

## Knitting Step By Step Episode 2

Jason: Welcome to Knitting Step by Step. The video podcast that teaches you how to knit. I'm your host, Jason Block.

Ivy: And I'm your knitting instructor, Ivy Reisner.

Jason: This is episode 2, the Cast On. Last week, we told you what materials you should have by now, and what project we're working on. Ivy, remind the viewers what we're going to do.

Ivy: We're working on a garter stitch scarf. And by now you should have a pair of size 8 US/ 5.0mm knitting needles and about 400 yards/400 meters of a worsted weight yarn.

Jason: Such as this. Now. You told me earlier that there are literally hundreds of ways to cast on. Shouldn't there be just one universal one that everybody can learn?

Ivy: Would be nice, but there's different ways to cast on for different things. If you want a very stretchy edge, you're going to have a cast on different than if you want a very firm, decorative edge. There are also specialty cast ons, such as the figure 8 cast on, which is good for sock toes, because it allows you to knit from both sides at once, and the provisional cast on, which allows you to remove the cast on edge, and make those stitches live later on.

Jason: Now, that is for, of course, expert knitters, but right now the people who are watching right now are beginners and don't know it yet. But right now, how many different cast on methods are you going to teach us today.

Ivy: Today four.

Jason: Okay. So now, if you'll explain to me and the viewers out there for the first one, which is called a long tail cast on, what the long tail means, and how you get that long tail.

Ivy: Okay, the tail of the yarn is basically the stuff on the side of the project that's not the working yarn, which is connected to the ball. You want to start a long tail cast on by pulling a long tail of yarn. Now normally that would be about three times the width of the width of the project, so if you're casting on for ten inches, you want to pull a thirty-inch tail. For this, it's simple to just pull basically two cubits. Wrap the yarn around your arm, and when it comes back to the thumb, pull a little bit beyond that and call this your tail (indicated section of yarn just pulled) and this your working yarn (indicates yarn up to and including the ball of yarn).

Jason: Now, in about a minute we're going to show in a close-up view, how you cast on the long tail and the three other basic cast ons and we're going to go into the first part of knitting, which is of course, the knit stitch.

(Caption: The Long Tail Cast-On)

\*Note: Jason is off camera for this segment.

Jason: Now we're about to go into the four different methods of casting on. The first one's called the long tail. Ivy, show us what you've got.

Ivy: You take your yarn, you make a loop, you pull the working yarn across the back, bisecting the loop, you pull that strand through, and you put it on your needles, pulling closed but not too tight, and that's your basic slip knot, all your cast ons are going to start that way. Now, you're going to take your thumb and forefinger and put them in this V that's forming here. The tail goes over your thumb and the working yarn goes over your forefinger, your other three fingers close on both strands. Pull the needle back a little bit, and you can see you've got another V. I'm going to show you what we're going to do, then I'm going to explain a little bit about how it's working, and then I'm going to show it to you again.

So, you take your needle. You put it in the strand that's around your thumb, in the same way that the thumb is addressing the yarn. Go over the strand that's around your pointer, under again, through the thumb loop. Take the thumb out. Pull it not too tight but closed, and return to your starting position.

The goal is to create a loop with this yarn (points to yarn over index finger) and pull it through this loop (indicates loop over thumb). And if you think about how you'd do that with your hands, well you'd reach in you'd grab it, you'd pull it. You're doing the same thing with your needle. You're going to go in. You're going to grab this loop. You're going to pull it back out, and then you're just going to take your thumb out and finish it. Again. You're going to go in, over, under, around, take your thumb out, pull it closed.

Jason: One more time.

Ivy: In. Over. Under. Take the thumb out. Pull it closed.

Jason: Right. You said it's the most difficult, but it's the best one. Why?

Ivy: It's a very stretch cast on and it makes a beautiful edge.

Jason: Okay. Now take the needle out and let's get ready for the next one.

(Caption: The Knit-On Cast-On)

Jason: We'll go to the second one, which is called the knit on cast on. Why is it called that?

Ivy: Because you're using the knit stitch to cast on, pretty much.

Jason: Show us.

Ivy: Start with about five or six inches of a tail and you're going to do that same slip knot again. Make a loop. Bisect it with your working yarn. Pull the working yarn through. Put it on your needle and pull it not too tight. You're going to need your second needle for this. And you're going to put your second needle into the loop in the same direction that the first needle is addressing it. Wrap your yarn around your finger for tension. Not too much, you don't want to pull too tight. And you're going to pull this around the needle so that it goes under and back and then up, and then over, and forward again. Pull that new loop forward through the stitch and put it on that first needle. Again. In. Around. Through. And put it on that first needle. In. Around. Through. And put it on that first needle.

Jason: One more time.

Ivy: In. Around. Through. And put it on that first needle.

Jason: Now, what are the advantages and disadvantages of this particular method of casting on?

Ivy: Once you've done a row of knit on cast on, you've done a row of knitting. It is a stretchy cast on, not quite as stretchy as the long tail. It does make a very nice edge. And when you've learned this method of casting on, you've pretty much learned your knit stitch.

(Caption: The Cable Cast-On)

Jason: But you've got two more to go. The third one is called the cable cast on. Show us why.

Ivy: Okay. You're going to start pretty much the same as your knit on cast on. Start with about five or six inches of a tail. Make a loop. Bisect the loop with your working yarn from behind. Pull the working yarn through. Put it on the needle. And pull it closed, but not tight. There's your slip knot. Now this first stitch looks exactly like the knit on cast on. You come in, wrap the yarn around your finger for tension, wrap around, over, and forward. Pull it through and put it on the needle. Here's where things get different. Instead of going into the stitch, what you're going to do is you're going to go between the two stitches.

Jason: And what does that do?

Ivy: It makes a more twisted edge, it makes a very beautiful cabled sort of an edge, but it makes a very firm, not at all stretchy edge.

Jason: Continue.

Ivy: Wrap the yarn the same as for the knit on cast on. Come through the same way. Put it on the needle. Again. In between the two stitches. Around. Pull it through and forward. Put the stitch on the needle.

Jason: Again.

Ivy: In between the two stitches. Around. Through. And put it on the needle.

Jason: Okay. So we've seen three.

(Caption: The Reverse Loop Cast-On)

Jason: Let's see the fourth one and the fourth one is something that I would think little kids could learn for their first project. What's that one called?

Ivy: It's called the twisted loop cast on, or reverse loop cast on, and it is the easiest, but it is the least elegant. If you go with this one now, try to learn one of the other ones later on. You cannot use this for knitting in the round.

Jason: Why?

Ivy: Because it's going to make a gap between the stitches that's going to get bigger with each stitch. So when you get back to where you started, you'll have an unsightly loop hanging down.

Jason: Show us the reverse loop cast on.

Ivy: Take about six inches of yarn again. Form your loop. Bisect it with your working yarn. Pull the working yarn through. Put it on the needle and pull it closed, but not too tight. You only need one needle for this one. Now, wrap the yarn around finger, turn it, and put it on the needle. You're kind of going to pick up the yarn as if you're point palm up towards the needle, and then twist it. The needle goes through. Pull it, but not too tight.

Jason: It does seem very simplistic.

Ivy: It is. You can really cast on very quickly with this. But let's just see it one or two more times.

(Caption: Counting Stitches)

Jason: How do you know how many stitches you have on your needle?

Ivy: You can count the loops and that first slip knot does count as a stitch.

(Caption: The Knit Stitch)

Jason: Now that you have your yarn on your needle, you're going to have to actually know how to use it. So, show us the knit stitch.

Ivy: You put the needle through the first loop in the same direction the other needle is facing it, so they're both coming through the same way. Wrap your yarn, first around your finger a little bit for tension, not too much. One of the biggest mistake beginning knitters make is strangling the needle. You don't want to do that. Wrap it. It goes behind, up and around, and then comes forward. Pull that loop forward through the first stitch. Pop that stitch off and you're good to go. Again, insert the needle, front to back, wrap the yarn, pull it through forwards. Pop the stitch off. You want the bar to fall on the side away from you. One more time it's going to be in, around, through, and pop that stitch off.

Jason: So now do a row.

Ivy: Okay.

Jason: Now what's really kind of funny is that you didn't know this stitch when you first began to knit. Is that true?

Ivy: No, I only knew the purl stitch. Sharron knew the knit stitch. We traded.

Jason: There you go. It's as simple as that. That's how you got started. So now, show them what you have there.

Ivy: The knit side is going to look like a bunch of little "v"s. The purl side is going to look like a bunch of little bumps. This stitch here is going to look loose. As soon as you start knitting the second row, that looseness is going to go away. And the way to start the next row is simply to turn it around and you go do your knit stitch.

Jason: So now we've shown you the knit stitch and four ways to cast on.

(scene cut)

Jason: So now you have seen the four ways of how to cast on. The long tail, the cable cast on, the reverse curve.

Ivy: The reverse loop cast on and the knit on cast on.

Jason: That's why I'm the host and you're the knitting instructor. So next time on the podcast we're going to show you how to check a gauge and we're going to show you how to join a new yarn once you've run out of the first ball of yarn, which I think is a really important skill. And I think another one, how to pick up dropped stitches, because everybody in this podcast is going to make a mistake or two and you know what? That's okay, because you're learning. Making mistakes is the only way to learn. So, we didn't get any viewer questions this week, which is sad because she wanted to impart more of her wisdom. So, we want questions. How do we contact you?

Ivy: E-mail me at [Ivy@KnittingStepByStep.com](mailto:Ivy@KnittingStepByStep.com) or go to the website and leave a comment on the blog.

Jason: Until next time. This is Knitting Step by Step. I'm Jason Block.

Ivy: And I'm Ivy Reisner. Thank you for watching