FREE KNITTING TUTORIAL

How to Bind Off Knitting

5 bind-off methods + a practice swatch with garter, stockinette and 2x2 rib · US terms

SKILL LEVEL	SWATCH	NEEDLES
Beginner	**about 4.9 x 4.7 in**	**5 mm (US 8)**
YARN	**CAST ON**	**TIME**
Worsted (#4), about 25 yd	**22 sts**	**About 30 minutes**

Materials

- About 25 yd of light-coloured worsted yarn
- 5 mm (US 8) needles (plus a spare needle for the three-needle bind off)
- Tapestry needle, scissors

Abbreviations (US terms)

k	knit	**BO**	bind off (UK: cast off)
p	purl	**RS / WS**	right / wrong side
k2tog tbl	knit 2 together through the back loops	**st(s)**	stitch(es)

Keep your bind off loose: if the edge pulls in, use a needle one or two sizes bigger in your right hand.

Practice swatch

Cast on	Cast on 22 sts.
Rows 1–4	Knit every row (garter).
Rows 5–20	Stockinette: knit RS rows, purl WS rows.
Rows 21–28	2x2 rib. RS: *k2, p2* to the last 2 sts, k2. WS: *p2, k2* to the last 2 sts, p2.
Row 29	Bind off in pattern.

The 5 methods

1	Standard bind off: Knit 2. *Lift the first st over the second and off the needle. Knit 1.* Repeat until 1 st is left. Cut the yarn and pull it through.
2	Purlwise bind off: Same as the standard bind off, but purl the stitches instead of knitting them. Use it on a WS row or for a purl-side edge.
3	Bind off in pattern: Knit the knit sts and purl the purl sts as you bind off, lifting over as usual. Best for ribbing: the edge stays stretchy and neat.
4	Stretchy (decrease) bind off: Knit 1. *Slip the st back to the left needle, knit 2 together through the back loops.* Repeat. Good for hats, socks and necklines.

5	Three-needle bind off: Hold two needles with the same number of sts parallel, RS together. Knit 1 st from each needle together, twice, and lift over. Repeat. Joins and binds off at once (shoulders, cowls).

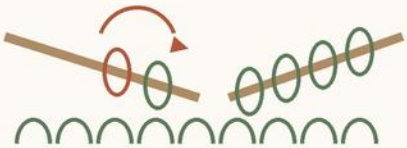
How to Bind Off Knitting · Step by Step

1 Knit 2



Knit the first 2 stitches as usual. Two stitches are now on the right needle.

2 Lift over



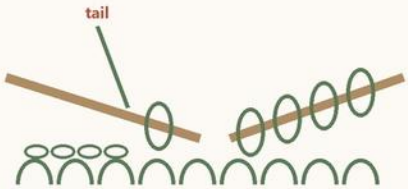
Insert the left needle into the first (right-hand) stitch on the right needle and lift it over the second stitch and off.

3 Knit 1 more



One stitch is left on the right needle. Knit the next stitch so there are two again, and lift over again.

4 Fasten off



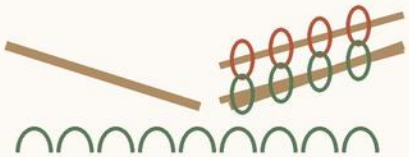
When one stitch is left, cut the yarn leaving a 6 in tail, pull it through the last loop and tighten.

+ Stretchy: decrease bind off



Knit 1. *Slip it back to the left needle, knit 2 together through the back loops.* Repeat.

+ Three-needle bind off

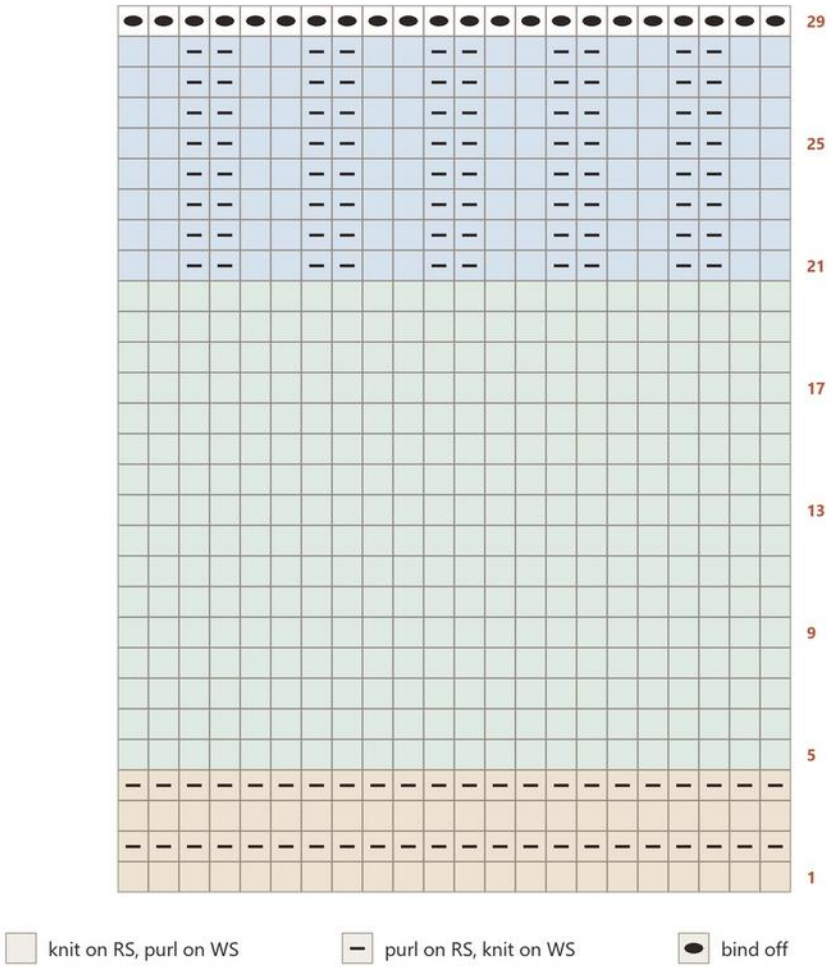


Hold two needles parallel, right sides together. Knit 1 st from each needle together, twice, and lift over.

cozymakery.com

Bind-Off Practice Swatch · Stitch Chart

Cast on 22. Garter, stockinette and 2x2 rib, then bind off in pattern. RS rows right to left.



Rows 1–4 garter · 5–20 stockinette · 21–28 2x2 rib · Row 29: bind off in pattern (knit the knits, purl the purls)

cozymakery.com