

Tips & Techniques!



BANDS THAT BIND!

Cut and sew construction makes it possible to concentrate on beautiful fabrics and garment shaping as two separate issues! This is certainly a major advantage when it comes to dividing jacquard and other double bed necklines, but there are lots of other instances when cut and sew is just as practical. Whether you use cut and sew for entire garments or just for necklines, you'll find these sandwich bands helpful because they totally enclose any raw edges. They are also excellent finishes for conventionally shaped pieces that don't require a ribbed treatment.

Do not apply sandwich bands to live stitches or cut edges for you run the risk of stitches pulling and running - no matter how well you steam them first. Better to be safe and bind off, sew or serge the edge first. The band will totally conceal the serged edge.

To determine how many stitches to knit for a band, you can measure the size of the neckline then multiply by your stockinet stitch gauge. Subtract 10% to insure that the band doesn't flare. You can also just poke the neckline onto the sinker posts (be careful not to stretch the edge) and read the numbers on the bed.

Single bed sandwich bands most commonly include stockinet, mock rib and fair isle. Sometimes we tend to overlook how useful and attractive these bands can be for finishing scoopy necklines, 3/4 sleeves or jackets that

require a straight, smooth fit. Ribbing is not always the answer!

All the single bed variations begin and end with about 10 rows of waste knitting and a row of ravel cord to divide the waste and main knitting. They are knitted twice the depth needed to allow for folding over and there is usually some consideration given to the row that creates the fold. You can simply knit one row with a greatly increased stitch size to create a fold line. Gradually decreasing and then increasing your stitch size for each half of the band produces more control and shape. If you're interested in decorative effects, two turning rows with a garter bar will make a nice garter stitch ridge (careful, this edge is very stretchy) and a row of transferred eyelets will produce a picot edge. For a sample band to try the application methods below, cast on about 20 stitches and knit 10 Rs waste yarn, 1 R ravel cord, 6 Rs main knitting, 1 fold row, 6 Rs main knitting, 1 R ravel cord, 10 Rs waste knitting.

When knitting these bands in mid or chunky weight yarns, you can eliminate some bulk and weight by knitting the inside of the band on every other needle. Then, instead of a turning row, simply bring the remaining needles to working position and continue knitting the band. This will produce an automatic row of picots while it reduces the bulk!

BASIC BANDS

Button Hole Band: This is just a functional

variation of the basic stockinet sandwich band. The width of the finished band is determined by the number of rows knitted before/between/after the buttonholes are made. Try knitting a band with our sample instructions for 4 rows/section and then vary the width as desired once you've seen how its done. Unless your buttons are very large (or your gauge quite fine) three stitch buttonholes should be adequate. The needle bed numbers are helpful in determining the exact placement and spacing of the buttonholes if you nudge groups of needles slightly forward in their slots to try out different arrangements. Before you begin, cut 1 yard of your main garment yarn and set it aside. You'll also need some contrasting waste yarn and ravel cord. Knit these bands at the same stitch size you used for your garment - or a size smaller for a firmer band.

1) With waste yarn, cast on and knit 10 rows. Knit 1 row with ravel cord.

2) With the main yarn, knit 4 rows.

3) Bring the groups of needles that will form the buttonholes forward to holding position. Manually knit them back to regular working position with ravel cord, carrying the cord across from one buttonhole to the next.

4) Knit 4 rows.

5) To form a sharper crease where the band folds, knit 1 row at stitch size 10.

6) Knit 4 rows.

7) Use a transfer tool to pick up the 4 main stitches at the top of each group of ravel cord stitches and hang them on the needles directly above. Refer to the numbers on the bed to double check your spacing after all of the groups have been picked up. Please note that you need to pick up 4 (not 3) stitches as

shown in figure 1.

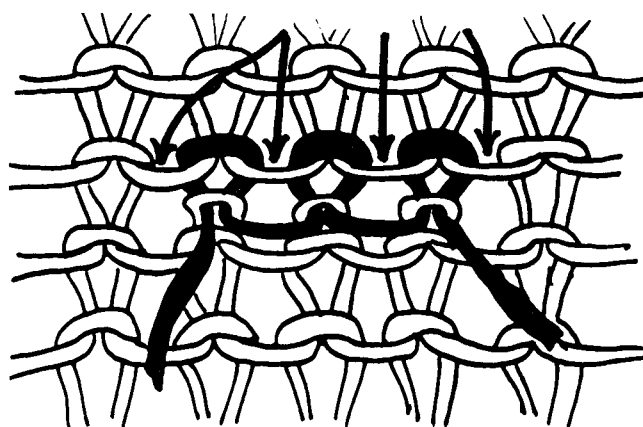


Figure 1

8) Using the reserved strand of the main yarn, bind off each of the buttonhole groups so that you have groups of 3 empty needles. Carry the yarn across loosely from one buttonhole to the next. The floats will be hidden inside the band.

9) Fill the empty needles by picking up the main stitches below the ravel cord as shown in figure 2.

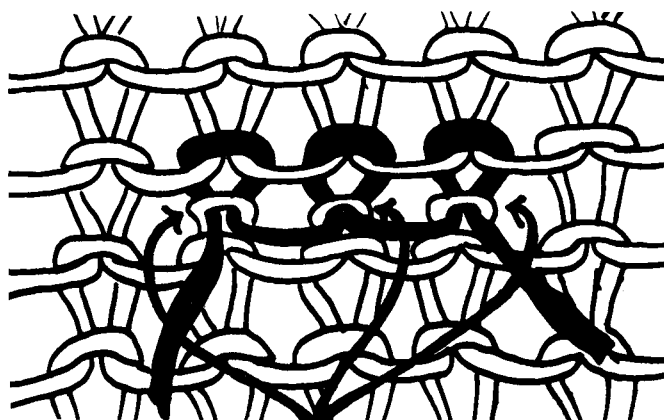


Figure 2

10) Knit 4 rows with main yarn, 1 row ravel cord, 10 rows of waste yarn. Drop the band from the machine.

11) Steam the band before applying to garment edge by one of the following methods.

How To Knit A Ribbed Band: Cast on and knit the desired number of rows of ribbing. With the beds in half pitch, bring the empty needles on both beds into working position, pick up and hang the purl bar from an opposite stitch onto each empty needle to prevent holes and knit 1 row across all needles. Put the beds into full pitch, increase the stitch size as for stockinet and knit at least 8 circular rows (4 on each bed). Sometimes the stitches at the very ends of the band are easier to manage later on if, instead of circular, you knit 4 rows on one bed then 4 rows on the other. For the simple band application, end with circular waste knitting and drop the band from the machine. The commercial neck band application begins with the band still on the machine so the circular waste is not necessary.

For a special, decorative touch try adding some purchased lace or trim to the machine between the fabric and the band. In the directions below, (***) indicates the appropriate time to hang the trim on the needles. Any lace or trim that has holes in it can be used.

APPLICATION METHODS

Simple Band Application: This method can be used for applying all single bed bands, as well as ribbed bands that end with circular knitting.

With the right side facing you rehang the garment over the specified number of NDLS, by poking the NDLS through the fabric, 1/4" in from the edge. (***) Bring the NDLS to HP with the garment behind the open latches. With the wrong side of the band facing you, fold back the waste yarn and rehang the first row of the band STS into the hooks of the same NDLS. Close the latches and use a flat needle pusher to *slowly and carefully* push the needle butts back to normal working position. The garment STS will slide over the closed latches as the band stitches are pulled

through them. Only the band STS should end up in the hooks of the NDLS. It is important to make sure that the latches remain closed throughout this step. Fold back the waste yarn on the second edge of the band and rehang the last row of STS into the same NDL hooks. Do not knit a row. Loosely B/O both sets of stitches by catching the yarn behind one sinker post as you work.

Commercial Sandwich Band: Several versions of this band have been around for years. It is a popular method because the bands look very much like they've been applied with the DL1000 linking machine. This is a very professional looking finish!

1) Begin with the completed band on the machine. This can be a single bed band (begin with waste knitting) or a ribbed band that ends with circular stockinet. In the latter case, drop the ribber bed just slightly.

2) Cover the main bed with a cloth or towel to keep the fabric clean. Work with the right side of the garment facing up and the neckline edge of the garment in front of the bed. Poke the needles through the neckline about 1/4" in from the edge and bring them out to C position with latches open. (***)

3) For single bed bands, pick up the first row of stitches above the waste yarn on the lower edge of the band and hang in the open needle hooks. For ribbed bands, transfer the ribber stitches to the main bed needles. At this point there are two methods to choose from for binding off. Method B looks better because it lies flatter, but method A is easier to manage.

Bind Off Method A: Use a needle pusher to gently and slowly push the needles back to regular working position so that the stitches just placed in the needle hooks are pulled through the garment and the stitches behind the latches. Flip the garment towards you, off

the bed so it hangs straight down in front of the machine. Knit one row with stitch size 10 and bind off loosely.

Bind Off Method B: Bring the needles all the way out to D position as you hang the last set of stitches. Manually knit each needle back to a point half way between working (B) and non-working (A) position. This gets a little awkward as you need to reach back under the garment with one hand to manipulate the needle butts while the other hand puts yarn into the needle hooks. Make sure the latches stay closed as you move each needle back. Flip the garment towards you so that it hangs straight down in front of the bed. The stitches you just formed by hand are large enough to latch one through the next for binding off.

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