

Tips & Techniques!

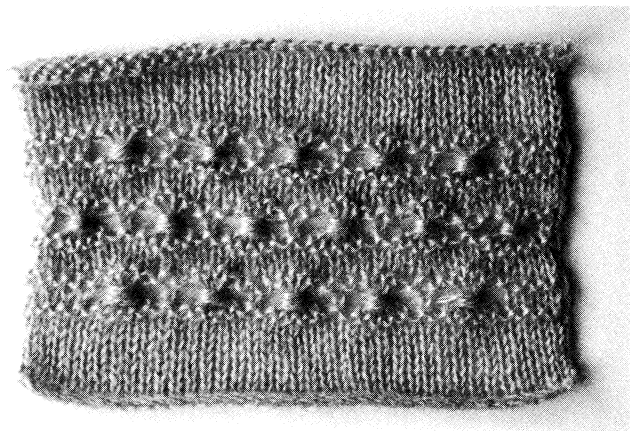
Studio
by WHITE

Tips & Techniques

Issue #24

HAND KNIT STITCHES FOR MACHINE KNITTING

It's always a challenge to duplicate hand knit stitches on the knitting machine. Not because it is necessarily difficult, but because it means taking the machine beyond the obvious and making it work for you. For those of us who want to keep the word "hand" in our knitting even when we work on a machine, hand manipulated stitches offer the opportunity to be intimately involved with the work and always justify the extra time and effort. The three examples that follow are some that I am often asked about by hand knitters who have discovered the machine. All of them are single bed techniques that can be knitted on any machine.



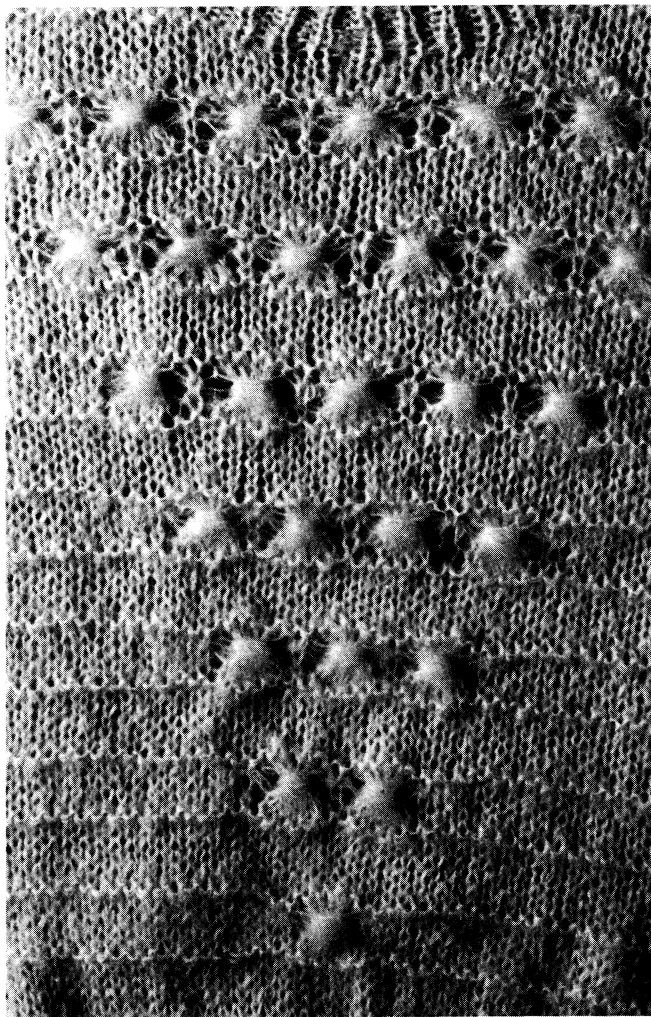
LAZY DAISY STITCH

The "daisies" are outlined by a single row of garter stitch at each edge. You can simply use a latch tool to reform these rows of stitches or you can use a garter bar (an accessory to remove the work from the

machine and turn it over) to speed things up. The stitches that are gathered together to form the daisies must be elongated so that the fabric doesn't distort when they are wrapped. In hand knitting, you would wrap the yarn around the needle several times and then drop these loops later. On a machine, there are many ways to elongate stitches. For this fabric, the simplest way is to hand knit the needles back to non-working position (all the way back on the bed) by laying the yarn into the hook of each needle and manually moving it back on the bed to form each stitch.

Cast on a multiple of 6 stitches (plus four for edges) and knit some plain rows. After knitting the first garter stitch row, unthread the carriage and manually knit the next two rows as follows: (Row 1) Knit the first two needles back to regular working position to form a seam edge. *Knit the next five needles to non-working position, then one needle to working position.* Repeat from * to * across the row, ending with two needles in regular working position. (Row 2) Knit the first two needles to working position. Remove the next five (elongated) stitches on a five prong tool if you have one or use two tools together. Hold the tool about an inch in front of the bed so that the stitches are nearly horizontal. Wrap the yarn around the stitches five times and then replace the wrapped stitches on their needles. Knit the next needle to working position and repeat across the row, ending with two edge needles in working position. Rethread the carriage and knit the ending garter stitch row. My sample shows three plain rows between

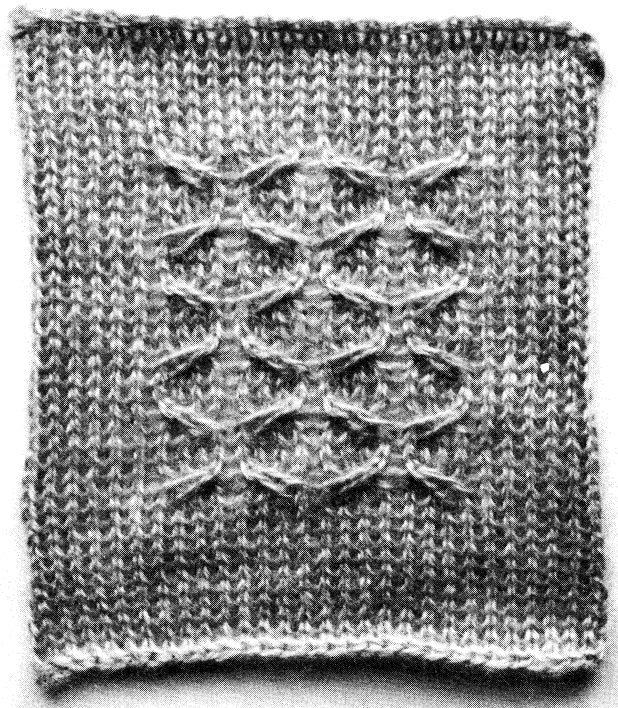
each pattern repeat, but you can certainly alter the spacing. The next repeat is staggered over the first so that the center of each daisy is directly above the single stitch in the previous repeat. You can vary this pattern by using a second color for the garter/wrapping rows or by eliminating the garter stitch altogether. Depending on the gauge of your machine, you may also find that you can gather seven stitch daisies with no difficulty.



OPEN HONEYCOMB

This all over pattern is formed by pairs of opposing four stitch cables. However, they are crossed as 1x3 cables and the single stitch has been enlarged. The enlarged stitch has several effects: First of all, the cable appears lighter and lacier. Also, this honeycomb is easier to cross than most and doesn't

draw the fabric in tighter. In fact, it will barely affect your stockinette gauge. For this pattern we will knit specific needles back to non-working position (as for the Lazy Daisy stitch), but we will allow the carriage to knit the needles in between by utilizing the holding positions on your machine. Needles that are all the way forward OR all the way back on the bed are in holding position.



Begin with the carriage on the right (COR), set to hold needles in holding position (if your machine has levers or buttons). (Row 1) Hold all needles to the left of needle #8 on the right of zero. Knit 1 row across the remaining, working needles. Then, using the free yarn between the carriage and the last stitch, manually knit needle #8 back to non-working position and leave it there. Push all other needles to forward holding position and place COR. Place needles #27 right in upper working position so they can knit. Knit 1 row, then manually knit needles #1 left and #1 right back to non-working position. Put all working position needles into forward holding position and place COR. Place needles #27 left into

upper working position, knit 1 row and then manually knit needle #8 left back to non-working position. Push all working needles to forward holding position and place COR. Place all needles left of #8 left into upper working position and knit to the end of the row. The four needles that remain in non-working position hold the elongated stitches that will cross to the front of each cable as you cross the 1x3 cables shown on the chart. Knit 3 rows after crossing cables. (Row 5) Knit with the same method as row 1, but interrupting the carriage to knit needles #4 & 5 right, 4 & 5 left back to non-working position. Cross cables and knit 3 rows.



8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

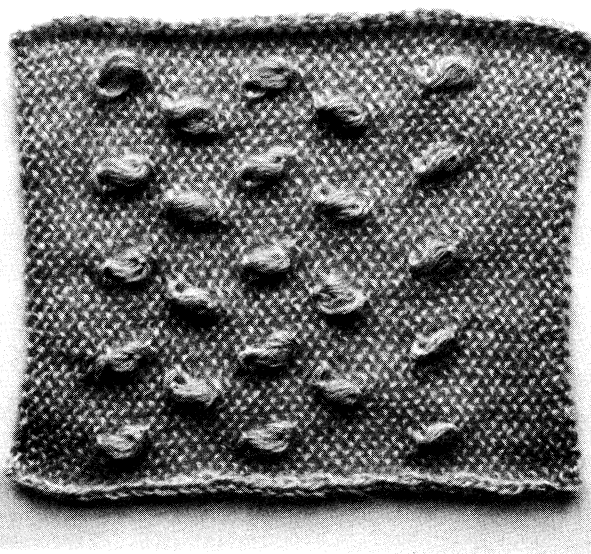
Remember to turn off your row counter before knitting rows 1 & 5 because although the carriage moves across the needles several times, you are really only knitting one row on any of the needles. It is important to return needles to holding (or non-working) position as soon as you knit them so that the yarn always continues from right to left, stitch to stitch and no needle knits more than once. This is why the carriage keeps returning to the right side.

TWISTED BOBBLES

These twisted bobbles are knitted using the same interrupted carriage method as the honeycomb stitch except that instead of knitting specific needles back to non-working position you will wrap the bobbles. Use a hand knitting needle to wrap each bobble, holding it about an inch below the needle on

the machine where you want the bobble to start. Use the free yarn between the carriage and the last stitch it knitted to wrap the yarn around the tip of the hand knitting needle and the hook of needle above, five times. I find that I can stabilize the hand knitting needle by poking it through the fabric, then all the loops are the same size. Manually knit the needle to regular working position two times to secure the bobble and then remove the hand knitting needle. Hold all needles, return COR and place the next group of needles to the left into upper working position to knit to the next bobble placement. When all of the bobbles in the row have been knitted, knit 2 rows across all needles. To twist and complete each bobble, insert a single pronged transfer tool into all five loops, twist the tool 180 and then place the loops on a needle to the right (or left) of the bobble base needle. Knit 3 rows between repeats. In my sample, I alternated left and right placement from row to row and staggered the placement as well. You can use this bobble for an all over design or to accent cables and other techniques. If you hold the hand knitting needle lower, the loops and bobble will be larger so you must knit more rows before lifting/twisting the loops.

8
7
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5
4
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1



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