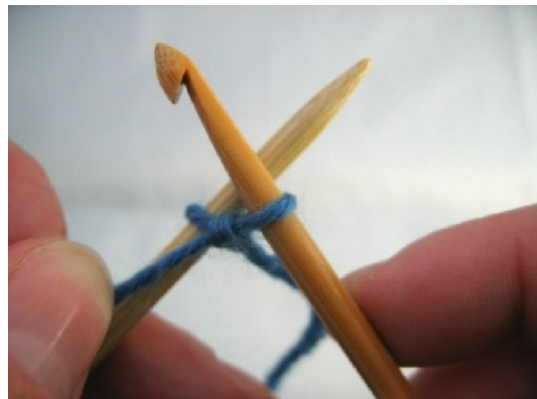
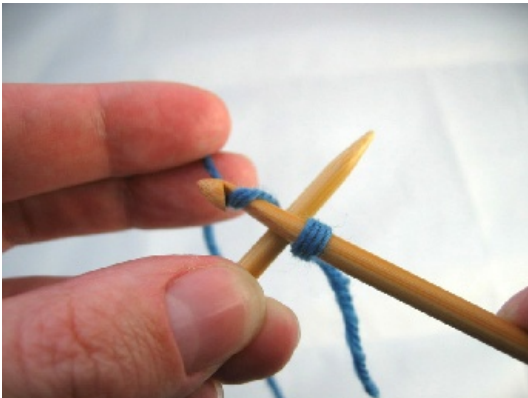
The chain crochet provisional cast-on is fairly well known, yet the method of working it directly onto the needle isn't so much – trying to find the right bump along a crocheted chain to pick up as a stitch can be difficult, and if the wrong bump is picked up the provisional cast-on isn't as easily removed. Crocheting the stitches directly onto the needle, as demonstrated here, saves a lot of time and effort!

Once you have finished the body of your knitting, this cast-on is easily removed, although it is advisable to remove the chain stitch by stitch, to avoid dropping any stitches.

To do this provisional cast-on, you will need a crochet hook and some waste yarn. The amount of waste yarn needed will vary depending on your project but for most of Woolly Wormhead's sideways Hats, 2 metres is plenty.

When choosing your waste yarn, use something that isn't fuzzy, something without grip. A wool yarn may well start to felt with the handling and it can be difficult to remove. Cotton or other smooth yarns are best for this job.

The crochet hook should be the same size as the needles you will use, although one a little larger will help make the chain easier to remove at the end. Same goes for the waste yarn – use one the same gauge, or slightly heavier, than the yarn you will be using in your knitting.



1. Using your waste yarn, make a slip-knot and slip it onto your crochet hook. Hold the hook in front of the needle, taking the working yarn behind the needle. With the hook catch the working yarn at the front.



2. Pull the working yarn through loop on the hook – this will form your first stitch. Repeat these 2 steps until you have the required amount of stitches.



3. Once you have the right amount of stitches, pull the remaining loop on the crochet hook until it becomes very large, tie a knot in it and then break your yarn.

4. Your provisional cast-on is now complete and you are ready to knit! This is how the cast-on looks after a few rows of knitting.

When you have finished the body of knitting and wish to remove the provisional cast-on, carefully undo the knot in the waste yarn and start to remove the chain. Don't rip the chain out quickly – you could lose or drop stitches – so it is best to remove them carefully, one by one.

If the stitches around the provisional cast-on are complex and it's difficult to see where to insert your needle to grab the stitch, gently stretch the chain and the knitting in different directions and the loop of the stitch you need to pick up will be more visible.

If there is any instance when you need to cast-off then cast-on again in a piece of knitting, this cast-on method works perfectly as it mirrors a regular cast-off very nicely.

Instead of using waste yarn, you will use your working yarn. The slip knot you would normally create to start the provisional cast-on will be replaced as the last stitch knitted before the cast-on commences – slip this knitted stitch onto the crochet hook and work as above.

When you have cast-on enough stitches less one, slip the stitch on the hook back onto the needle and your cast-on section is now ready. This method works particularly well when you need to cast-on mid-row.

Contact:-

All information included is accurate to the best of my knowledge, and is gained through my own experimentation and development. The photographs & text used

in this tutorial are part of a more expansive, detailed tutorial found in 'Going Straight – A New Generation of Knitted Hats' – Woolly Wormhead's first book.

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