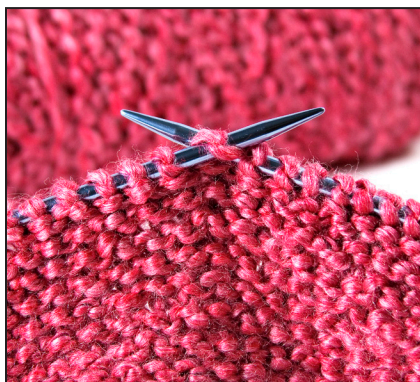




# How to Choose Knitting Needles

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## Choosing your knitting needles

You probably learned to knit using traditional straight needles. As you shop for additional needles, you may be overwhelmed by all the choices available. Here are some answers to help you choose the right needles for your projects.

### There are three basic types of knitting needles:

**Straight needles** are sold in pairs and are used for most basic knitting projects to create a flat piece. They are generally available in two lengths, 25 cm and 35 cm. Choose the length that will allow you to keep all the stitches on your needles without crowding.

**Circular needles** are used to knit "in the round" without any seams. Sweater bodies, hats and socks are common uses for circular needles. They come in a variety of lengths to accommodate many different size projects. Some people also like to use circular needles for all their knitting because the weight of the project will rest in your lap instead of on the needles. This may be especially desirable when making large items like afghans.

**Double point needles** have points at both ends and are usually sold in sets of four or five. They are used to knit in the round. Often they are used when the circumference of a project is too small to be knitted on a circular needle.

In addition to needle sizes, knitting needles come in a variety of materials. Choosing what type of material to purchase is often a personal preference. Sometimes one material may work better for a specific project. All material types are available in straight, circular and double point styles.

**Plastic needles** are smooth and flexible. They are often the least expensive choice. They are easy to work with and widely available. They allow the yarn to move smoothly over the surface, so they are good for fuzzy yarns which could catch on wood or bamboo needles.

**Metal needles** may be made of aluminum, steel or nickel-plated brass. These needles are sturdy and don't bend easily. Because their surface is highly polished and smooth, all types of yarn will move quickly and easily over the surface. They are a good general purpose choice.

**Bamboo and exotic wood needles** are good for slippery yarn. They are warm to the touch and smooth. They are usually a bit more expensive than plastic or metal. Very small sizes may bend or break easily. Because the yarn does not move as quickly over their surface, bamboo needles may be good for beginners.

Check the ballband on your yarn to find the recommended size hook or needles to make your project.

**Tip**

**SPOTLIGHT**