

Feature Article - Knit One, Purl One... Oops!!

By Alison Craven

Mum had a favourite saying “ If a jobs worth doing, its worth doing well”. When it comes to knitting this saying is certainly most appropriate.

Dropped or twisted stitches, joins in the middle of rows, dye lot variations or other mistakes left unfixed may seem insignificant at the time, but will come back to haunt you later and could even ruin your enjoyment of the finished garment.

Most problems can be easily fixed. It's a good idea to stop and inspect your knitting with a critical eye every so often, to avoid the necessity of having to unravel hours of work to correct a single mistake. Those of you who knit while watching TV know all too well how this can happen, especially on the ABC. With no ad breaks, it's possible to knit for a full hour without interruption. I can only imagine the look of shock and horror on your faces when, having been immersed in “The Bill” for 40 minutes or so, you find a glaring error right back at the beginning of your session.

A single dropped stitch one or two rows back is easy enough to fix using a crochet hook. Insert the hook through the front of the dropped stitch, catch the yarn strand and pull it through the stitch. Repeat this process for each row.

As soon as you spot a dropped stitch spin into damage control mode. Use a safety pin, spare needle, toothpick; anything handy to stop the stitch running any further.

If you do have to unravel large tracts and the yarn you are using is slippery , hairy,

or difficult to work, it is possible to pick up the stitches in the row before the mistake before unravelling. Use a spare needle at least a size smaller than the one you're knitting with. Weave this needle through the first loop and over the second loop of each stitch one or two rows below the mistake. You can then unravel your work without fear of going too far or getting in a tangle.

When unravelling cable, lace or similar patterns you may need to go back to a row without too much patterning so that you can see the stitches clearly.

Don't forget to slip the stitches back onto the correct sized needle before reknitting the piece. You'll hate yourself if you have to knit the section for a third time. This would make a great scenario for a knitters nightmare, or worse still, a Stephen King horror story!

Written by Alison Craven, and originally published in her column 'Let's Knit!' in the Mirboo North Times.

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