

Shaina's Guide to Picking Up Stitches



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Supplies

- **Yarn for the picked-up edge**
- **Knitting needle**

The knitting needle size might vary depending on your border, yarn, and knitting tension. Often the same size or 1-2 sizes smaller are used for picked-up edges that become patterned borders of your work.

- **Locking stitch markers** (optional)

QUICK TIP

If you have a large number of stitches to pick up, separating the sections of the fabric using locking stitch markers is helpful. Or, if you have a lot of stitches to count, placing these markers at regular intervals is helpful for keeping track of your stitch count.

How to Pick Up

Working from right to left with the RS of the work facing:

Step 1: Insert the needle into the work from RS to WS.

Step 2: Hold the yarn the way you would for knitting. Wrap the working yarn around the needle the same way you would for knitting.

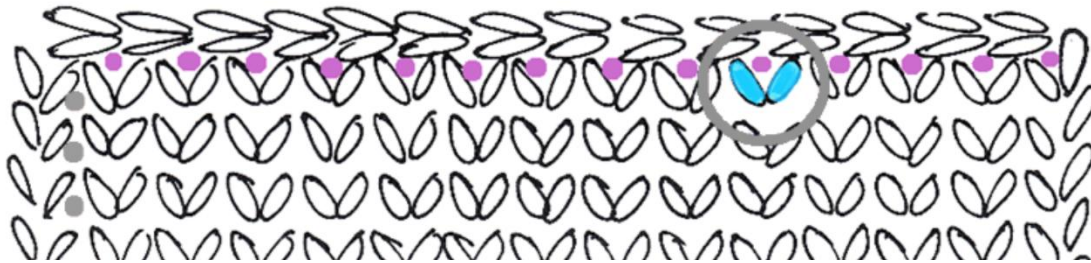
Step 3: Bring the newly wrapped stitch on the knitting needle up to the RS by coming out of the hole you entered. Leave this new stitch on the right-hand needle.

Step 4: Repeat from Step 1.

Picking up stitches is just like knitting, except you're only using one needle and you're "knitting" out of fabric instead of a stitch.

Picking Up Stitches on a Cast On or Bind Off Edge

RATIO of 1:1



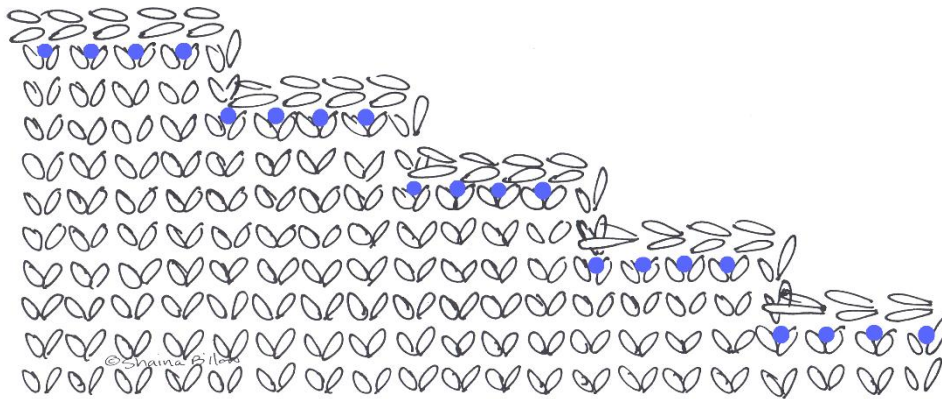
The purple dots represent where to insert the needle and pick up a stitch.

Helpful guidelines:

- Pick up ONE STITCH for every ONE STITCH that was cast on or bound off in that section.
- Pick up into the stitch that points down (looks like a “V” or a heart) and NOT into the space between the stitches that points up (looks like an ^)
- Pick up in the tidy looking stitch in the row just below/underneath the bind off or cast on edge. Do not pick up into the bound off edge.

Picking Up Stitches on a Stairstep Edge

RATIO of 1:1



The blue dots represent where to insert the needle and pick up a stitch.

Helpful guidelines:

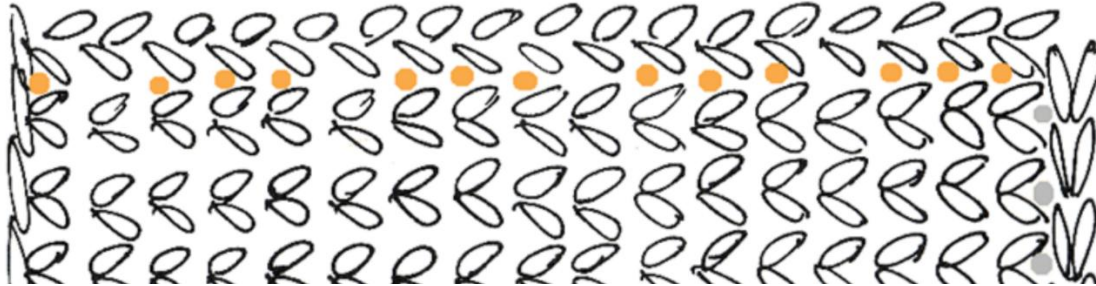
- Pick up as per the “Picking Up Stitches on a Cast On or Bind Off Edge” instructions.
- Do not go into the tall row space between steps. It adds lumps, holes, and extra stitches to your picked-up edge.

QUICK TIP

Follow the column of stitches from further down the work if you have trouble locating the stitch to pick up into.

Picking Up Stitches on a Straight Side Edge

RATIO of 3:4 or 2:3 or 4:5



The yellow dots represent where to insert the needle and pick up a stitch.

Helpful guidelines:

- To avoid ruffles or puckering, follow the desired ratio, above, when picking up. For a 3:4 ratio, pick up 3 stitches in 3 rows and then skip the fourth row. For a 2:3 ratio, pick up 2 stitches in 2 rows and then skip the third row.
- Pick up in the first clean looking column along the edge of the work. Typically this is between the first stitch and the second stitch.
- It is possible to pick up with a half-stitch selvedge, but often that looks uneven and messy.
- Stay in the same selvedge “ditch” for a smooth looking edge.
- The ratio of 3:4 works for most side edge pickups. There may be some discrepancies based on yarn or stitch pattern that leads to a 2:3 or 4:5 ratio, but 3:4 is a good place to start.
- If you are mathematically inclined, you can determine your precise ratio by comparing your stitch gauge and row gauge.

Garter Stitch

Since the row heights of Garter Stitch are shorter,
Garter Stitch requires a 1:2 pickup ratio.

Pick up one stitch for every garter stitch ridge.

Picking Up Stitches on an Angled Side Edge

RATIO of 4:5 or 5:6

Helpful guidelines:

- Pick up as per the “Picking Up Stitches on a Straight Side Edge” instructions, working a few extra stitches prior to the skipped row. This accounts for the added width of the sloped edge.
- Plan ahead for smooth edges and work your increases and decreases at least one stitch away from the edge of the work.



Adjusting Stitch Count Discrepancies

If you are picking up stitches and get a different number than what the pattern calls for, make the following considerations:

Is the number significantly different from the recommended stitch count?

If the number of stitches is very different from the pattern recommendation, either increase or decrease on the next row to get a closer number.

Does the number of stitches work with the repetition of the stitch pattern used for that section? (Example: Your pattern calls for a K2P2 Ribbing and needs a multiple of 4 stitches for the neckline pickup)

If the pattern uses a stitch repeat that won't work with the number of the stitches you've picked up, adjust by increasing or decreasing on the next row to the appropriate stitch repeat.



QUICK TIP

Do NOT adjust stitch counts; follow the recommended pattern numbers for:

- Set-in sleeves that are worked from the armhole down. They need a very specific number of stitches.
- Any sweater pickup that is for a piece of the body of the sweater, rather than a neckline or buttonhole.

Buttonhole Adjustments

There are two main ways to adjust the buttonhole placement on an edge that doesn't have the number of stitches called for in a pattern.

1. Place markers in the work at the positions that you'd like to have buttonholes. When you get to those positions on your buttonhole row, work a buttonhole.
2. Figure out mathematically how far apart to space the buttons as follows:

For 2-stitch buttonholes (YO, K2tog)

Number of desired buttonholes = X

Stitches – $(X * 2) = Y$, or, the number of stitches to be divvied up between buttonholes.

$Y / X = Z$, or, the number of stitches in each section between buttonholes. "Z" may need to be rounded to a whole number.

$Z / 2 =$ the number of stitches before the first buttonhole and after the last buttonhole. Note: If this number represents more than 1"/2.5 cm of stitches, you might want to take a few stitches away from this count and redistribute them between the buttonholes (amongst Z).

The Buttonhole Row would read:

Work $(Z / 2)$, *work buttonhole, work Z ; repeat from * $(X-1)$ times, work buttonhole, work $(Z / 2)$.

QUICK TIP

Shaina's Favorite Simple Eyelet Buttonhole:

YO, K2tog