

Tips & Techniques!

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YOU NEVER KNEW CASTING OFF COULD BE SUCH FUN!

by Terri Burns

Love how fast the knitting machine knits, but hate the time it takes to bind off? Have we got a tool for you! The Studio by White SC-3 Linker. It performs the crochet bind off in a manner of seconds.



HOW IT WORKS

The SC-3 Linker looks something like a small carriage with a knob on top. It is placed onto the bed of the machine. By pushing a lever at the rear of the linker, it hooks into the back slots of the rail. The knob is hand turned in a clockwise motion. Each turn brings forward a latch hook inside the linker that takes the

stitch off the needle of the machine. The stitch is held behind the latch while the latch hook is pushed forward to catch the next stitch. A full 360 degree turn of the knob pulls stitch #2 through stitch #1. The next turn pulls stitch #3 through stitch #2. This process continues across. A crochet cast off is completed as fast as you can turn the knob!

SOME KEYS TO SUCCESS

A crochet cast off is non-elastic. To have a bind off that is compatible with the knit fabric, the last row must be knit at a large stitch size. If your project was knit at a stitch size between 0 and 4, knit the last row at stitch size 10. If you were knitting between 4 and 6, knit the last row very slowly in stitch size 10 while pulling down (adding lots of weight) on the fabric. If you were knitting at a stitch size of 6 or more, extra measures must be taken to increase the stitch size of the last row. If you have a ribber, bring up the corresponding needles on the ribber bed. Set the machine to half pitch. At garment size on both beds, knit one row across. Use your P-carriage to drop the ribber bed needles. This exactly doubles the loops on the main bed needles. If you do not have a ribber, try this method. Bring forward all the needles so the stitches are behind the latches. Lay the yarn into the hooks of the needles and manually knit back each stitch. The further back you pull the needle, the larger the stitch will be. Try to keep the stitches as even as possible. You may find placing a dowel, piece of wood, or some other object at the back of the bed will

help you keep the stitches even.

PREPARATION FOR THE SC-3 LINKER

Because the linker works from right to left, the last row of your project must be knit from the right to the left leaving the tail end in the correct place. Bring all the needles out to the highest position and the knit fabric slightly forward, away from the gate posts. Place two prongs of a claw weight on the right hand edge of the knit, about 1 1/2" down from the needles. Place a second claw weight directly above the first, again two prongs in. The SC-3 Linker is then placed onto the bed of the machine on the right hand side. Be sure it is hooked onto the front guide of the needle bed. Slide the linker toward the stitches, guiding the first couple of stitches into the slot. Push the lever on the back side of the linker to connect it into the slots of the rail. Then simply start turning the knob in the clockwise direction. When you get to the 1st stitch, turn slowly and stop at 1/2 turn. Pull down slightly on the last stitch to elongate the loop. Then holding the stitch from underneath, continue to turn until the stitch drops off the linker. Pull the tail end through the last loop. Be sure the linker is lined up with the triangle before disengaging from the machine.

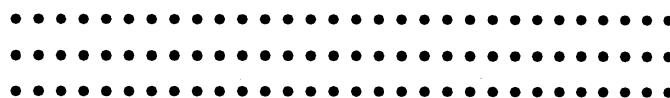
POSSIBLE USES

Anywhere a bind off is required you can use the SC-3 Linker. When hanging shoulder stitches together try this method. Hang on the back stitches with the right side facing you. Push all needles forward so the stitches are behind the latches. Place the front shoulder stitches into the hooks with the wrong side of the garment facing you. Pull the front stitches through the back stitches. Knit the large stitch size row as described above and link off. This method has a nicer look on the right side of the garment than knitting the large stitch size row through both stitches at once. If you need to bind off large area in the middle of your knitting (such as a square neck), the needles

that will remain in working position on either side will hinder the use of the SC-3 Linker. Using scrap yarn, knit 6-8 stitches back to A position on each side before proceeding. After the bind off is complete, simply pull out the scrap yarn bringing the needles into work position and continue. If you have been working on every other needle don't despair, you can still use the SC-3 Linker. When knitting the last row, bring up all needles to working position. There is now a loop on every needle to link off.

Use the SC-3 Linker to bind off your ribbing in a crisp handknit look edge. In any rib set up (1x1, 2x2, etc.), knit the desired length of ribbing. Set the machine for half pitch, and bring up the empty needles so all needles are now working. Knit the last row from right to left. Drop the needles that were empty and now have just a loop of yarn on them on both beds. Transfer the remaining stitches to the main bed. Use the SC-3 Linker to bind off.

You can even put together the side seams of your garment using this ingenious tool. With the right side facing you, hang one side of the garment onto the needles one full stitch in from the edge. Hang the remaining side with wrong side facing you onto the same needles one full stitch in. Knit one row at garment stockinette stitch size then one large stitch size row and link off. As you can imagine, it is critical to know the stitch gauge of the bind off before hanging on the garment. Make a sample of 50 needles. Measure the distance of the bind off from the first to the last stitch. Dividing the number of stitches (50) by the distance gives you stitches per inch. Determine the length of the seam to be out together. Multiply by the stitches per inch, and hang the garment onto that number of needles.



DECORATIVE USES FOR THE SC-3 LINKER

The linker not only binds off, but creates a single crochet edge as it does. This edge can be used decoratively throughout your garment. If the bound off edge is to be a finishing edge (not going into a seam), knit the last row in a contrast yarn or a decorative yarn.

To further decorate, add eyelets to the edge. Prior to knitting the last row, transfer every other stitch to the adjacent needle. Leave the empty needles in working position and knit the last row at a large stitch size. Link off. Even larger eyelets may be obtained by transferring every other stitch to the adjacent needle one row before the last row. With the empty needles in non-working position, knit across. Bring forward the empty needles to working position and knit the last row at a large stitch size. Link off. This is a beautiful edge for the hems of skirts, sleeves, etc. where elasticity is not required. Knitting that last row in contrast adds yet another dimension.

The SC-3 Linker also may be used to add a crisp finish to bands and pleats where there is a horizontal turning row. Turning rows are usually knit at a large stitch size and are distinguishable from the other rows. Pick up from that row and rehang onto the knitting machine. Knit one row at the large stitch size and link off. The result is a crisp (non-elastic) single crochet look edge.

That crisp edge also may be obtained vertically. For instance, the edge of a band down the front of a cardigan. Fold the band in half, wrong sides together. Following the vertical stitch at the fold, hang the band onto the needles being sure you pick up the entire stitch. Knit the large stitch size row and link off. (Don't forget to make a gauge swatch as described under seaming side seams so the bind off doesn't distort the band.) This crisp edge is also wonderful on vertical pleats.

Use the same technique to put a permanent ridge down the front of pants!

Picking up the vertical stitch may be used throughout the garment in contrasting colors to add vertical stripes. Perfect for window pane plaids! Picking up on the fold in any direction, knitting the large stitch size row and linking off can add lots of exciting interest to any garment.

You never knew binding off could be so much fun, did you? The SC-3 Linker adds a whole new dimension to that boring task.