

Materials and techniques

Knitting on four needles can be tricky, especially when you are working the first few rows. To cast on, use the two-needle method, sometimes called 'chain' cast-on, as it will create a firm, tight edge that is less likely to slip off the needles. For most of the patterns, you will see that the first row (or round) is knitted by inserting the needle into the back loop of each stitch, which also helps to form a firm edge.

The needle sizes given in the patterns are smaller than you might expect and you may have to use a larger or smaller needle size than the one recommended in order to produce a firm, close-knit fabric that will hold its shape and not allow any stuffing to poke through.

The projects are mostly made from double knitting yarn, though some of the smaller items use 4-ply. As a general rule, I prefer to use natural fibres in my knitting projects, particularly pure wool, as it has a natural elasticity. In some cases, though, I have had to use acrylic yarns and various blends in order to source suitable colours. For the main colours in each project, quantities are stated in balls but you will not use a whole ball, so before you go shopping for yarns, experiment with any oddments you already have. If you need to buy only a small amount of a certain colour, tapestry yarns are a good choice as they are similar in thickness to double knitting, are sold in small skeins and are available in a wider choice of colours than most knitting yarns.

Tension guide

Most of the patterns in this book are knitted to a similar tension – 12 sts and 18 rows to **5cm (2in)**, measured over stocking stitch on 2.75mm (UK 12; US 2) needles, using DK yarn.

To be sure that your tension matches, work a swatch using spare DK yarn on 2.75mm (UK 12; US 2) needles and measure it. If you have more stitches over 10cm (4in), this indicates that you knit more tightly than the stated tension (or gauge) and your egg cosy is likely to end up smaller than the one in the picture, so use a larger needle; if you have fewer stitches, this means that you tend to knit more loosely, so choose a smaller needle.

Abbreviations

st(s)	stitch(es)
k	knit
p	purl
SS	stocking stitch
sl	slip
pssso	pass slip stitch over
rep	repeat
rem	remaining
inc	increase
inc1	knit into front and back of same stitch*
inc2	knit into front, back and front of stitch**
dec	decrease
RS	right side
WS	wrong side
tbl	through back loop(s)
k2tog	knit 2 together
k2tog tbl	knit 2 together through back loops
yfwd	yarn forward
beg	begin(ning)
DK	double knitting

*Where the pattern states 'inc1', knit into the front and back of the stitch, thereby creating one extra stitch.

**Where the pattern states 'inc2', knit into the front, the back and the front again, thereby creating two extra stitches.

Retro Stripes

Materials:

2 balls DK yarn (wool or wool blend) – white and turquoise
small amount of DK yarn (wool or wool blend) – red

Needles:

set of four 2.75mm (UK 12; US 2) double-pointed knitting needles
tapestry needle

Instructions:

With set of four 2.75mm (UK 12; US 2) double-pointed needles and turquoise DK yarn, cast on 36 sts and distribute between three needles.

Round 1: k each st tbl.

Rounds 2 and 3: join in white DK yarn and k.

Rounds 4–18: knit a further 15 rounds, changing colour after every 2 rounds, to create striped pattern.

Cut white yarn and continue in turquoise.

Round 19: (k4, k2tog) six times [30 sts].

Round 20: k.

Round 21: (k3, k2tog) six times [24 sts].

Round 22: k.

Round 23: (k2, k2tog) six times [18 sts].

Round 24: (k1, k2tog) six times [12 sts].

Round 25: (k2tog) 6 times.

Cut yarn and thread through rem 6 sts.

Cord

With two 2.75mm (UK 12; US 2) double-pointed needles and red DK yarn, cast on 2 sts.

Rows 1–60: k2; do not turn but slide sts to other end of needle.

Cut yarn, leaving a tail for sewing up, and fasten off.

Making up

Pull up the yarn at the top of the egg cosy to gather; fasten off. Fold the cord to create four loops and stitch to the top of the cosy.



Pink and Perky



Materials:

1 ball DK yarn (wool or wool blend) – pink
polyester fibrefill
2 small glass beads – black
black thread

Needles:

set of four 2.75mm (UK 12; US 2) double-pointed knitting needles
tapestry needle
sewing needle

Instructions:

Body and head (worked in one piece)

With set of four 2.75mm (UK 12; US 2) double-pointed needles and pink yarn, cast on 36 sts and distribute between three needles.

Round 1: k each st tbl.

Rounds 2–25: k.

Round 26: (k4, k2tog) six times [30 sts].

Round 27: k.

Round 28: (k3, k2tog) six times [24 sts].

Round 29: (k2, k2tog) six times [18 sts].

Round 30: (k1, k2tog) six times [12 sts].

Round 31: k2tog six times [6 sts].

Round 32: inc1 in each st [12 sts].

Round 33: (k1, inc1) six times [18 sts].

Round 34: (k2, inc1) six times [24 sts].

Round 35: (k3, inc1) six times [30 sts].

Rounds 36–44: k.

Round 45: (k3, k2tog) six times [24 sts].

Round 46: k.

Rounds 47–49: as rounds 29–31.

Cut yarn, leaving a tail for sewing up, and thread through rem 6 sts.

Trotters (make 2)

With two 2.75mm (UK 12; US 2) needles and pink yarn, cast on 3 sts.

Row 1: inc1 in each st [6 sts].

Row 2: p.

Row 3: inc1 in each st [12 sts].

Rows 4–14: beg with a p row, work 11 rows in SS.

Row 15: k1, sl1, k1, pss0, k6, k2tog, k1 [10 sts].

Row 16 and each even-numbered (RS) row: p.

Row 17: k1, sl1, k1, pss0, k4, k2tog, k1 [8 sts].

Row 19: k1, sl1, k1, pss0, k2, k2tog, k1 [6 sts].

Row 21: k1, sl1, k1, pss0, k2tog, k1 [4 sts].

Row 23: k1, k2tog, k1 [3 sts].

Row 25: sl1, k2tog, pss0: cut yarn and fasten off.

Snout

With two 2.75mm (UK 12; US 2) needles and pink yarn, cast on 4 sts.

Rows 1–48: sl1, k3.

Cast off.

Ears (make 2)

With two 2.75mm (UK 12; US 2) needles and pink yarn, cast on 11 sts.

Row 1: k each st tbl.

Row 2: k4, sl1, k2tog, pss0, k4 [9 sts].

Rows 3, 5, 7 and 9: k.

Row 4: k3, sl1, k2tog, pss0, k3 [7 sts].

Row 6: k2, sl1, k2tog, pss0, k2 [5 sts].

Row 8: k1, sl1, k2tog, pss0, k1 [3 sts].

Row 10: sl1, k2tog, pss0 [1 st].

Cut yarn, leaving a tail for sewing up, and fasten off.

Tail

With two 2.75mm (UK 12; US 2) needles and pink yarn, cast on 10 sts.

Row 1: inc1 in each st [20 sts], then cast off.

Egg Warmers

Materials:

1 ball self-patterning 4-ply sock yarn

Needles:

pair of 2.25mm (UK 13; US 1) knitting needles
pair of 3.00mm (UK 11; US 2) knitting needles
stitch holder
tapestry needle

Instructions:

Front and back (make 2)

With 2.25mm (UK 13; US 1) knitting needles and self-patterning yarn, cast on 21 sts.

Row 1: (k1, p1) ten times, k1.

Row 2: k1, (k1, p1) nine times, k2.

Rows 3 and 4: rep rows 1 and 2.

Rows 5–18: change to 3.00mm (UK 11; US 2) knitting needles and, beg with a k row, work 14 rows in SS.

Row 19: k1, sl1, k1, pssso, k to last 3 sts, k2tog, k1.

Row 20: p.

Rep rows 19 and 20 until 7 sts rem; transfer sts to a holder.

Sleeves (make 2)

With 2.25mm (UK 13; US 1) knitting needles and self-patterning yarn, cast on 13 sts.

Row 1: (k1, p1) six times, k1.

Row 2: k1, (k1, p1) five times, k2.

Rows 3 and 4: rep rows 1 and 2.

Change to 3.00mm (UK 11; US 2) knitting needles.

Row 5: k.

Row 6: p.

Row 7: k1, inc1, k to last 2 sts, inc1, k1 [15 sts].

Rows 8–10: beg with a p row, work 3 rows in SS.

Row 11: k1, sl1, k1, pssso, k to last 3 sts, k2tog, k1.

Row 12: p.

Rows 13–20: rep rows 11 and 12 until 5 sts rem, ending with a p row.

Row 21: k1, sl1, k2tog, pssso, k1 [3 sts]; transfer sts to a holder.

Do not cut yarn after completing 2nd sleeve but use to knit neck.

Neck

Change to 2.25mm (UK 13; US 1) knitting needles and, with RS facing, knit 3 sts across top of sleeve just completed, 7 sts across top of back, 3 sts across first sleeve and 7 sts across front [20 sts].

Work 12 rows in k1, p1 rib; cast off in rib.

Making up

Stitch raglan seams, then sleeve and side seams. Fold the neck over to the right side.



Bobble Hats

Materials:

1 ball self-patterning 4-ply sock yarn

Needles:

set of four 2.75mm (UK 12; US 2) double-pointed needles

stitch holder

tapestry needle

Instructions:

Hat (worked in one piece)

With set of four 2.75mm (UK 12; US 2) double-pointed needles and self-patterning yarn, cast on 3 sts and distribute between three needles.

Round 1: inc1 in each st [6 sts].

Round 2: k.

Round 3: inc1 in each st [12 sts].

Round 4: k.

Round 5: (k1, inc1) six times [18 sts].

Round 6: (k1, p2) six times.

Round 7: (k1, p1, inc1) six times [24 sts].

Round 8: (k1, p1) twelve times.

Round 9: (k1, p1, k1, inc1) six times [30 sts].

Round 10: (k1, p1, k1, p2) six times.

Round 11: * (k1, p1) twice, inc1*, rep from * to * five times [36 sts].

Round 12: (k1, p1) 18 times.

Rep last round 21 times; cast off in pattern.

Bobble

Wind yarn around two fingers about 25–30 times. Slip off, then tie a spare length of yarn tightly around the bundle and use this to attach the bobble to the centre top of the hat. Cut through the loops and trim the ends to form a neat bobble.



Hats Off

You can produce different effects by using self-patterning yarns in different colourways. Even a single ball of yarn will produce a variety of different hats, depending on which part of the ball of yarn you begin with. These hats are 6.5cm (2½in) high.