KNITTING TUTORIAL

How to Pick Up Stitches

Step by step for side, cast-on and bind-off edges, plus a mug rug to practise on

SKILL LEVEL **Advanced beginner**	PRACTICE PIECE **Mug rug, 6.2 × 6 in**	NEEDLES **4.5 mm (US 7) straight + 16 in circular**
YARN **Worsted cotton, 2 colours**	STITCHES **k, p, pick up, M1L, M1R**	TIME **About 2 hours**

Materials

- Worsted (#4) cotton: main colour 30 yd, contrast 44 yd
- 4.5 mm (US 7) straight needles and a 4.5 mm 16 in circular needle, 4 locking markers, tapestry needle

Abbreviations

k / p	knit / purl	**M1R**	make 1 right-leaning
pick up	pull a new loop through the edge	**RS / WS**	right / wrong side
M1L	make 1 left-leaning	**rnd**	round

Gauge: 18 sts and 24 rows = 4 in in stockinette, which is exactly why the 3-for-4 ratio works: 3 sts are as wide as 4 rows are tall.

How to pick up stitches

Step 1	Hold the piece with the right side facing you and the edge at the top. Work from right to left.
Step 2	Side edge: put the needle tip into the gap between the first and second stitch of a row, from front to back.
Step 3	Wrap the new yarn around the needle as if to knit, and pull a loop through to the front. That is one picked-up stitch.
Step 4	Move up one row and repeat. On stockinette, skip every 4th row so you pick up 3 sts for every 4 rows.
Step 5	Cast-on or bind-off edge: go under both legs of each V, 1 stitch for every stitch.
Step 6	Count each side and spread any extra or missing stitches evenly before you start knitting.

Mug rug: stockinette centre (main colour)

Cast on	In the main colour, cast on 22 sts.	**(22)**
Row 1 (RS)	Knit.	**(22)**
Row 2 (WS)	Purl.	**(22)**
Rows 3–28	Repeat Rows 1 and 2 (28 rows in all).	**(22)**
Bind off	Bind off knitwise on the next RS row. Do not cut the yarn too short: leave a 6 in tail.	

Mug rug: picked-up garter border (contrast colour)

Pick-up round	With RS facing and a 16 in circular needle, start at a corner. Pick up 1 corner st, 22 sts along the bound-off edge (1 per st), 1 corner st, 21 sts along the side (3 for every 4 rows), and the same on the last two sides. Mark the 4 corner sts; place the start marker.	**(90)**
Rnd 1	Purl around.	**(90)**
Rnd 2	*Knit to the corner st, M1L, k the corner st, M1R*; repeat 4 times, knit to the end.	**(98)**
Rnd 3	Purl around.	**(98)**
Rnd 4	*Knit to the corner st, M1L, k the corner st, M1R*; repeat 4 times, knit to the end.	**(106)**
Rnd 5	Purl around.	**(106)**
Rnd 6	*Knit to the corner st, M1L, k the corner st, M1R*; repeat 4 times, knit to the end.	**(114)**
Bind off	Bind off purlwise, loosely. Weave in the ends and block flat.	

How to Pick Up Stitches in Knitting

Right side facing, working from right to left with a new strand (green)

Step 1



Hold the piece with the right side facing you and the edge at the top. Work from right to left.

Step 2



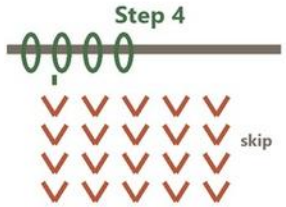
Side edge: put the needle tip into the gap between the first and second stitch of a row, from front to back.

Step 3



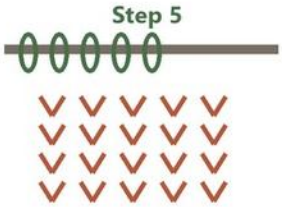
Wrap the new yarn around the needle as if to knit, and pull a loop through to the front. That is one picked-up stitch.

Step 4



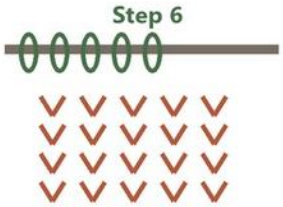
Move up one row and repeat. On stockinette, skip every 4th row so you pick up 3 sts for every 4 rows.

Step 5



Cast-on or bind-off edge: go under both legs of each V, 1 stitch for every stitch.

Step 6



Count each side and spread any extra or missing stitches evenly before you start knitting.

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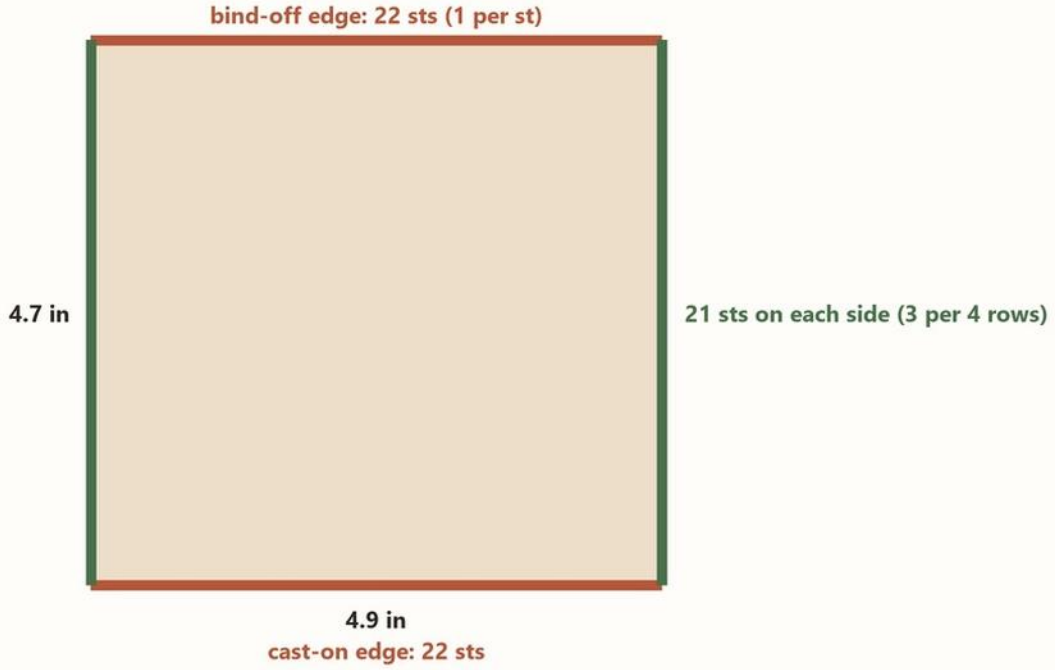
Where to Pick Up: Mug Rug Border

Stockinette centre 22 sts × 28 rows. Pick up 90 sts in all.



Top and bottom: 1 st in every stitch (22 each) · sides: 3 sts for every 4 rows (21 each)
+ 1 corner st at each corner · then knit the garter border in the round with M1 on both sides of each corner

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Pick-Up Ratios Cheat Sheet

Worsted weight; the same ratios work for most yarns

Edge	Pick up	How
Stockinette, side edge	3 sts for every 4 rows	skip every 4th row
Garter, side edge	1 st for every ridge (2 rows)	go into the dip between ridges
Cast-on / bind-off edge	1 st for every stitch	go under both legs of the V
Ribbing, side edge	3 sts for every 4 rows	same as stockinette
Curve (neckline)	1 st per st, 3 per 4 rows on the steps	skip the corner gaps

Too many stitches ruffle; too few pull the edge in.

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