

**Lee Meredith** 00:03

Welcome to the Knit Picks Podcast! I'm Lee and I'm here with Stacey!

**Stacey Winklepleck** 00:08

Hi. So today on the Knit Picks podcast, we're gonna kind of do something a little bit different. We're going to talk about our origin stories, whether it's knitting or crochet or crafting. But so it's not just the two of us talking, we brought in some of our co-workers. We've got Kate here and Heather. Hi, guys.

**Kate Millard** 00:27

Hey!

**Heather Mann** 00:28

hello,

**Lee Meredith** 00:29

hi. [laughing]

**Kate Millard** 00:32

Hi, friends.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 00:34

It's so nice to see everyone. So today, we're going to talk, like I said about origin stories, like how we learn to- specifically how we learn to knit and/or crochet. I'll go ahead and start because I'm talking, I'm gonna start. I actually learned to crochet when I was really young, but it never really stuck with me, I tried a couple times, but mine's a little bit sad. But in 2001, my father passed away from cancer, he'd been sick for a long time. And my mom was kind of at loose ends. Like she just didn't know what to do, you know, that feeling where you just don't know what to do. So at that point, I wanted a scarf. And I wanted my mom to concentrate on something and give her like something to do. So I had her teach me how to knit. And so we just got some yarn from the craft store. And she taught me how to cast on and to actually do a knit stitch. Unfortunately, I live two hours away from my mom. So when I went home, I tried to do it on my own, I knit but I did the you know, the thing where you kind of add stitches and don't know about it. [Lee giggles] So my scarf turned into a very wide scarf, and ended up being just a cat blanket. So that is what my origin story is. At that time internet wasn't really big, but I did kind of search around and use like Knitty and a couple of websites. And I also got a couple of books and like learned. And then once I started I just couldn't stop. How about you, Lee?

**Lee Meredith** 02:12

Oh, I had a couple of roommates, my third year of college, which would have been 2002 2003, who knit and crocheted a little bit. And they're the ones who first made me see like, Oh, I could like make hats and stuff. Like that's the thing, like I had never known anyone who knit or crocheted. So I got really into the idea of learning how to do it. But I was really busy with college and classes and stuff. I was an art

major. So I constantly had art projects, I had to work on stuff and as I didn't really get into it, but I did learn some basics from them and from my mom who also knew some basics. So they kind of taught me you know, cast on, knit stitch and also crochet like single crochet, and I actually did more crochet a little bit in college. I crocheted a few hats and learn some basics and stuff. And then when I graduated college from art school, and I no longer had art classes and projects constantly, you know, on the canvas or whatever other medium. I felt very like I didn't know what I was doing with my life with my hands with. I like I needed projects and school had always provided me with projects. So now that I'm no longer in school, I was like, Okay, I need projects, like my brain isn't okay without projects. So I got some knitting books. I got old school classic Stitch 'n Bitch. This is was 2004. And I really got into it. I just like dove in. I learned how to knit, purl, rib, cable, yarn over, all the things. It just, yeah, I just so self taught myself in that point on and there was no looking back. Yeah.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 03:54

That's awesome. So Heather, how about you?

**Heather Mann** 03:58

Okay, it's my turn. Um, so I grew up both of my grandmothers were knitters. One grandma was from Norway. So that's pretty cultural. Like every, almost every Norwegian, I think, knows how to knit and crochet. I even still have the traditional Norwegian sweater that my grandma knitted for herself, that is now mine. So that's pretty cool. So I grew up seeing people knitting and crocheting all the time. And I learned how to finger crochet basically make chains as a child. So I would spend time knitting or finger crocheting a whole entire skein of like, yarn into a long, long chain, and then kind of that kept me busy a lot when I was in grade school, but I didn't really learn how to construct anything until about the same time period, Lee mentioned early 2000s when the Stitch 'N Bitch groups became popular, and I started going to a group in Houston, Texas, and I learned how to knit there. And I didn't I did. Like I knitted a little bit, I knitted a few scarves and things. And I think the last project I ever knitted was one of these projects. One of these patterns, actually. But I, then I taught myself how to crochet and I taught myself from the little booklet. So there it was before YouTube was the thing. So you either had to have someone specifically teaching you or you had to just figure it out on your own from written material. So I was crocheting. At that time, I was like traveling for my job. So I would always crochet in my hotel room at night. And the first like three things I made were really had weird tension, and they're really not stretchy. And I learned later that I had been inserting the hook like backwards. And I don't know, like making really tight stitches because I was putting the hook in the wrong way. But then once I learned how to crochet, putting the hook in the correct place, I was pretty much off and running with crochet at that point. And I didn't really knit at all after that. So fast forward to I don't know, five years ago, I started crocheting regularly. And then once I got a job here with Knit Picks, I've been crocheting constantly for the last two and a half years. So that's it I, that's my story, and I'm sticking to it.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 06:16

I had a similar thing. I was reminded, bringing up Stitch 'N Bitch and like putting in your hook that wrong way. That was probably my problem with doing crocheting, too, which it's never really stuck with me.

But when I learned to knit, and I learned to knit by myself, I learned a purl by myself. I completely did it backwards for years. And it was actually when I got the Stitch 'N Bitch book that it kind of like it was like a light bulb going off. I'm like, Oh, you wrap the yarn this way to purl. And you won't have twisted stitches. Because remember, at the time, I had a blog, and I was like posting it. And people were like commenting and like, looks like you're twisting your stitches. And I'm like, I'm not twisting my stitches. What are you talking about? I was. Yep. And I should listen. So Kate, how about you? What have you, when did you learn?

**Kate Millard** 07:06

I believe it was the mid 2000s. And I was in Seattle with a friend. We were visiting his family. And his stepmother was a pretty avid knitter. And we were there for the weekend. And she's like, you know what, because it was myself and his siblings and like extended family, there was a big group of us. And we were in the Seattle area. She was like, Let's go, you know, to a yarn shop. We I can't remember the name of it. It may or may not still be there. But it was in sort of like the Queen Anne area of Seattle. And she took us in she's like, pick out a you pick out a yarn, and we'll get you some needles. And we all ended up doing that I remember I picked out a really gorgeous, like teal, kind of expensive, totally the wrong yarn to start to learn with because it was slippery and silky. And it was it ended up being a hot mess. But it was very sweet of her. She She paid for all our yarn, the needles, we went back to the house and she taught us all how to cast on. And you know, real simple just like garter stitch, we, by the end of the weekend, we all have very long, wonky kind of scarf like things in various yarns. And that was sort of really my first introduction to knitting. I grew up in a family of like sewists and quilters. So yarn crafts, weren't really our jam, but ever since then, I've been much more inclined to pick up you know, yarn and some needles and now actually I'm dabbling in crochet. And I find it's just a lot easier. It's a lot more transportable you know, I take it with me, projects with me everywhere I go so versus you know, can't really lug around a sewing machine and a couple of yards of fabric it's just not really travel friendly. So So yeah, just my friends step mom a weekend in Seattle, a little yarn store and a very slippery expensive silk yarn.

**Heather Mann** 09:19

That's synopsis was so cute.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 09:23

Been there with the with the wrong yarn for beginning and are learning knitting I used to remember early on in my knitting I was like obsessed with like ribbon yarn. And that wasn't great to to as a beginner to use.

**Kate Millard** 09:39

Yeah

**Lee Meredith** 09:39

My very first project was I had I was a crafting kid but I didn't like knit or crochet but I did just like random crafts with yarn as a kid. And my mom had kind of kept my craft stuff all like in a box. So I had a bunch of random yarn. It was just like all acrylic. It was all random, all kinds of different weights but like around worsted-ish but varied. And so my very first project was just a long garter stitch scarf. But I kept switching yarns to do stripes because I was bored with just you know, same, same same for the whole thing. So I kept adding stripes and not knowing what I was doing not knowing about gauge. And so the stripes are kind of like all different ways. So the scarf is not very straight. I didn't add stitches like you, Stacey, I think I kept the same stitch count throughout, but is a very wonky.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 10:32

I still don't know how I did that. But I did. So it was just, I'm sure the piece is somewhere in my deep in my boxes or something.

**Heather Mann** 10:42

So do you have pictures of it on Ravelry?

**Stacey Winklepleck** 10:46

I don't think so. This is before Ravelry. So, um and it was before I started my blog, which was, I only had my blog for like a couple of years. And then Ravelry came and I just kind of gave up my blog. So I don't think I took pictures of it.

**Kate Millard** 11:02

Was it before digital cameras? [laughing]

**Stacey Winklepleck** 11:10

No, it was definitely I did have a digital camera. I guess it must have. I think it was before phone cameras were a thing. Because I didn't really have a phone. So I must have been able to take pictures somehow. But

**Heather Mann** 11:19

Yeah from 2000 to like 2008 digital cameras were a normal part of life.

**Lee Meredith** 11:25

Yeah

**Stacey Winklepleck** 11:25

Yeah, I guess I must have had one. I don't remember getting an actual digital camera until like, more recently, like in the last I mean more recently as in the last 15 years rather than the last 20 years. [Heather laughs] So since I moved to this part to- move to my current house anyway, that's awesome.

**Heather Mann** 11:44

Everyone, in learning, knitting or crochet, was there any specific tip or approach that helps you learn better? Do you remember anything that like sticks out that kind of helped you on your way to learning?

**Kate Millard** 11:58

Don't knit too tight.

**Heather Mann** 12:01

..And crochet too. That's it. That's a tip for everyone.

**Kate Millard** 12:04

I still struggle with that. Because if for some reason my brains like, "tighter is better". And that's not true at all. It's just, it's like, you have to train yourself to just kind of relax, which is not easy for me. But you know, working on it.

**Lee Meredith** 12:19

Yeah, agreed.

**Kate Millard** 12:21

Well, it's like Beyonce says, "gotta get it tight. gotta get it right". And those are words I live by. [laughing]

**Lee Meredith** 12:28

Not for knitting, though!

**Kate Millard** 12:29

Not for knitting!

**Lee Meredith** 12:31

She's, she's-- Unfortunately, she's not talking about knitting. We wish she was.

**Heather Mann** 12:34

I'm sure there's some kind of song about being loose, or keeping it loose or something too. [Laughing]

**Lee Meredith** 12:38

Oh yeah, totally. That one's about knitting. [Laughing]

**Heather Mann** 12:42

When I when I learned how to crochet actually what inspired me to want to learn to crochet was at the Stitch 'N Bitch group. One girl was crocheting a granny square scarf out of mohair, and it was like white mohair granny squares. And it was so pretty. I was like, wow, I really want to learn how to do that. So I went to a local yarn store and got mohair yarn and tried to learn to crochet with it, which is just like such

a noob mistake to make and it didn't, I don't think I was able to really learn how to do it with that yarn. But that was what inspired me to go towards crochet.

**Kate Millard** 13:16

Did you ever make that dream scarf?

**Heather Mann** 13:20

No. And I have thought about I think about it regularly. Actually, whenever I look at our Aloft mohair yarn. I'm like I should just make that thing happen because I could probably do it in like an evening now.

**Kate Millard** 13:32

Yeah

**Heather Mann** 13:34

I, maybe I will.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 13:37

Well, what I heard from it on all of our origin stories that someone helped us introduce the craft while learning happens solo, someone helps guide us. I think that's pretty true for everyone here. At least starting beginning with someone teaching us and then kind of working on our own. So that's awesome. I kind of love it. I wonder if... if you have an origin story, leave a comment on this blog post or whatever and let us know yours if you had a completely different one. [music starts] But anyway, thank you so much, Heather and Kate for for joining me and Lee... not just listening to the two of us talk.

**Kate Millard** 14:14

Of course, any time.

**Heather Mann** 14:15

Thank you for having me.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 14:17

And then Lee and I are going to come back together and offer some tips and tricks on what you should keep in mind when teaching someone how to knit. [music ends]

**Zoey Baggins** 14:26

[music begins] If you're looking to level up or introduce knitting to someone, you know, our Knit Picks Learn to Knit Kits are the perfect gift. With project-focused kits, you'll be able to begin as soon as you open the box. Kits vary from beginner-dishcloths and scarves-to more intermediate-hats and socks. Knit Picks Learn to Knit Kits include yarn, needles, a book and notions to complete each project, and we're happy to introduce our latest Learn to Knit Kits for Learning to Cable with two different knitted cable projects. These kits were made by knitters with knitters of all levels in mind, but don't just take our

word for it. Our customers have also weighed in. Deborah S. said, "loved everything about the kit. The yarn was great and the instructions clear. Would recommend to anyone." Nancy C. said, "this project is great for the beginner knitter. The project is perfect for instant gratification. The project is a perfect size to get some muscle memory without it being too overwhelming." Visit [knitpicks.com](http://knitpicks.com) and go to Kits and Value Packs and select Learn to Knit Kits to shop and learn more. Happy knitting. [music ends]

**Stacey Winklepleck 15:35**

Hey, so we're back with Lee and Stacey Of course. And we're going to talk a little bit more about teaching someone to knit. Our friends at the WeCrochet Podcast did an episode on jobs and crochet that kind of touched on making money as a teacher to knit a knitting or crochet teacher. But today we're going to look at teaching someone one-on-one. And I know we both have had some experience with teaching someone one on one. But I know Lee you've had a lot of experience as a teacher

**Lee Meredith 16:04**

Well. So actually, I haven't really taught people one on one. But I have taught classes for knitting. So,

**Lee Meredith 16:11**

I base my experience on teaching classes, I used to design knitting patterns and do random freelance stuff, which included teaching so I've taught at some like festivals and retreats and events and like yarn stores and all kinds of random things. And with like different kinds of classes and different kinds of experience levels. So I've had a bit of experience with like, just kind of learning- The main, the main number one thing that I've learned is that everyone's brains works differently, really.

**Stacey Winklepleck 16:11**

Oh, okay.

**Stacey Winklepleck 16:19**

Yep.

**Lee Meredith 16:34**

Like we like kind of know that. But it when you're teaching, you really realized like, oh, everyone learns differently, everyone thinks differently, everyone kind of clicks at different places, or based on different things kind of. So we all know that, you know, visual learner versus, you know, reading kind of learner different kinds of learners. But so for teaching, you want to really keep that in mind that like you don't know, what's going to help something click for the other person. So, you know, the classes I would teach, I always had printed out paper instructions of what I was teaching. And then I would also you know, say everything in person and words and try to word things a few different ways, especially if they were kind of complicated or hard to wrap your head around that was kind of try to, you know, make analogies or, or comparisons if applicable. Just put things in different terms for different people. And then also of course show with by doing it yourself or, or pointing to what they're doing and showing visually. So you have kind of the written downwards and the spoken words and that the shown actions

all working together for it to help really kind of sink in for people who are learning things for the first time.

**Stacey Winklepleck 18:02**

Yeah, I mean, I'm thinking back to when I learned to knit my mom taught me like kind of basic ones, and showed me but for me personally, learning was looking at more like photos of like how to do a knit stitch and like how to do a purl stitch. Which is funny, the procedure never really clicked with me until like, a couple years after I did it. I'm like, oh, I've been doing it wrong the entire time. So I was like twisting my purls. I think that's a pretty typical newbie thing is twisting the purls, I'm going to pretend it is because I did that for several years.

**Lee Meredith 18:37**

I've heard from many other knitters that I know who have the exact same story of, of years of twisted purls.

**Stacey Winklepleck 18:46**

So if you're gonna teach someone how to knit, where this is kind of where we're kind of going with this of like, how do you teach someone to knit who's really interested? And so we're going to come up with some tips and tricks on getting started and most importantly, I think is gathering materials. Like what's what kind of yarn to do suggest for teaching someone to knit for the first time?

**Lee Meredith 19:08**

Yeah, I think like around a worsted or Aran weight is going to be the easiest to learn with. As you get lighter, it gets just a little bit more fiddly where you want to kind of know what you're doing already and if it gets heavier than that, you know it might like a bulkier super bulky might be a good like visual way to really see what's happening but it also just might be like harder to hold

**Stacey Winklepleck 19:30**

It's harder on my hands I think. Yeah,

**Lee Meredith 19:32**

so I would like a worsted [weight] is really kind of the perfect in between medium like you can see the stitches and see what's happening.

**Stacey Winklepleck 19:42**

Yeah along those things I would say a really smooth yarn to is helpful. If you're using something like if you're using something like say Swish is also or Brava are good ones to learn because they're very smooth. I wouldn't recommend using something like even though it's lovely but like Preciosa or like Wonderfluff just because yeah, fuzz, and you can't see. And one of the things that clicked really well with me was being able to read my stitches. And I think when you're learning to knit, being able to tell,

well, this is a knit stitch, this is what it should look like. And this is a purl stitch. That's what it should look like, and so on and so forth.

**Lee Meredith** 20:19

Yeah, and that's actually, one of the huge things I learned. While teaching is how many knitters can't read their knitting, or are just not experienced or not, not used to needing to kind of like rely on on row counters and stuff and not. So I taught a class of with a pattern of mine that like it used to make one increase every six rows. And a huge part of that class was actually teaching people how to look at their knitting and know when six rows had happened, like when it's the sixth row, when to increase instead of, you know, counting, because I think that's really important. Or even if it's not necessary, because row counters exist, and you can write down notes, I think it really helps the enjoyment of knitting, to just have that in your tool belt to be able to read your knitting. So, yeah, teaching a person to knit, kind of focusing on reading their knitting and look at just focusing on making sure they're looking at what's happening and can see the difference between, you know, right side and wrong side. And they can see when a stitch is twisted, like, if you can see things that that experienced knitters would be like, Oh, yeah, obviously. But like, you need to learn that that's the thing you need to learn. It's like, what does the wrong side versus the right side look like? So I think that's a great thing to teach, like, explicitly, instead of just kind of assuming they're looking at it.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 21:46

Right. I mean, it's, I mean, I was talking to one of our co workers, when we were in the office, and she was asking me to figure out what was wrong with her knitting. And so I was explaining to her, like, okay, so see that that's, that's a knit stitch. I mean, she was someone who had knit but not really read her knitting. And like, Okay, I'm like, so when you're looking at this, see how this is different, like it's a knit two together there, it shouldn't be there. Again, you can see how the two legs are knit two together, and so on and so forth. So it's a really, it's something that I think a lot of people don't realize is important, like you said about row counters. Yeah, row counters exists. But I can't tell you how many times my row counter has fell off my knitting and lost. So I've had to count them so or my cat runs off with it, or it breaks, which doesn't happen that often. But sometimes it happens. So yeah, yeah. Then along with that, I'd say making sure you're using like kind of a, I'd say the medium size needle like size six through, I'd say eight. I think once they get a little bit past eight, they get a little bit too heavy. Would you say that?

**Lee Meredith** 22:50

Yeah.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 22:51

Especially if you using worsted? Yeah. And if you're using worsted weight, that's the needles you're going to gravitate to, too. So it's not the stitches aren't too loose or too tight. So do you have a preference on needle material, like for teaching,

**Lee Meredith** 23:05

I tend to like wood or bamboo better than metal because it, it holds the stitches a little better, they're less likely to slip off. Yeah, it's pretty good to learn on. I think I probably learned on like vintage plastic, it was just whatever I got for free, or found at their store or something. But if you want like the best learning experience for the person to have like the best first impression, then probably like a wood needle is going to be a better first impression.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 23:33

Me, I think I just became like a knitting needle snob anyway, like I was teaching my niece several years ago, how to knit and she had the plastic needles that you get at the Goodwill, or that your were your grandmother's, in fact, they were my grandma, my mother's. And I'm like, No, no, no, we are going to switch to like wood. It'll feel nicer in your hand. And I just, I will help you with that. So

**Lee Meredith** 23:58

Yeah.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 23:59

It didn't really stick with her, though.

**Lee Meredith** 24:02

You know, learn, learning crafts is hard when it's like the kind of crafts that's passed down, or that's, I'm just thinking about sewing too because I, a lot of people learn sewing on like a really cheap machine, or an old machine that hasn't really been tuned up. And and it's a bad first impression or spinning too. We talked about spinning last week and how it's their last episode. Um, it's a lot harder to spin on a spindle. Yet, a spindle is the way that most people learn, because it's not cost prohibitive. And it's hard to know if you like something when you're using like the cheapest possible version of tools, because you might. The reason you don't like it is very likely to be that you're using cheap tools. That's why you don't like it. But you're not going to want to invest in more expensive tools if you if you don't really know if you like it, right? So it's hard, it's hard. I'm just kind of working through the complication. But if you can just use some of your nice tools to teach so that the person can know if they like it or not before they know if they want to invest in nice stuff, you know, that's a helpful thing you can do. So someone did for me with the spinning wheels, they taught me how to use their spinning wheel, so I could see if I liked it first before I bought one. So I think that's, that's a kind way to teach someone is to give them the good stuff.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 25:22

Yeah, and we have I mean, we put together the Learn to Knit Kits on the site with that in mind of using like, the best materials. To get someone to fall in love with knitting, I love the feel of yarn and the feel of wooden knitting needles. And that's what we put in the Learn to Knit Kit along with like, easy ways to teach someone. So if you are learning, if you are going to teach someone to knit, I mean, just to plug our Learn to Knit Kit is actually a great way to start because it comes with the yarn, and the needles and everything you need to get someone started on the right path of knitting will say that.

**Lee Meredith 26:03**

A lot better than thrift store plastic needles.

**Stacey Winklepleck 26:05**

Yes, it may be cheap, but then you might not right I think, I think it was Stephanie Pearl McPhee who's like motto is use the best, the best materials you can afford so or something. I don't know.

**Lee Meredith 26:18**

Yeah, it makes it you know, you don't you don't have to spend beyond your budget or but just like being able to upgrade a little bit from the basics, it makes it more enjoyable. And it's a hobby that we all want to enjoy, right. So the person you're teaching should get to experience that to see if they enjoy it. So you're going to bring good needles, good yarn, good, good weight, that's pretty much all you need for tools. I talked a little bit about teaching classes and how I'd always have printed materials for my classes. So I think that would translate to bringing some books along. Because the person you're teaching might learn better from from reading, then hearing things spoken or a combination. So if you happen to have any, like learning, you know, old old school Stitch 'n Bitch or just like basic learn to knit books, and that can help with like other visuals along with your own words and actions and stuff, it can all work together.

**Stacey Winklepleck 27:15**

Definitely. One thing to keep in mind, actually, when you're teaching someone to knit, is to pick the right kind of project, because it feels like a lot of people start with scarves. And that is not, I don't feel like that's the way to have someone fall in love with knitting, because it's such a time commitment. And honestly, especially if you if the person you're teaching just wants the product. I mean, I learned to knit on a scarf, my scarf was not a very good scarf. And I didn't give up on it because I did love the process. But I think using something like a dish cloth, I always recommend dish cloths because you use worsted weight yarn for the most part, like our Dishie or, or anything like that. It's over really quickly. And if you make a mistake, hey, it's a dish cloth, you can still use it even if there's like twisted stitches or skipped stitches or whatever. So.

**Lee Meredith 28:08**

yeah, I think dish cloth is perfect. I also think upgrading to a hat is a really good way to, because the hat is small and it can be very simple. You learn how to knit in the round, which is a great skill to have. You can learn ribbing, so you can get used to purls and knits and the difference between them and how to do ribbing. And then after you've gone around around a bunch and kind of gotten the hang of that, then you can learn some decreases. So it brings a lot of skills building on each other in a pretty small manageable project. Hats are kind of my favorite thing. My favorite way to like try.

**Stacey Winklepleck 28:47**

You don't say. [laughs]

**Lee Meredith** 28:48

I think they're a great way to learn. I also learned with scarves and it like two giant scarves. And luckily it was meant to be with knitting and me I it didn't discourage me from yep, keeping going. But after those two giant scarves, I started to venture out into hats and then I got obsessed with hats. Yeah.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 29:08

Yeah, my first scarf was, I lived a couple hours away from my mom, and she taught me to knit and then I just was like I'm gonna knit when I go home. And then I just, you know, it's a classic thing that happens with new knitters. I say, hopefully, and it wasn't just me is I accidentally would increase my row and then I would just keep going. And then so my, my, my, my scarf turned into what ended up being a cat blanket. So because it got so wide, because I didn't know I was just like I'm having fun. So anyway, I just wanted to throw that in there for picking the right kind of project for the person you're knitting for is particularly important. So

**Lee Meredith** 29:51

Yeah, yeah, and cotton is a little bit trickier to knit with than like a wool. So you might want to just have them knit like a rectangular swatch like like a dish cloth out of wool, just to learn, you know, and then then maybe try some cotton dish cloths or or wool hat or,

**Stacey Winklepleck** 30:09

Yeah, that sounds like something to keep in mind.

**Lee Meredith** 30:12

You can also make like, a rectangle into fingerless mitts by seaming it into a tube, you know. So that's a way to just knit like a wool rectangle, and then just kind of or make it into a cowl, you know, cowls a lot smaller, smaller than a scarf. So you can kind of brainstorm other ways to knit very simple small projects that aren't giant long scarves. Yeah.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 30:36

So Lee, since you've taught people how to knit Have you ever heard that the famous old knitting rhyme?

**Lee Meredith** 30:43

No, I don't think I have

**Stacey Winklepleck** 30:44

No?

**Lee Meredith** 30:45

No.

**Stacey Winklepleck 30:46**

Into through window, run around the back, out through the window off jumps Jack. And that's how you had to do a knit stitch. So you're in through the window, run around the back out to the window off jumps Jack. The stitch.

**Lee Meredith 30:59**

Yeah. It's like how we learn to tie our shoes. Yeah. I don't remember what it is. But it sounds similar to that. Yeah. someone's having a hard time remembering the steps. That's, the rhyme, it's always a good way to. That's fun.

**Stacey Winklepleck 31:15**

So I think one of the another really important part of teaching someone to knit is to be patient. Because Yeah, you may have like, 20 years of knowledge, like me and you, but this person isn't and you know, we've been around it for most of our lives and, and all that so they're not going to do it. So

**Lee Meredith 31:36**

Especially if they're not like a crafter, if they like a lot of people learn to knit, maybe they have sewn or or crocheted or you know, or macrame, or embroidery or something, so they kind of like, at least know how like string works, and they but if someone is really coming at it new if it's a younger person has never done a craft before just anyone who doesn't have that kind of background. It's all new to them. You have to. Yeah, be patient. Be patient, it's, it might be a little bit frustrating that they're not like getting it but try explaining in different words or showing different ways or if they're really having a hard time holding the yarn, maybe try it the other way, you know, Continental versus English. Throwing versus picking like, maybe try the other one that might be better for them. Yeah, just just a basic knit stitch can be really difficult to learn for the first time and a lot of us don't remember what that's like, I think that was so long ago.

**Stacey Winklepleck 32:33**

It's like, No, you just put it here. But using clear words, I think is really important. Like, even though that little rhyme is very cute, but like this is a stitch and so you're going to poke your needle through that stitch and better words than that, I would say I am not a teacher as obvious.

**Lee Meredith 32:52**

Yeah, and watch them do the steps and make sure you know, they're they're doing everything correctly, because they might, it might be difficult because they're doing something wrong or twisted and that's making it harder for them. And they're like, Oh, no, if you if you do it this way, it's easier. Yeah.

**Stacey Winklepleck 33:08**

I have a question, actually, since this is probably come up when you've taught people, but some of the people that I've taught in a more not formal way, but they always hold it really tight. How do you get

people to loosen their hands? That was a problem I had. I was just remembering that when I was teaching someone to knit I'm like, because I guess because I'm a loose knitter. I My hands are always just kind of relaxed when I'm knitting it. But I've also been doing it for a long time. So

**Lee Meredith 33:33**

Yeah, yeah. anecdote. I taught my brother had an it when I was in college, and we were both in college and we were home for Christmas break. And he's he's like this genius like computer engineer person. He's a very smart person. And he was sitting there knitting and he said, this is the hardest thing I've ever done. And the reason was that it was so tight it was like a piece of paper like it was there was no drape to the fabric at all. It was so tight and I was still a new knitter I had just learned myself so I didn't really understand how much harder that was making it or how to tell him not like I told him no it's too tight you need to loosen up but like I didn't really know. Yeah, so for I was a much tighter knitter and I had to kind of like force myself to loosen up. And it really was just like being really conscious of it. being conscious of being looser. Elizabeth Zimmerman has some good stuff about like gauge all evening out and like, have no known it or has like a perfect even tension all throughout. It just blocks out that you know it all, it all evens out. So I think I think one of the problems with people who knit tightly is that they want it to be even and they think if it's loose and it's uneven, but it all does even out now even if it's something you're not blocking really hard, it's just like the nature of knitting is it's going to even out. So don't worry, I think that's the main thing is to tell them like, no, don't worry about the tension being even just worry about, like it feeling good on your hands and like feeling comfortable. And then you're gonna, you're gonna find a place that that it works for you comfort wise, and then it will be even because it'll all just be close enough and even out kind of, does that make sense?

**Stacey Winklepleck 35:26**

Yeah, I just know that my method of just relax didn't really help my person I was teaching.

**Lee Meredith 35:33**

Yeah, I think kind of explaining to them maybe like, oh, you're probably knitting tighter than you need to, because you're worried about like evenness. But that's, that's not really something you need to worry about. You should worry about your hands at because it's gonna hurt if you keep going that tight. Yeah.

**Stacey Winklepleck 35:49**

If you're teaching someone who's like a child, or someone you're very close to, and you don't mind putting your arms around them, actually holding the, the their hands with the needle, I'm thinking like, as a kid clearly, but I mean, a partner would be fine, too. But like, like actually doing them holding their hands and doing the actual knit stitch might be helpful to like to get the like, this is how it should be. You know what I mean? Anyway, just throwing that out there. I mean, I'm sure most people probably are aware,

**Lee Meredith 36:18**

Yeah, there's no right or wrong way to knit. I mean, to be fair, like you can, if you're producing the fabric you want, there's no wrong way to knit. I remember our old coworker was, was told so many times that she knit wrong, because she did knit very strangely. But it made beautiful projects. So who's to say, so? Anyway, everyone needs to relax.

**Lee Meredith** 36:18

It's also important to know that like, there is no correct tension or tightness. Like, you don't need to get the gauge on the ball band that with the needle on the ball. But you know, like, the whole point of gauge is that you you get gauge with whatever needles you're using that works for you. And so, you know, it's not that they're doing it wrong or anything, it's just if it's really tight, it's gonna be hard on their bodies, on their hands. So that's like the reason. It's not a matter of like, doing it right or wrong. I think that's a big thing with knitting as people think there's a right way to do everything. And they have to do it right. But like knitting is, like, pretty flexible, and kind of do what works for you.

**Lee Meredith** 37:22

Something you like, you're doing it right. Yeah. Right, you're enjoying it.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 37:27

And then most importantly, you want to celebrate the win. You want to cheer them you want to keep this person as a knitter forever. So you want to indoctrinate them into the knitting cult.

**Lee Meredith** 37:40

Wouldn't have put it that way, but yeah,

**Stacey Winklepleck** 37:42

That's how my partner refers to it. So I figured I'd throw that in there. But no, I mean, I think it's great. We really want to create like a new, you know, generation of knitters if you're teaching a child or a teenager or, or what and so they can go out and teach people too, so, and more than anything, so it's not a bad thing.

**Lee Meredith** 38:03

Yeah, you could tell them people to follow on Instagram, who are really inspiring knitters who will get them excited or hashtags to follow just kind of like introduce them to like the online world of knitting so they can see what's out there and stuff and and, you know, books and patterns and things that that you think would be fit them style wise that they would like and show them how knitting can be very, you know, diverse style wise and stuff. And they can really like whatever whatever kind of stuff they like to wear, or, or home decor or whatever. Like they can find stuff out there that suited to them that they can be excited about. And that'll encourage them to learn more.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 38:44

I was just remembering that I'm like, I wish I mean, I remember when I first started knitting, it was early, it was early 2000. So it wasn't, Instagram wasn't a thing. Social media wasn't a huge thing. But I remember, that's actually what got me falling in love with knitting was I got really into like message boards and knitty patterns and things like that,

**Lee Meredith** 39:06

Craftser!

**Stacey Winklepleck** 39:06

Craftster, yep. Yeah, so I was, like, that's kind of my, that's also kind of my personality is I get obsessed with something, and I want to read everything about it. And then I get really obsessed. For a long time knitting never really left. And then of course, it turned into my job. But I just do that I just read everything I can find. So if you have someone like that, you know, Instagram is a great way I'm thinking of Instagram too, because that's how I got really into garment sewing. was actually yeah, it was following Instagram, hashtags. And I think also I work with you and you know, other coworkers who sew. But I also just like that was a part of feeding my obsession with it was actually going into Instagram and like, looking at all the stuff I can make and then and I feel like that's the thing.

**Lee Meredith** 39:51

Yeah, for me as the the MeMadeMay hashtag I think it would have been 2018. I was following that hashtags that a lot of Me Made May stuff is knit and I was following it to see like the knitted sweaters but then there were so many sewn garments. I was like, Oh no, I want to sew these things too. And then that's that's what got me into to start sewing because that hashtag. Yeah.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 40:13

Yeah, no, I think that's great. [music begins] So, let us know some of your tips and tricks of teaching people how to knit you can leave them in the comments below or give us a call and leave us a voicemail. We'll give the number at the end of the show.

**Lee Meredith** 40:27

Yeah.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 40:27

Thanks, Lee.

**Lee Meredith** 40:30

Thanks, Stacey.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 40:35

This podcast was originally created by Kelly Petkin.

**Lee Meredith** 40:38

This episode is produced and hosted by me, Lee Meredith, and Stacey Winklepleck,

**Stacey Winklepleck** 40:44

With additional content from Heather Mann and Kate Millard.

**Lee Meredith** 40:48

It is produced and edited by Sarah Nairalez.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 40:52

Transcripts and production assistance by Kelly Fulop.

**Lee Meredith** 40:56

We've recorded this episode in the Pacific Northwest where we're always excited for new people to find knitting and us.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 41:03

A big thank you to our friends over at the connecting threads podcast and the week crochet podcast where we're all keeping the craft in crafting.

**Lee Meredith** 41:12

And from everyone here at Knit Picks. Thank you for joining us.

**Stacey Winklepleck** 41:15

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**Lee Meredith** 41:27

Yarn, tools, patterns mentioned in this episode along with any inspiration a knitter could need could be found on our website, [KnitPicks.com](http://KnitPicks.com)

**Stacey Winklepleck** 41:36

If you'd like to be on our podcast, leave us a voicemail. We'll be checking it regularly and using your calls in later episodes. To leave a voicemail, call 360-334-4847 and record your message. You could also record a voice memo on your phone and email us that audio file at [podcast@knitpicks.com](mailto:podcast@knitpicks.com)

**Lee Meredith** 41:57

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**Stacey Winklepleck** 42:05

Rate and review us wherever you listen to this podcast. It really makes a difference and can help others find us.

**Lee Meredith** 42:11

Until next time, happy crafting! [music ends]

**Lee Meredith** 42:15

Oh, it's like the true crime trend overlap.

**Kate Millard** 42:19

Yeah, seriously

**Lee Meredith** 42:19

Like all new knitters are into True Crime right?

**Stacey Winklepleck** 42:22

yeah.

**Heather Mann** 42:23

We should do a segment on True Crime knitting. [laughing]

**Lee Meredith** 42:25

...on the podcast. [laughing]