

• NO-NEEDLE KNITS •

# LOOM KNITTING PRIMER

A BEGINNER'S  
GUIDE TO  
KNITTING ON A  
LOOM WITH OVER  
30 FUN PROJECTS



I SELA PHELPS



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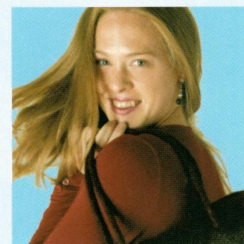
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## Meet the Family

The knitting loom family can be divided into three subdivisions: the circular looms also known as knitting looms, double-sided rake looms, and single-sided rakes.

**Circular knitting looms** can be used to make a specific size tube by knitting on them in the round. Each circular knitting loom can only create a specific size of tube. The bigger the knitting loom, the bigger the tube it can create. They are formed by a continuous row of pegs that can be a circular, oblong, octagon, square, or even heart shape. The base shape of the loom does not have an impact on the look of the knitted item, as long as the loom has a continuous row of pegs.

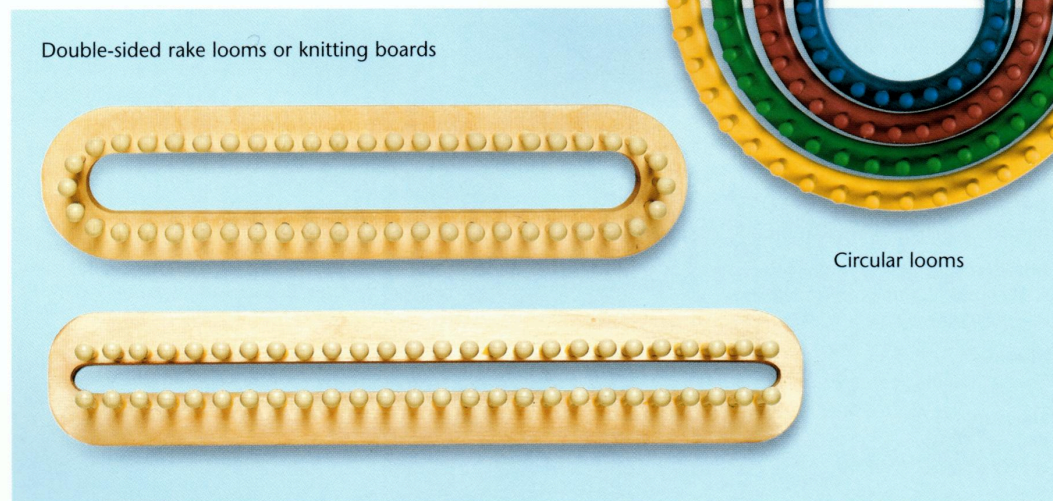
**Double-sided rake looms** are also known as knitting frames, and knitting boards. Throughout this book, we will refer to these double-sided rakes as a Knitting Board. Knitting Boards have two parallel rows of pegs with a gap between them that allows the knitting to fall through. Knitting Boards are used to create double-sided items that have no wrong side. (To learn more about Knitting Boards see page 108).

**The single-sided rake** is a knitting loom with a single row of pegs that is not continuous. It is used

to create a flat panel with a reverse and right side. Both, circular looms and knitting boards can be used as a single-sided rake to knit flat panels. When a loom is being used to knit a flat panel, it is said that they are using it as a knitting rake.

During my loom knitting journey, I have seen knitting looms being sold in different shapes, sizes, and colors. I have seen knitting looms being sold exclusively as single-sided rakes. A piece of advice if you have the choice of purchasing a round loom or a straight knitting rake, I recommend you get the round. Although they can both be used as a knitting rake, the round has the advantage of being more versatile as you can use it to create tubes.

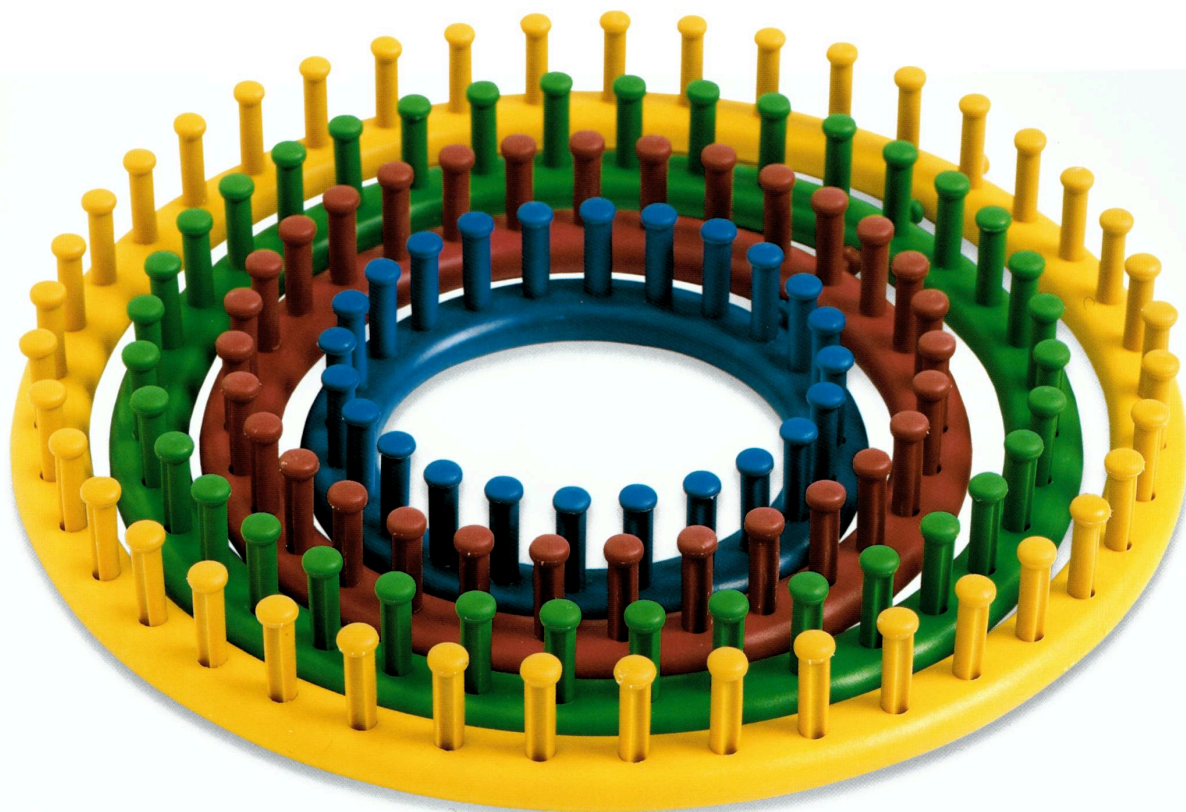
Another advantage to knitting on a round loom is that with a straight knitting rake you will need to hold it on your



Double-sided rake looms or knitting boards

Circular looms





lap and look down to work, thus straining your neck muscles. Or you can hold it with one hand and wrap and knit with the other, thus putting strain on your wrists. With the round knitting looms you have the benefit of using it standing up, perpendicular on your lap, and turn it as you wrap and knit, leaving all the weight of the loom and the knitted item on your lap.

Remember, any knitting loom can be used as a knitting rake to make flat panels. Although the knitting loom may have a "designated" name, do not feel obligated to use it solely for that purpose. If the knitting loom is called a hat loom, it is only called a hat loom because it can make a tube that will fit a head. However, that same knitting loom

can be used to make panels for a baby sweater, dishcloths, panels for a blanket, and any other garment that can be made by piecing together knitted panels.

How to choose the perfect knitting loom for you? The truth is that you are the only one that can answer this question. You will have to take each one for a spin until you have found the perfect one that makes you feel comfortable.

In your journey, you will find that some knitting looms work better with different yarns. Different pegs let the yarn slide off easier, or maybe you want a little bit more resistance between the yarn and the peg so the yarn doesn't come off flying off the pegs. A little experience will help in your search.



# Buying a Loom

It may seem daunting at first, as there are so many different looms available. Don't panic; you will soon be adding to your extensive collection like a pro.







Knitting looms, like needles, can become expensive, especially if you want to have each size available at your disposal. Before purchasing one make a list of the qualities that you are looking for—assess your needs and see which loom can best fulfil them.

- Overall durability—will it break on the first or second use? If your dog happens to use it as a chew toy will it survive the game?
- Wood or plastic base—does the base need any upkeep?
- Gauge of the loom—will it allow you to knit with the yarns you use the most?
- Type of peg—is a smooth peg what you are looking for? Or do you want a bit of resistance? If you happen to step on it, can the peg/pin be replaced?
- Do the pegs have grooves to facilitate picking up the loops?
- Do the pegs have a knob at the top to prevent the yarn from accidentally popping off?



Remember, your knitting looms are your main tools to create your knits; finding the right one will take a little time and research.

**Loom Gauge Table**

Yarn Recommended	 1 SUPER FINE	 2 FINE	 3 LIGHT	 4 MEDIUM	 5 BULKY	 6 SUPER BULKY
Distance from center of pin to center of pin in inches	$\frac{3}{16}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{3}{8}$ – $\frac{3}{7}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{5}{8}$ – $\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{4}{5}$
Loom Gauge	Extra Fine Gauge	Fine Gauge	Small Gauge	Regular Gauge	Large Gauge	Large Gauge
Manufacturers	Décor Accents	Décor Accents	Décor Accents	Knifty Knitter Long Series Décor Accents	Knifty Knitter Décor Accents	Knifty Knitter



## Quick Reference

### **Large Gauge Knitting Looms**

- Distance from center of peg to center of peg:  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch +
- **Available in:** wood & plastic, with nylon pegs, plastic, wood, and metal
- **Yarn:** Bulky weight yarns or 2 strands of medium weight yarns
- **Knits:** Bulky weight knits and knits that will be felt
- **Loom Gauge:** Approximately 1.5–2 stitches per inch
- Compared to needle knitting stitch gauge: size 13 (9 mm)

### **Regular Gauge Knitting Looms**

- Distance from center of peg to center of peg:  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch
- **Available in:** wood & plastic, with nylon pegs, plastic, wood, and metal
- **Yarn:** Chunky weight yarns or 2 strands of sport weight yarn
- **Knits:** Medium weight knits

- **Gauge:** Approximately 3–3.5 stitches per inch
- Compared to needle knitting stitch gauge: size 10 (6 mm)

### **Small Gauge Knitting Looms**

- Distance from center of peg to center of peg:  $\frac{3}{8}$  to  $\frac{3}{7}$  inch
- **Available in:** wood & plastic, with nylon pegs, plastic, wood, and metal
- **Yarn:** Worsted weight/medium weight yarn
- **Knits:** Medium and light weight knits
- **Gauge:** Approximately 3.5–4 stitches per inch
- Compared to needle knitting stitch gauge: size 7–8 (4.5–5 mm)

### **Fine Gauge Knitting Looms**

- Distance from center of peg to center of peg:  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch

- **Available in:** wood base and metal pins/pegs
- **Yarn:** Sport weight/DK weight
- **Knits:** Light weight knits
- **Gauge:** Approximately 4–5 stitches per inch
- Compared to Needle Knitting Stitch Gauge: Size 5–6 (3.75–4 mm)

### **Extra Fine Gauge Knitting Looms**

- Distance from center of peg to center of peg:  $\frac{3}{16}$  inch
- **Available in:** wood base and metal pins/pegs
- **Yarn:** Fingering weight/sock weight
- **Knits:** Light weight knits
- **Gauge:** Approximately 7–8 stitches per inch
- Compared to needle knitting stitch gauge: size 1–2 (2.25–2.75 mm)





## Essential Tools for your Loomy Bag

The journey is about to begin and like any journey, we need to gather our tools and gear up to make the journey easier and more enjoyable.

**A Knitting Tool or Pick** is the most essential gadget for the loom knitter—you can never have enough of them. Have a few of them on hand, or if you are paranoid like me, you will have a drawer full, as they are sneaky and tend to hide when you need them the most.

The purpose of the knitting tool is to facilitate knitting on the knitting looms. The tool allows you to lift the yarn up and over the peg, creating a stitch. A knitting tool is similar to a dental pick or nut pick, generally made out of metal, with a wood or plastic handle. The end is bent at an angle to allow the lifting of the stitches. Knitting tools come with different ends, some sharp for use when knitting on very small pegs and fingering weight yarns, some more blunt for use with bigger pegs and thicker yarns.

If you happen to lose all your knitting tools, you can also use a small crochet hook, nut pick, or even an orange peeler.

**The yarn guide/aid** is a thin plastic tube. It facilitates wrapping the yarn around the pegs and helps maintain an even tension in your wrapping. Some knitting loom vendors carry them as part of their line; if you are unable to find one, you can easily make one (see the box below).

**A stitch guide** allows you to determine exactly the number of stitches and rows per inch in your work. It is a flat metal or plastic piece with ruler markings on the sides. In the center there is a small L-shape window cut-out that allows you to check the rows and stitches per inch of the knitted piece. If you don't have one, you could make one out of stiff card.

To check the gauge, block the knitted piece lightly, place it on a flat surface then place the Stitch Gauge Guide on top of it. Line the bottom cut-out window opening with one row of the knitted piece. Line one of the columns of stitches to the side (see picture opposite). To determine the gauge, count the stitches per inch in the window opening. Count also the rows per inch. Make sure to count  $\frac{1}{4}$  stitches and  $\frac{1}{2}$  stitches.

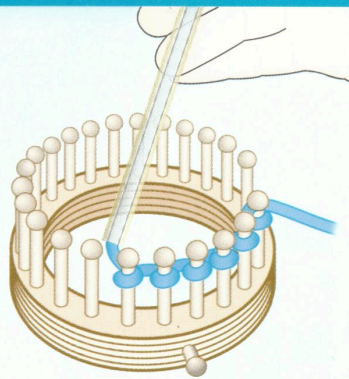
**Scissors/Yarn Cutters** are invaluable. Some yarns are easy to break with your hands; however, you will find that many synthetic yarns and cottons are almost impossible to break. Carrying small scissors in your knitting bag is always advisable. If traveling by airplane, I recommend obtaining a yarn/thread cutter that you can take along with you.

**A Row Counter** is a nifty item to have in your knitter's bag. It comes in handy... as long as you

### How to make a Yarn Guide:

- 1 Find a Bic-style ballpoint pen with a hollow center.
- 2 Take out the inside ink cartridge.
- 3 Cut the tip off the barrel.
- 4 Sand any rough spots with an emery board.
- 5 Ready to use. Pass the starting tail of the yarn through and wrap around the pegs with the aid of your new Yarn Guide!

No pens around? No problem. Get a thick drinking straw. Cut it so you have a piece that is about 5 inches (12.5 cm) long. Thread your yarn through it and you are ready to start wrapping your yarn around the pegs.



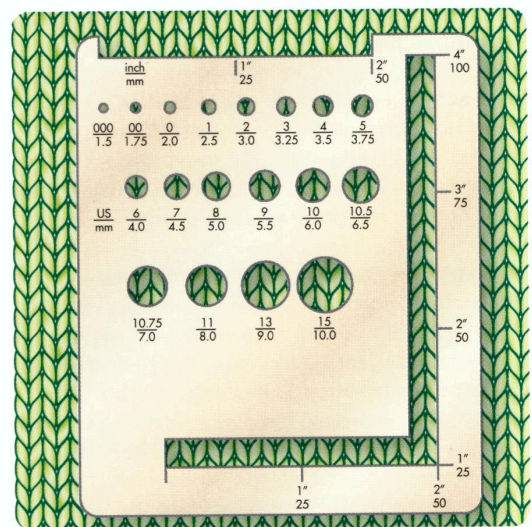




don't forget to change the setting. Row counters came in various shapes: cylindrical, square and circular. There are two types of cylindrical shaped row counter. One of them has an opening that is usually used to insert a knitting needle through; in our case it can be fitted over the knitting tool. The second one has a small ring attached to one of the sides that allows you to put it over a peg and keep it at the base of the knitting loom. The square and circular types are mechanical in that you only need to push a button to increase the numbers.

Although all of them help in keeping track of rows, you have to remember to reset them at the beginning of each row.

**Crochet Hooks** are very useful. Don't worry, crochet knowledge is not necessary to loom knit, unless you want to crochet an edging around your knits. Crochet hooks just come in handy when picking up a dropped stitch or when binding off a flat panel from the knitting loom. It is advisable to have the size of crochet hook called for on the yarn label, as this will make it easier to handle the yarn. In general, carrying a medium size hook in your accessories bag will suffice.







**Single-Pointed Knitting Needles.** Don't run, wait! You won't be using them to knit. There, you can relax! The needles are only going to be used as stitch holders for grafting the toes of socks. I would recommend obtaining a pair of size 8 (5 mm) and a pair of size 2 (2.75 mm). The size 8 can be used with the large and regular gauge looms, while the size 2 can be used with the smaller gauges.

**Tapestry Needles** are used for seaming the sides of a knitted garment, for gathering and closing the ends of hats, and for weaving in the ends on the knitted garment. Tapestry needles come in plastic and metal. They have a larger eye than regular sewing needles. The plastic needles are flexible and allow you to bend them. The metal needles are smoother and won't snag the knitted item. Both styles of needles have blunt ends that prevent the splitting of the yarn. As with the crochet hooks, the needles come in different sizes, and the eye opening can fit certain thickness of yarns; it is advisable to have a collection of needles that differ in the size of the eye opening.

**Pins** have uses everywhere in the knitting world; they can turn a curled piece of stockinette into a nice straight sleeve. They are essential tools in the finishing of knitted pieces. The straight pins with colored heads are perfect to use when seaming two sides together. Large T-pins make blocking a knitted garment a breeze. These pins can be found at any yarn shop. Do not use any other household pin as it may rust and leave rust spots on your knits.

**Stitch Holders** look like oversized safety pins, except they have a blunt end. They are useful for holding live stitches that will be worked on later in the project, like a neckline, or a tricky bit of shaping. They come in different sizes and it is advisable to have an array of sizes in your knitting bag. Small coil-less safety pins also come in handy when holding only a few stitches or marking the right or reverse side of the knitted item.





**Stitch Markers** are small rings that can be used to mark the pegs where special stitches or other special treatment needs to be done on the knitted item. Usually, the stitch markers are used on needles, however, since they are small rings, they fit perfectly over the pegs on a knitting loom and they sit at the base of the loom to remind the loomer that the peg has a stitch that requires special treatment.

Split ring stitch markers are very helpful in marking a stitch itself rather than the peg. The open split rings are removable by simply opening the ring and sliding it off the peg. They come in various shapes, sizes and colors. Having a variety of different colors is recommended.

**Measuring Tape or Ruler** is a loom knitter's best friend; no knitting bag should be without at least one. When choosing a good measuring tape, choose material that won't distort easily. Discard any measuring tape at the first sign of wear, even if it's your favorite. A distorted measuring tape can mean disaster to your knitted garment as it won't measure accurately. A small plastic ruler is also advisable to have on hand.

**Cable Needles** come in different shapes and sizes. They are available in plastic and metal. Usually, one package contains three different sizes; choose the size that best works with the yarn in the project.

Until very recently, loom knitters were not able to create cables on a knitting loom, the non-elasticity of the stitches as set on the knitting loom making it difficult. However, this has changed. Now, we are able to create cables and thus we have added the use of cable needles to our extensive gadget repertoire!

**Calculator.** Yep, you read it right, we will still be doing math. I know you thought math was long gone with school, but math has come to haunt you again; it wants to be your best friend. No worries though; you can cheat this time and use a calculator. A calculator comes very handy when calculating gauge or even adding a few pegs to the count in the pattern.



## Other noteworthy gear for the journey

### Post-It Notes

Stickies are a great way to mark the row on the paper pattern you are knitting. After knitting each row, move the Post-It down the page.

There are two schools of thought about Post-Its:

- 1 Cover the previous knitted row and expose the rows to come.
- 2 Cover the future rows and only expose the rows worked on.

It is up to you to decide which method works best for you.

### Notebook

A place to jot down ideas about the patterns, comments about yarns, and other loomy gems.

### Ball Winder

This little gadget allows you to wind your yarn into an easy to use center pull ball. Two

styles are available, manual and electric, but you can always make balls the old-fashioned way with your hands.

### Yarn Swift

A yarn swift is usually used in conjunction with the ball winder. It resembles the inside of an umbrella. It holds a hank of yarn and it unwinds it. When used along with the ball winder, the yarn swift unwinds the hank of yarn and the ball winder winds it into a ball. If you don't have one of these, persuade a passer-by to sit still with their arms outstretched while you wind your ball, or failing that, use the back of a chair.

### Fingernail File/Emery Board

Is your yarn catching on the pegs? Some knitting looms have small burs on the pegs that may snag the yarn. Use the

emery board to sand down the small burs and you have smooth looming ahead!

### Knitting Bag

You would need a bag that is big enough to hold your project and your knitting loom. Sturdy enough to carry the weight of the knitting loom. Comfortable handle to hold or carry around. It should have a wide opening to take out and put in all your loom knitting essentials. It should have pockets, lots of pockets to put in all the yummy gadgets and notions and even a small snack for the reward moments. If possible, it should be waterproof so if it happens to rain, your knitting is safe. Closures should be either zippers or buttons; say no to Velcro—this will snag your yarn and can even destroy your knitted item if caught.





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## Eyeglasses Case

This is a great project to try out a new stitch pattern. Here we have used double moss, or seed stitch, but any will do.

### You will need

#### Knitting Loom

Large gauge loom with 18 pegs  
[Round Blue Knifty Knitter used in sample]

#### Yarn



40 yards (37 m) of bulky weight yarn

[Simply Soft Quick, 100% Acrylic, 50 yds. (46 m) per 3 oz. used in sample]

#### Tools

Knitting tool  
Tapestry needle

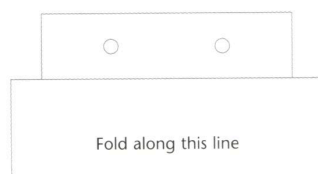
#### Size

5.5 ins. x 3 ins.  
(14 cm x 7.5 cm)

#### Gauge

6 stitches and 10 rows  
to 2 inches (5 cm) over double  
moss stitch

#### Assembly diagram



#### Pattern notes

Knitted as a flat panel

#### Stitch Pattern

Double Moss Stitch: Multiple of 2 stitches.

**Row 1:** \*K1, P1, repeat from \* to the end of the row.

**Row 2:** \*P1, K1, repeat from \* to the end of the row.

**Row 3:** \*P1, K1, repeat from \* to the end of the row.

**Row 4:** \*K1, P1, repeat from \* to the end of the row.

#### Instructions

Cast on with the crochet chain method on 18 pegs.

Knit in double moss stitch pattern until item measures 6.5 ins. (16.5 cm) from CO edge.

Bind off 2 stitches. Knit 14.

Bind off last 2 stitches. Cut yarn.

Attach yarn to the fourteenth stitch. Continue knitting in double moss stitch pattern for 1.5 ins. (4 cm).

**Next row:** Continue knitting in pattern as follows: Knit first 3 stitches in pattern. K2Tog. Knit in pattern to the last four stitches. K2Tog. Knit in stitch pattern to the end.

**Next row:** Continue knitting in pattern. Remember to cast on a stitch on the fourth peg. Continue in pattern for another 1 inch (2.5 cm). Bind off with the basic bind off method.

#### Assembly

Fold the eyeglasses case in half. Mattress stitch the short side seams. Attach two buttons so they match the buttonhole openings made by the K2tog. Weave in all yarn ends.



## Practice Project



## You will need

## Knitting Loom

Knitting board with at least 12 sets of pegs  
[Pink Knifty Knitter was used in sample]



## Yarn

65 yds. (60 m) of bulky weight yarn  
[Berroco Pleasure, 66% Angora, 29% Merino Wool, 5% Nylon, 130 yds (119 m) per 50 g was used in sample]

## Tools

Knitting tool  
Crochet hook  
Decorative pin

## Size

17 ins x 4 ins.  
(43 cm x 10 cm)

## Gauge

11 sts and 14 rows =  
4 ins. (10 cm)

## Scarflet

A small project to learn decrease/increase on a knitting board. Use a special brooch to give this small scarflet a unique touch.

## Pattern notes

Knit completely in stockinette stitch.

K2tog = knit 2 together, creates a decrease. (Move the stitches inwards, then weave and knit).

## Instructions

Cast on 12 set of stitches.  
Knit for 14 ins. (36 cm) in stockinette stitch.

**\*\*Decrease row:** K1, k2tog, knit to last 3 sts, k2tog, k1.

**Next two rows:** Knit\*\*.

Repeat from \*\* to \*\* 3 times (6 sets of sts will remain on knitting board).  
Bind off.

