

Stitch Analyses

Let's look at different types of stitches. The machine can make several types for a wide variety of looks with the same yarn.

Knowing what to expect of the stitch type (size & weight or yardage) before you start a project will help you make a better plan.

I like to encourage new knitters to sit down and make a sample of all the different types of stitches the machine can make then place them in a folder for future reference. A picture in a manual just doesn't do them justice and sometimes just flipping through your folder ideas start popping. The following is the results of just such a project.

We will use the same yarn – 3 Ply Astracryl by Tamm – and make sample swatches of all the stitch types. Then we will:

- Weigh them
- Unravel them to determine the yardage
- Measure for size.

Swatch – Cast on 60 stitches and knit 70 rows at tension 7.

Stitch Type	Size	Weight	Yardage
Stockinette	7 1/2" x 7"	3/8 oz.	58
Fairisle	7" x 8"	1/2 oz.	34 (main) & 43 (contrast)
Tuck	9 1/2" x 5"	3/8 oz.	57
Slip	7" x 5"	1/4 oz.	44
Lace	8 3/4" x 6 1/2"	1/2 oz.	58
Thread Lace	8" x 6 3/4"	1/2 oz.	51 (main) & 22 (thread)
Weaving	9 1/4" x 6 3/4"	5/8 oz.	59
1x1 Rib	4 1/4" x 7 1/4"	3/8 oz.	61
1x1 Tuck Rib	7" x 5"	3/8 oz.	59
Garter Stitch	9" x 6"	3/8 oz.	63

These will give you a rough estimate of amount of yarn each stitch type will require. The design you choose will make a difference as a tuck design that tucks for 2 rows will use less yarn than a tuck design that tucks for 4 rows.

As you can see – the stitch you select can make a big difference. *Remember this is just a small swatch. Think what a difference it would make on a larger garment.*

The yardages or weight might be about the same but the size of the stitch will be totally different. So you will need more yarn for a tuck stitch design because it doesn't knit up as big as a stockinette stitch.

Other things to consider:

- Tuck designs will give you more width than most other stitches.
 - Many of the tuck designs look great on the knit side as well as the purl side
 - For tuck designs that look best on the purl side – try knitting in a variegated color. You will be surprised at the design you get on the knit side.
- Tuck designs will use more yarn
- Tuck design generally use the purl side as the right side
- Slip designs don't have as much stretch as many of the other stitches. Great when you need a firmer fabric.
- Slip designs use the purl side as the right side
- Weaving is a firmer fabric. For more drape use light weight yarns for both the background and the weaving yarn.
- Weaving designs use the purl side as the right side
- Many times, you can weave with yarns too heavy to knit on the machine. Don't be afraid to try different and fun yarns. Also try narrow ribbon or cord. Some work and some don't but you have nothing to lose by trying.
- Lace designs use less yarn
- Lace designs use the knit side as the right side
- Fairisle uses the knit side as the right side.
- Fairisle has floats on the purl side so plan your garment so the floats don't cause a problem. Many blankets or afghan are

lined to cover the floats.

- Fairisle designs that have small floats (2-4 stitches) can use the purl side as the right side and it will look like weaving. It is also much faster than weaving and has more stretch.

Remember all knits should rest a while before measuring or blocking especially textured stitches to get a true gauge. I like 24 hours rest for the textures.

Notice the tuck stitch is wider and shorter. The stockinette is more of a square shape while the fairisle is longer. All the same number of stitches, tension and rows.



These are just general observations. All these rules have exceptions.

Keep your knitting Fun!

Charlene