

Unknown Title



Blocking Basics

Blocking is an essential but often overlooked step in knitting. Once a project is off the needles, blocking is like waving a magic wand over your knitting to bring it from good to great – yarn blooms to incredible softness, stitches smooth out to a uniform look, and lace stitches transform to a delicate beauty.

Today we're going to talk about the two main ways to block knitting projects, as well as offer tips for specialized knits.



Important tools:

- A [basin](#) or sink
- Towels
- [T-pins](#)
- [A measuring tape](#)
- Pattern schematic or finished measurements
- [Sock blockers](#) (for socks only)

Optional (but nice to have!) tools:

- [Soak wash](#)
- [Blocking mats](#) or a blocking board
- A set of stainless steel [blocking wires](#) for perfect, straight edges
- Spray bottle

Wet Blocking

Recommended for wool and animal fibers in general, wet blocking involves fully wetting your finished pieces.



Step One

First, fill a clean sink or [basin](#) with water. For water temperature and soaking time, follow the yarn label's recommendations for the yarn used. Generally, we recommend using lukewarm water (hot water may cause felting in wool!). If using, add [wool wash](#) to the bath and swish to distribute evenly.



Step Two

To soak, gently submerge your project, gently squeezing out any air bubbles so that the piece is fully saturated. Never place any animal fiber items under running water as this agitation may felt your fabric.



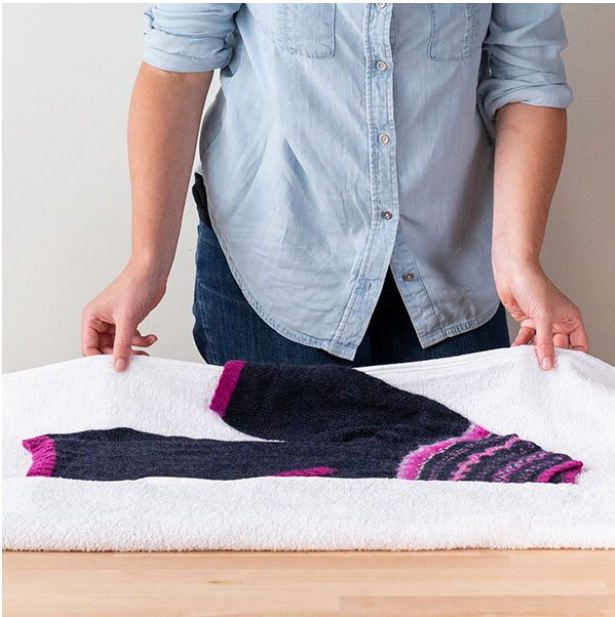
Step Three

Allow the piece to rest in the bath for at least 10 minutes and up to 30 minutes. To remove your project, gently lift it out of the water, making sure to support its weight evenly so that the fabric doesn't stretch and distort under the extra water weight. Gently squeeze (never wring!) to remove excess water.



Step Four

Next, lay your project flat on a clean, dry towel.





Roll your project up in a single layer or fold into thirds to make the rolling size more manageable. Press gently and evenly on the rolled towel to remove excess moisture before unrolling and laying your garment flat to completely dry.



Step Five

To block a garment or project to specific dimensions, lay your project on blocking mats or another pinneable surface. Gently adjust your garment until the piece matches the pattern's finished measurements or schematic dimensions. Use [T-pins](#) when necessary to maintain precise dimensions during the drying process.

Spray Blocking

This method is recommended for delicate lace projects, cottons, and for gently refreshing garments between wears. It allows you to block without the danger of stretching under water weight, as in wet blocking. Spray blocking is also a much faster method if you're dealing with a thin, single layered piece as with lace shawls or light accessories.



Step One

Place your project on the blocking mats and lightly spray your project with either ready-made spray wool wash or a diluted mix of [wool wash](#) and water in a regular spray bottle (to dilute regular wool wash, follow the manufacturers instructions on the bottle). Your project should be damp but not soaking wet; gently shape to approximately match the finished schematic/dimensions.



Step Two

We recommend using [lace blocking wires](#) for straight edges and perfect points on shawls, scarves, and blankets. Carefully thread your blocking wires through selvage stitches at regular intervals across the edges and/or through the "points" if your pattern features them as part of the design.



Step Three

Once you have inserted your blocking wires, place pins along the inside of each wire at periodic, even intervals while stretching your project to the desired dimensions. Inserting pins at a 45 degree angle will keep the wires more stable as the fabric dries, especially if you are blocking under pressure to get a larger size.

When your piece is fully dry, unpin and wear!

Sock Blocking

While many people choose not to block socks, it's extremely helpful to open up stitch patterns and even out knitting for photography or gift giving.

Like lace projects, you'll follow the basic instructions for wet or spray blocking. However, for socks, we recommend using a [sock blocker](#) to get them in that perfect sock shape.



Choose the correct size sock blocker to match the finished sock dimensions. Follow the instructions for wet blocking above, instead of pinning your project simply slide the sock on the blocker as you would put it on your foot! Make sure the heel and the toe are lined up in the proper places, then let dry. These blockers can be left to dry flat (flip them after a couple of hours to dry evenly) or hung up on a hook.

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