

Crossroads Stitches

by Andrea Berman Price



Introduction

Venerable knitter and eminently quotable Elizabeth Zimmerman (EZ) both calmed us down and gave us hope. Be the boss of your knitting;¹ don't get so anxious about making everything perfect. Relax. And if, in the dark of night, you were to stay up while all is quiet and sleeping, and make a loop here, and move it over there, you might create a new knitting technique. If you did, you would be thrilled. You'd be tickled that your own creation could be used other knitters.

You might also find, or you may never know, that someone else, by dint of insomnia or by making a mistake in broad daylight, invented the same technique. In Knitter's Almanac, EZ gave us the term "unventing"² for just this kind of situation. The technique I've come up with has, very possible been discovered by others, and if it has, I nod in their direction. I'm too scared to do the research to find out what marvels the Other Unventer hath wrought. So I present it to you, Dear Knitter, in the hopes that you will find some use for it.

The original Crossroads sample traveled for many years in my work tote back, clocking kilometers from home to metro to office to home, and it was my creative secret as I went from meeting to meeting and desk to desk over the years. I was lucky enough to be accepted to Forensic Knitter Extraordinaire Cat Bordhi's Visionary retreat in March 2011 for another idea, one that is dear to my heart and as yet unrealized. As an afterthought, I timidly asked Cat if I could test a second idea, and she recommended the talented and wise Val Mayse, who listened carefully and encouraged me to explore this technique further.

August 2013

1 – Swansen, Meg, in a note to the Author's Preface to **Knitting Around or Knitting without a License**. Schoolhouse Press, Pittsville, WI, 1989 (first printing).

2 – Zimmermann, Elizabeth, *Knitter's Almanac: Projects for Each Month of the Year*, Dover Publications, Inc., NY, 1981 a republication of the *Knitter's Almanac* published by Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974.

Part 1: Crossroads



Basic Intersection

Sample with 14 stitches (Garter Stitch – knit all stitches on all rows)

With three double-pointed or circular needles:

STEP 1

Using Color A, cast 14 stitches onto the first needle; we'll call this Needle A/the Pink Needle.

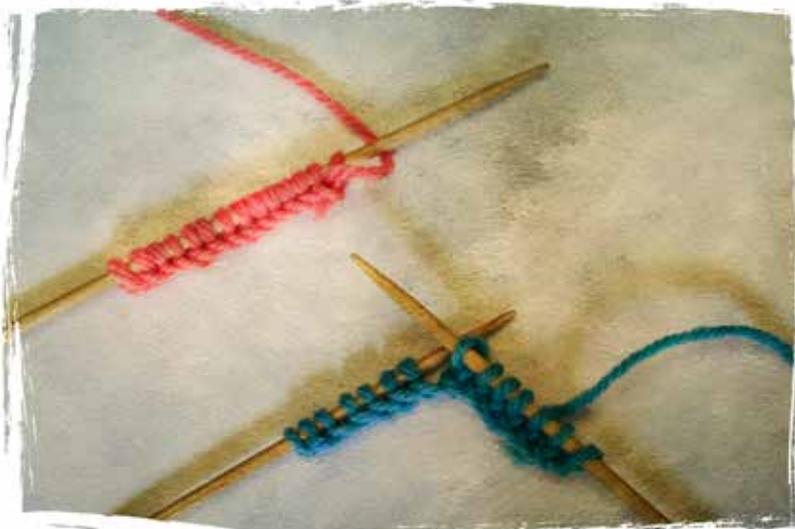
STEP 2

Using Color B, cast 14 stitches onto a second needle; we'll call this Needle B/the Blue Needle.



STEP 3

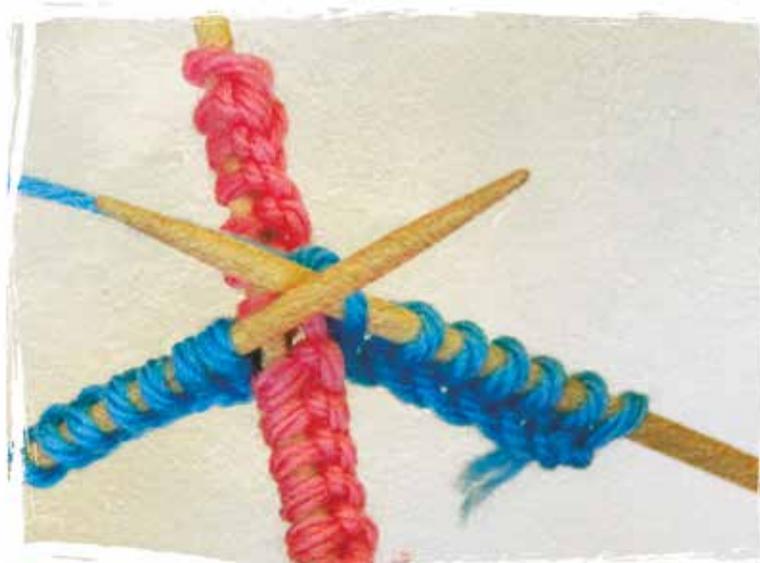
Use the third needle to knit 7 stitches on Needle B/the Blue Needle.



STEP 4

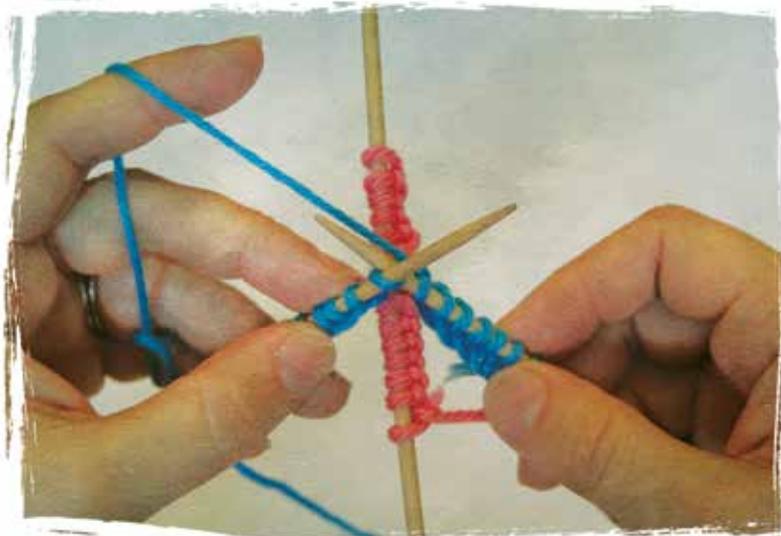
Take up Needle A/the Pink Needle and tuck it under the Needle B/Blue Needle, in between

Stitches 7 and 8, as shown in image below.



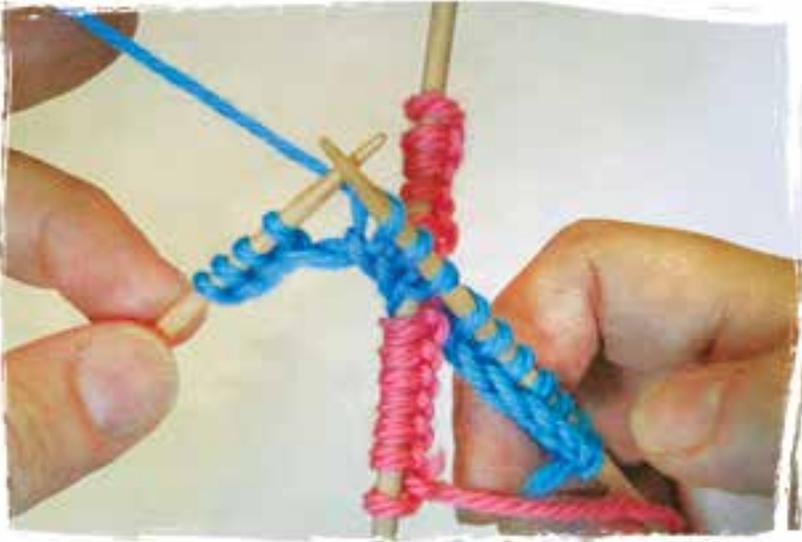
STEP 5

Knit across the top of Needle A/the Pink Needle to the next (8th) stitch on Needle B/the Blue Needle.



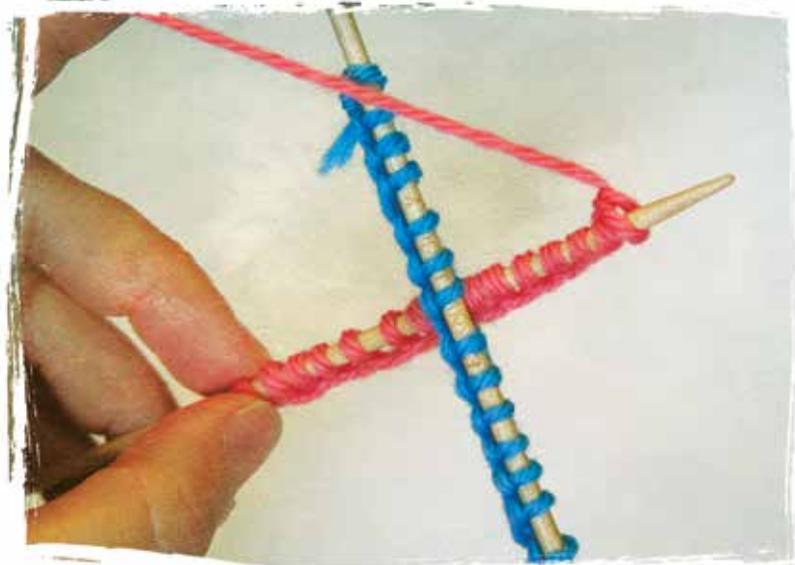
STEP 6

Continue knitting Needle B to the end of the second set of 7 stitches on Needle A.



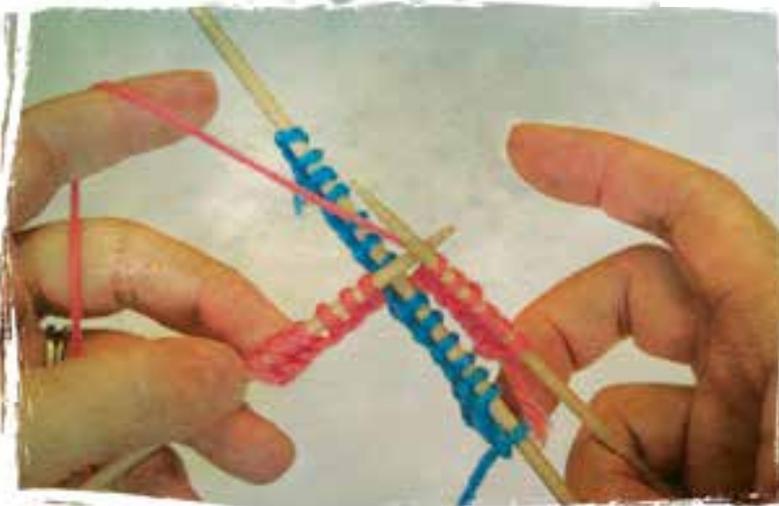
STEP 7

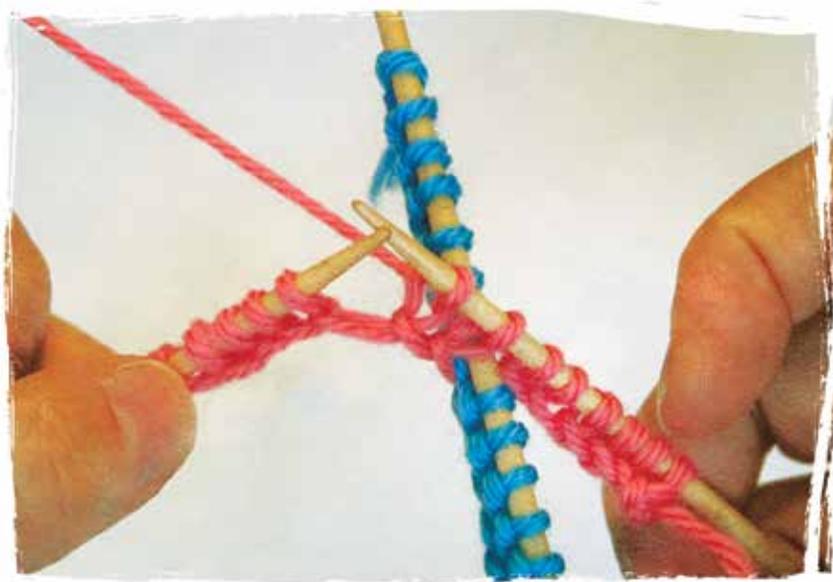
Turn the work so Needle A is ready to knit (with the working yarn coming from the right-hand side of the needle).



STEP 8

Knit 7 stitches on Needle A, slide Needle B into the gap between stitches 7 and 8





STEP 9

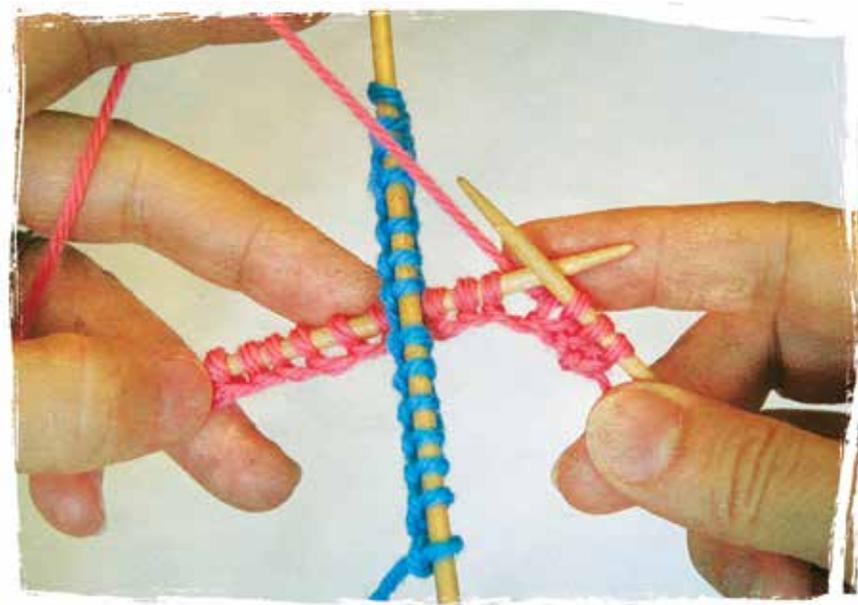
Knit to the end of the Pink Needle A.

Continue, turning the work so you are always starting with the lower needle, and sliding the top needle into the gap between the middle stitches.

TIPS

You may need to stop and untwist the colors once in a while, or twist the work counter-clockwise every other turn.

Don't get your working yarn caught up in the crossing or you'll have to tug the wool through the gap for the rest of your project.



Asterisk



STEP 1-6

- Garter Stitch Sample (knit all stitches on all rows) with 14 stitches.
- Use four double-pointed or circular needles
- Using Color A (blue), cast 14 stitches on the first needle; we'll call this Needle A
- Using Color B (green), cast 14 stitches on a second needle; we'll call this Needle B
- Using Color C (pink), cast on 14 stitches on a third needle; we'll call this Needle C
- Using the fourth needle to knit, follow Steps 1 – 6 for the Basic Intersection

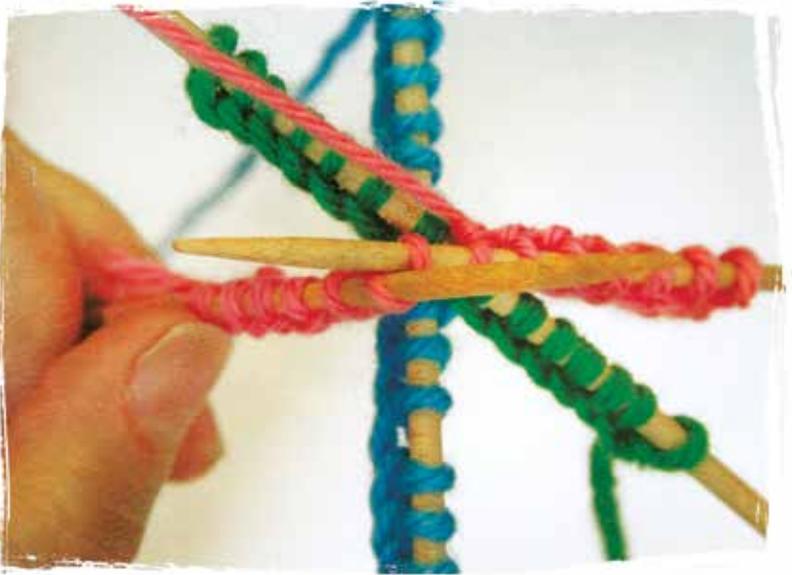


STEP 7

Pick up Pink Needle C and knit 7 stitches.

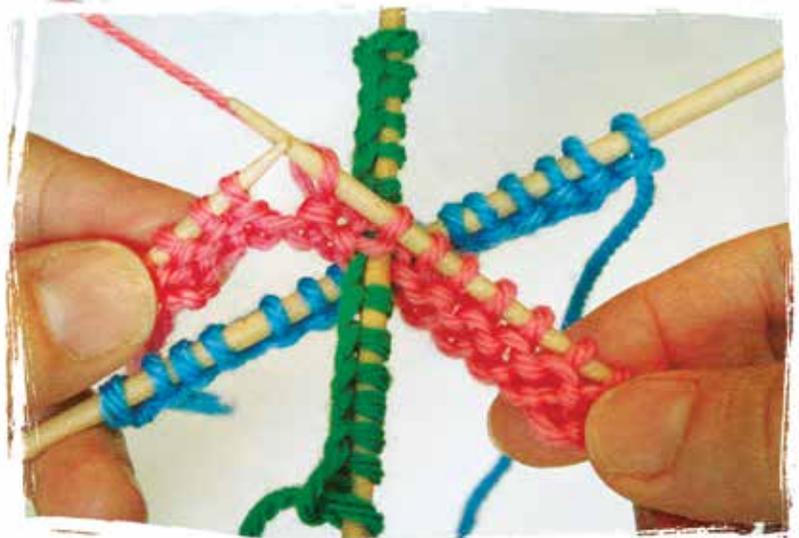
STEP 8

Pick up the conjoined Blue Needle A and Green Needle B, and lay them in the ditch after Pink Needle C stitch 7 and before stitch 8.



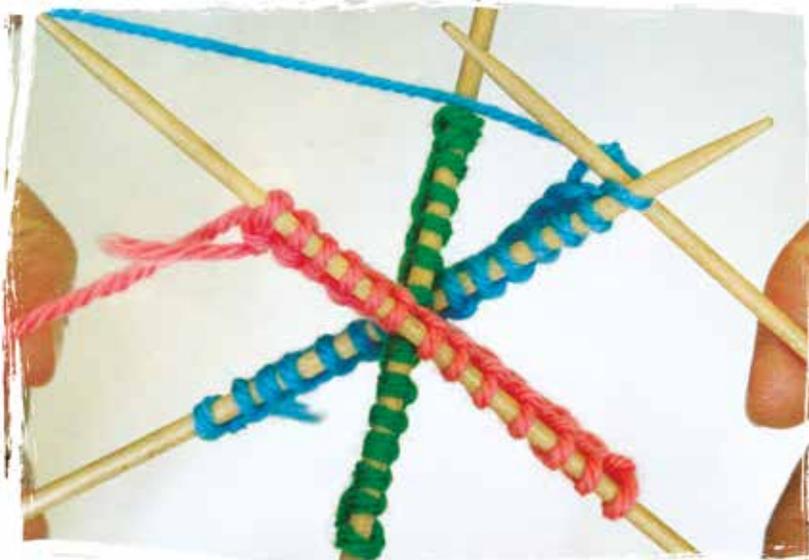
STEP 9

Knit the next, 8th stitch on Pink Needle C across the top of Green Needle B and continue knitting to the end of Pink Needle C.



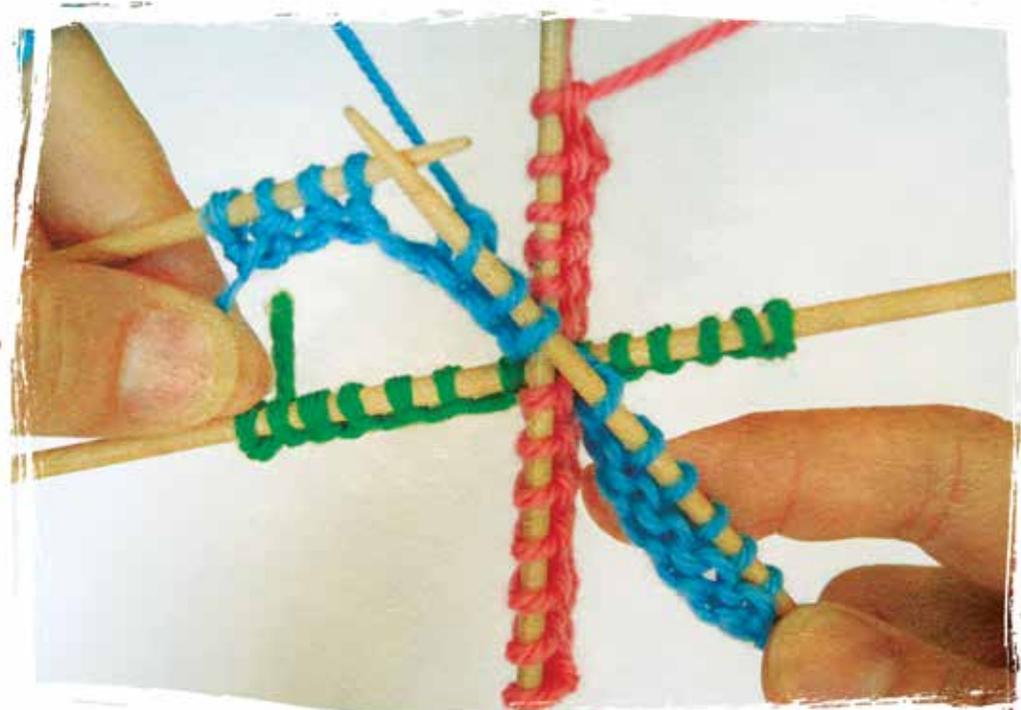
STEP 10

Turn the work so Blue Needle A is ready to knit

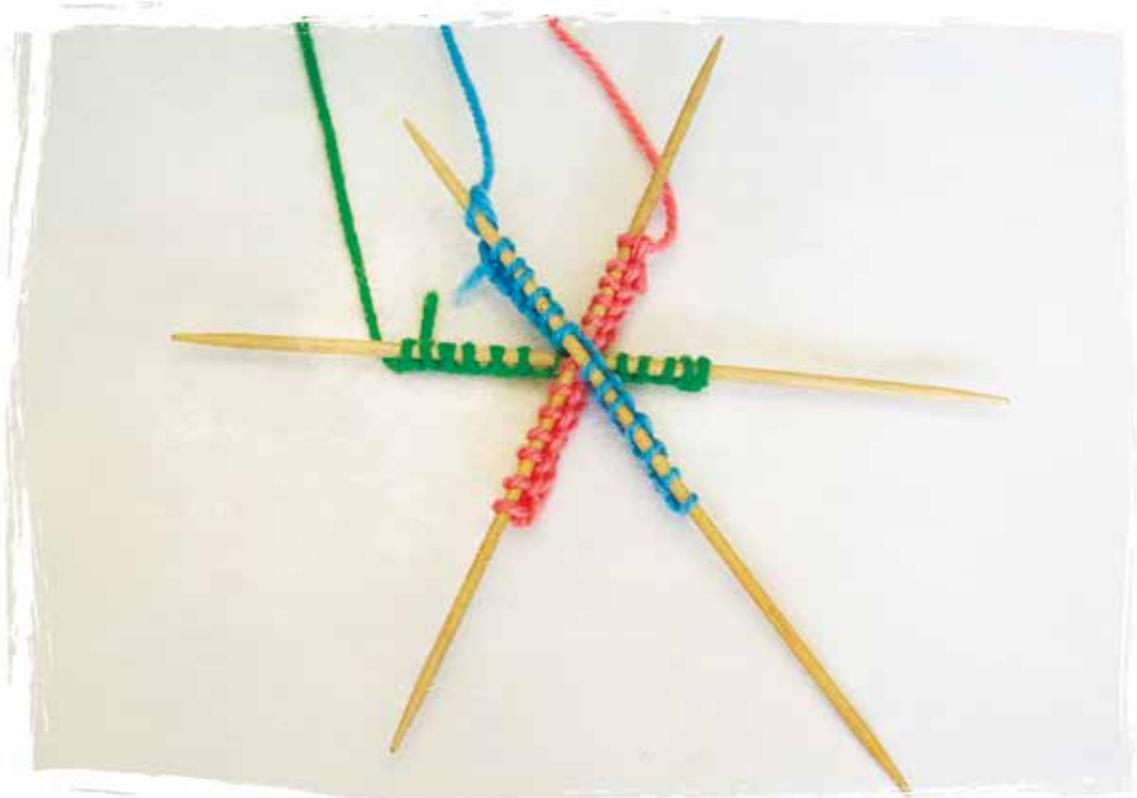


STEP 11

Knit 7 stitches on Blue Needle A, slide Needles Green B and Pink C into the gap between stitches 7 and 8, (top image) and continue knitting to the end of the Blue Needle A. (bottom image)



Continue, always knitting from the lowest needle. Reality test: the next needle would be Green Needle B.



Advance & Retreat



Advances and retreats create flanges or fins.

Moving across the knitting to the left will be called an Advance. Bringing the fin back toward the right-hand edge will be called a Retreat.

Advance

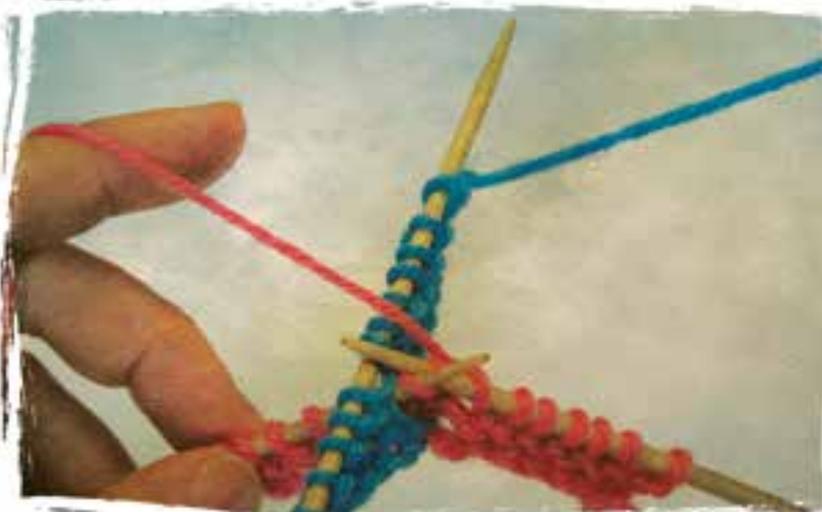
Follow the instructions for the Basic Intersection, Steps 1 – 9, ready to knit again with Needle A.

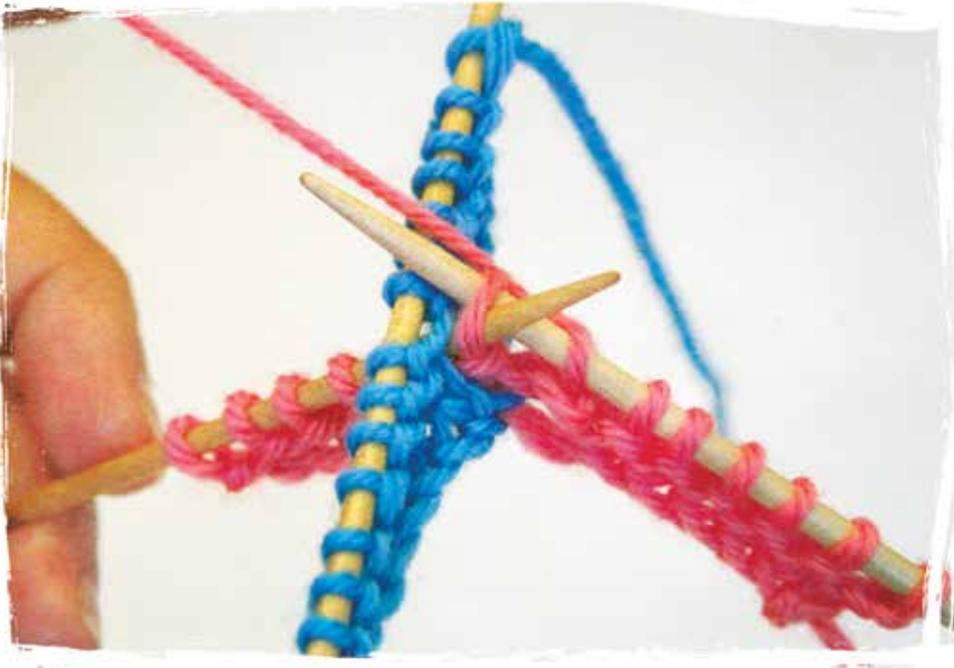
STEP 1-3

Work steps 1 – 3 of the Basic Intersection.

STEP 4

Before going on to knit the next 7 stitches as in a Basic Intersection, pull the top needle, Blue Needle A, to the left, up and over the 8th stitch so that the 8th stitch slides under the Blue Needle A, ready to knit





STEP 5

Knit Stitch 8, and slide Needle B into the gap. You should have 8 stitches on the right-hand side of Needle A, and six on the left. Knit to the end of the Needle A.



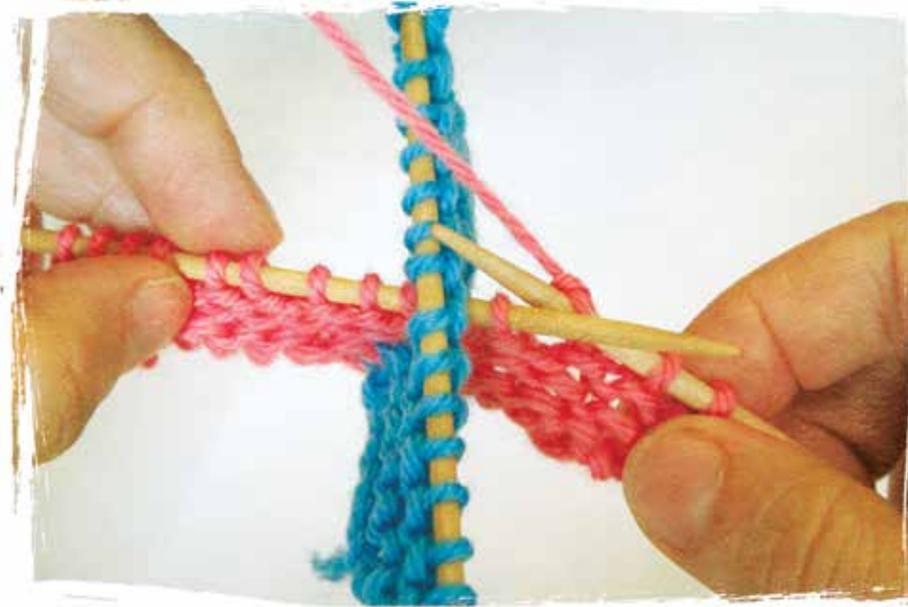
You have completed one Advance.

Retreat

Work Rows 1 and 2 of the Basic Intersection.

STEP 3

Knit 3 stitches on the lower needle, Pink Needle A, but stop before knitting the 4th



STEP 4

Pull the top needle, Blue Needle B to the right, up and over the 4th stitch and into the gap between the 3th and 4th stitches.



STEP 5

Knit over the top of Blue Needle B, and knit the 4th stitch.

Knit this eighth stitch, and slide Needle B into the gap between stitches 8 and 9, and continue knitting to the end of the Needle A (which should be 6 stitches).

Half Travelling

Samples A and B show what happens when Needle A does all the Advancing while Needle B maintains seven stitches on each side.



This can happen every row, as in Sample A or every other row, as in Sample B



Moving the stitch every row makes a sharper angle.

Full Travelling

In the Full Travelling example, both Needle A and Needle B will advance and retreat.



You can play with how often this happens and how far across the fin travels, or advances, before it retreats, as shown in the Scallops, below.

Waves



This effect is created by advancing the red yarn several positions, then retreating, while maintaining the same number of stitches on each side of the blue needle.

Head On Collision

To create this effect, begin knitting with one color, and add the second new color as if starting from Step 3 of the Basic Intersection.



Crossroads Variations

Texture



Each of the four sections of this sample is worked Basket Weave using alternating seed stitch and Stockinette panels.

Felting



This is a sample of a Basic Intersection that has been felted.

Edging lace



This effect is made by working an leaf pattern on each edge. The edge pattern is from Barbara Walker's Tulip-Bud Edging.³



Color Block



³ – Walker, Barbara *A Second Treasury of Knitting Patterns*. Schoolhouse Press, Pittsville, WI: 1998, originally published by Charles Scribner's Sons, NY, 1970.

Part II: Throughput

Basic Throughput

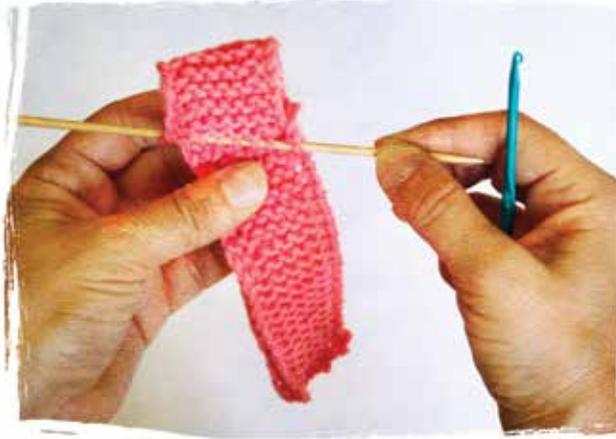
Make a sample to become familiar with the technique.

STEP 1

Knit a six-inch strip of work in garter stitch (that is, knit each row).

STEP 2

Fold over the top five rows; for the most visually interesting result, slant the needle slightly so it is not straight across.



STEP 3

Insert a crochet hook through the work from the back to the front of the work, and pull the first stitch off the working needle and through the work.)



STEP 4

Keeping the first loop on the crochet hook, push through the next stitch in the work laying under the needle, and pick up the second stitch with the crochet hook.



STEP 5

After all the stitches have been pulled through to the other side and onto the crochet hook, flip the work over and cut the yarn, leaving a six-inch tail.



STEP 6

Knit the stitches off the crochet hook with a double pointed needle.



STEP 7

Keep knitting!



Scrolls

Use this technique several times in a row to create scrolls.



Flower

To make a flower, pull the stitches through straight across a row, knit five rows and repeat.



Rosette



Begin the same way as for the Scroll and Flower, but in Step 2, fold over the top five rows so that the needle with the live stitches is lined up with the edge of the strip, a full 90 degree turn. Knit 10 rows, and turn again, 90 degrees. Repeat twice more.



Garland

The garland was made with a 7-stitch wide strip of green, adding scrolls, and then changing colors for flowers and rosettes.





Materials: Samples are shown in worsted weight yarn with Brittany wooden double pointed needles, size 4.

Credits

Laura Aronow, Creative Director
Whitney Clark, Miracle Photographer
Jill Carter for layout, inspiration, encouragement, and technical assistance, illustrator of *The Chicken and the Dog*, and *The Great Chicken Caper*.

Deepest thanks to Cat Bordhi for including me, to the Visionary Retreat Class of March 2011 for hearing me out, and especially Val Mayse for taking this idea seriously. May it ring true. To: long-suffering Richard Price, one part guru and five parts angel Dr. Annette Annechild, author of too many books to cite here. Much love and thanks to Donald S. Berman and Felicia DeMay-Berman. To Mary and John Price for their unwavering support. Thank you to Raoul Berman for technical assistance and Zak Miller texting me back. Thanks to Lynn Miller, spiritarts, author of *Spirit Arts: Transformation through Creating Art, Music and Dance* and Eric B. Miller author of *Bio-Guided Music Therapy* as models of determination. To Henry and Naomi Klein, inspirations to generations. And to Edie, Rose, Hannah and Sophie, needlewomen and foremothers.