

# All Thumbs Provisional Cast-On



Studio ATO / Ann Turley Dreith

**DESCRIPTION:** This provisional cast-on is an “un-vention” of a known technique used for the thumb opening of mitten/gloves and the pocket openings in garments. It uses knitting needles only, doing what you already know how to do, without wasting beautiful yarn in the process.

**The “All Thumbs Provisional Cast-On” may be used with any number of stitches and any weight of yarn where a provisional cast-on is desired or specified.**

As someone who is ‘all-thumbs’ when it comes to crochet, I have been frustrated with most traditional provisional cast-on methods. It dawned on me that this un-vention could be learned and remembered easily by anyone! I can recall the first time I used the original technique in a class. When the instructor announced that we were to remove the bright red piece of yarn from our work, none of us felt confident! We all held our breath as we pulled out the thread. Our jaws dropped as we saw all those lovely stitches standing proudly, waiting to be picked up to continue the work! The second class introduced the same technique, but used for planning a pocket in a garment. I am indebted to my two wonderful teachers and thank them for their clarity of thought and love of this craft!

## MATERIALS REQUIRED:

1. Knitting needles to be used for your project.
2. Skein of project yarn – or left-over yarn of same weight from previous projects.
3. Contrasting color of yarn 3 times the width of the cast-on row plus 12-16” in either the same weight or a lighter weight of non-fuzzy yarn.
4. Yarn of lighter weight than project yarn for “lifeline”. I recommend using “Button & Carpet” thread (purchase at JoAnn’s or other sewing supply stores).

## INSTRUCTIONS:

The following instructions with illustrations are given for

- 1) Garter Stitch applications, and then 2) Stockinette Stitch applications.

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## INSTRUCTIONS FOR GARTER STITCH PROJECTS



1). Using your favorite cast-on and your gauge needle(s), cast on the number of stitches for the project. (You may use the outside strand of your center-pull project skein; do not cut it off. After Step 5, frog the cast-on yarn and use for your project.)

2) Knit one row.

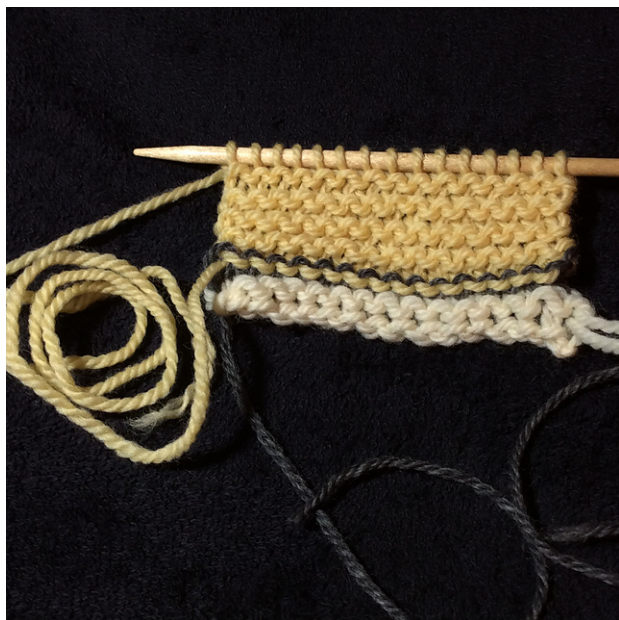


3). Using a bright color or high contrast strand of non-fuzzy yarn in the same or a lighter weight (for lace weight projects, consider using button thread as your contrast strand), knit all stitches on the needles. Leave 6-8" tails at **BOTH ENDS**. Do not attach to the cast-on yarn.

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4). Change to your project yarn and start knitting your planned pattern, leaving a tail equal to 3 times the width of the project stitches, plus 6-8", for use later. Do not attach to the bright or contrast color strand. (If using a "slick yarn", add a lifeline in the first row of project stitches.)



5). To take the provisional stitches "live", lay the entire piece on a flat surface, such as a table or the kitchen counter. Place your hand flat across the project stitches to help stabilize the work. Take hold of one end of the bright color or high contrast yarn used in the single knitted row and GENTLY pull that strand out of the work.



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(Step 5 - complete) The cast on yarn and the project stitches will easily separate. ('Frog' the cast-on yarn, re-wind it around the outside of your project skein, and use it for your project.)

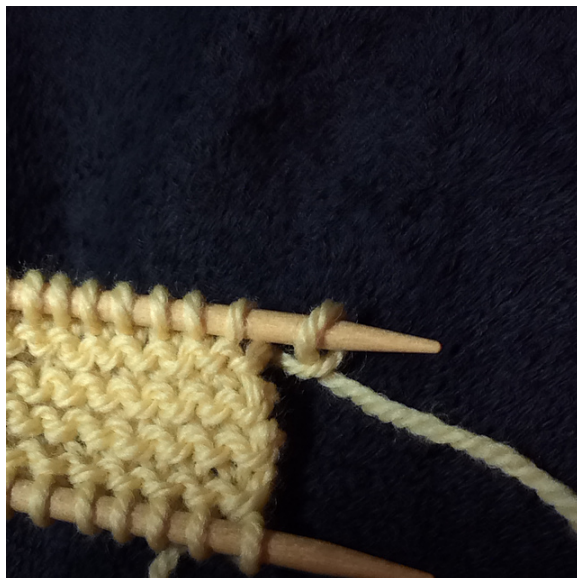


6) Carefully pick up all the live stitches.

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(Step 6 – completed). Count your stitches, adding a single loop stitch at the end of the row, if required. (Because you are eliminating the row directly under the first project row, one end stitch will be ‘incomplete’ or ungrounded without its corresponding loop, and will need to be added.)



7). Purl all stitches on the needle with the long tail.

8). Continue with your project from the provisional stitches.

Note: Where more intricate stitch patterns are started at the provisional stitches, it is highly recommended to use a ‘lifeline’ through the first row of knitted project stitches. This will make picking up stitches in the correct position much easier.

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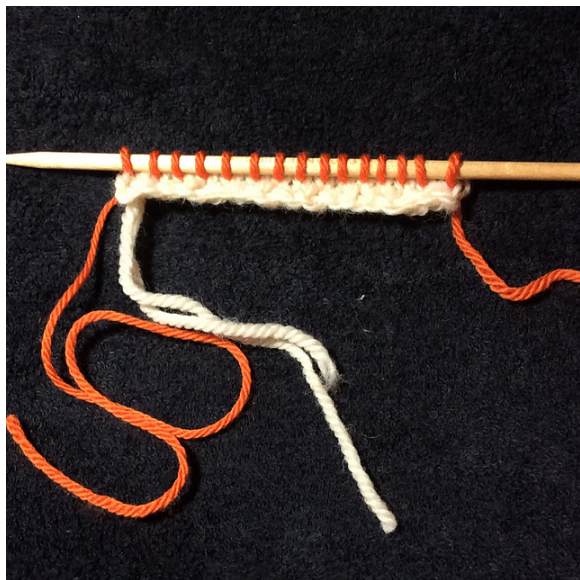
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## INSTRUCTIONS FOR STOCKINETTE STITCH PROJECTS



1). Using your favorite cast-on and your gauge needle(s), cast on the number of stitches for the project. (You may use the outside strand of your center-pull project skein; do not cut it off. After Step 5, frog the cast-on yarn and use for your project.)

2) Knit one row.



3). Using a bright color or high contrast strand of non-fuzzy yarn in the same or a lighter weight (for lace weight projects, consider using button thread as your contrast strand), knit all stitches on the needles. Leave 6-8" tails at **BOTH ENDS**. Do not attach to the cast-on yarn.



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4). Change to your project yarn and start knitting your planned pattern, leaving a tail equal to 3 times the width of the project stitches, plus 6-8", for use later. Do not attach to the bright or contrast color strand. (If using a "slick yarn", add a lifeline in the first row of project stitches.)



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(Step 5 - complete). The cast-on yarn and the project stitches will easily separate. ('Frog' the cast-on yarn, re-wind it around the outside of your project skein, and use it for your project.)



6) Carefully pick up all the live stitches.



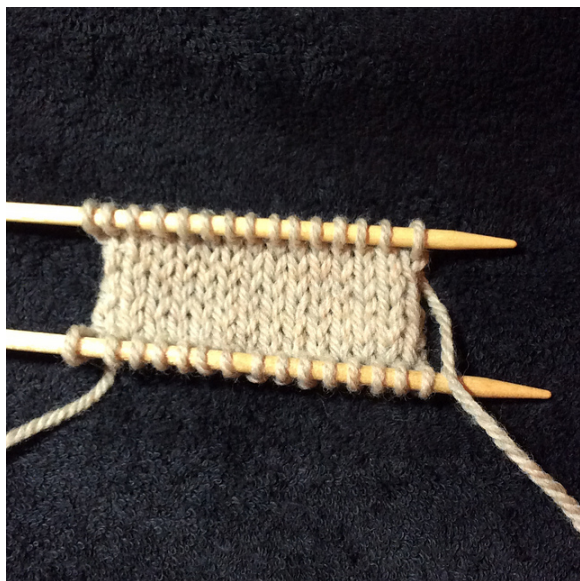
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