

The EASY Way to EASE In Stitches

© 2006 by Margaret Parker Published in GBMK Newsletter

One person wrote to me inquiring how to add a substantial amount (example will be 28 to be added to 100 stitches) evenly across their work.

Here's what I do ...You'll want to 'ease' in those 28 stitches evenly cross your work. The quickest way is to take the work off on either the garter bar or ravel/waste. Then pull out the additional 28 needles (14 on each side of 0) and begin the even distribution of your work across the whole bed.

You'll have empty needles, but just pick up the purl bar of the stitch next to it and a hole won't form when you start knitting again. Now my personal way that I was taught was to use simple sewing techniques, like when you're easing a sleeve cap into an armhole.... Put a marker on your 1/4, 1/2 and 3/4 stitches on your original work before taking it off onto waste yarn. Then once you've added the new needles, determine the 1/4, 1/2 and 3/4 needles and hang those corresponding stitches on them.

It makes it much easier to make the addition of several stitches 'evenly' spaced across the work. Say your original work is 100 stitches. Your 1/4 mark is 25, 1/2=50 and 3/4=75. Adding 28 stitches for a total of 128, your half-way is 64, quarter mark at 32 and 3/4 mark at 96. Hang stitch 25 onto needle 32, stitch 50 onto 64 and stitch 75 onto needle 96. It's soooooo easy to ease in the other stitches evenly.

The reverse is true for decreasing across a piece of work. I've usually got a pretty good eye for 'fit', but I still use my markers and I have nice, even-looking knits. One word of caution: try not to stretch or pull your stitches in any way or you're apt to have a line / ridge across your knitting just as if you'd done a drastic change in your tension dial.

In basic classes I've taught, I've seen people just 'yank' on those stitches and when I ask why, they say "So I can see them better." Then they give me a look that says I should have known that. Then once they've finished the piece, they ask "This doesn't look smooth. What's this ridge doing on here?" Once explained, they generally don't do it again.

Sometimes, you've got to make mistakes in order to set it in your mind.