



STITCHES HINTS AND TIPS

Lucy Neatby of Tradewind Knitwear Designs gives us the following excellent helpful hints:

1. Sweater in D minor. Think of a knitting pattern as a piece of sheet music. It may be interpreted in many ways. Knitting from a pattern becomes the expression of the knitter and their skill in the same way as music from a sheet becomes unique in the hands of a musician.
2. Your gauge can be affected by the type of material a needle is made of. You may subconsciously knit more gently on a bamboo needle than on an Addi turbo!
3. Salad bags. If you ever travel with your knitting projects, especially if it involves camping, canoeing or beaches, make a 'personal use' copy of your pattern and have it laminated. Take a wax pencil for notes or alterations. The patterns will then be impervious to water and can be used on a beach with impunity!
4. Let your tails dangle. Darn in your ends only once you are happy with your knitting. If you might wish to alter or adjust anything later, leave your tails dangling.
5. Temporary knots okay. There is nothing wrong with temporary knots. With slippery yarns a knot is better than a hole. If you still don't trust the yarn after finishing is complete use fray check or keep the knot. Salad bags (made from perforated plastic) are wonderful small project bags – they keep everything together, clean and visible and don't trap excess air or moisture.
6. To subtly adjust the gauge of a piece of round knitting, change only one of the needles used in the set; as the different needles is used on each set of stitches in turn it averages out. If you have only four needles of one size and want five, add a fifth 'odd' needles of the next size, it will hardly alter the gauge.
7. A music stand is a great place to mount your chart and shade card for easy viewing. Use a magnetic ruler and board to show your position on the chart. Place the lower edge of the ruler above the line you are working on. It is the knitting and chart already that its important – not what lies ahead.
8. Rainbow effect. In multi-colored knitting, look upon coming to the end of a piece of yarn as an opportunity to put in a new color or texture.
9. Try using a running yarn marker when working in the round on doublepoints. Circular or yarn loop markers drop off the needles every time they reach a needle junction.
10. To store a large number of wooden double point needles: develop a code and mark each needle with rings or indelible marker – one red ring per whole size, green rings for halves, blue rings for quarters, etc. This makes selecting a set easy and once they are in the work you can easily check if you have all the correct needles.
11. A salad spinner (normally used for drying lettuce!) is a great aid for a sock knitter. Place your wet hand –washed socks into the spinner and spin.
12. Hats are generally best knitted a little on the large side – no one likes a tight hat. If too slack, you can always knit up stitches around the brim.
13. Keep round balls of yarn in a bowl – to avoid entertaining your cat.
14. File away your old ball's bands with a snippet of yarn attached, they contain a lot of useful information.
15. Remember that all needles marked X mm may not actually measure X mm. Check with a needle gauge when switching needles in mid-project.



If you can't be kind, at least be vague.