

Blocking

Free instructions by Lisa Sawyer at
<http://www.loomknittingdesigns.com>

Materials:

- Any finished project (needle or loom knitted)
- Pins. Lots of pins!
- A couple of large towels
- A measuring tape
- A washing machine helps, but isn't required!



What is blocking?

Blocking is a method of finishing a piece of knitting. It aids in shaping garments that need to be fitted, evening out the knitted fabric in to nice even stitches, and generally makes hand knits beautiful and professional looking. If you are working on something that needs to be seamed, for example, blocking aids in seaming by reducing the curled edges.

When to block?

I block mostly when I've used all natural fibers like cotton, wool, silk, etc. You can block anything, however, and I'm convinced it makes any hand or loom knit garment look better. As long as you block correctly, it never hurts! So give it a try!

Instructions:

For the purpose of these instructions, I show pictures using a Sew-EZ blocking board. This board, although convenient, isn't needed to block. The same thing can be done using an ordinary towel and a measuring tape.

So, to start you must have finished pieces or a piece of knitting. This could be parts of a sweater or other multi-part project or it could be a finished hat, scarf, or some other one piece item.



Step 1

Step 1:

Soak your finished knit(s) in cold water for 10 minutes or so. Just long enough to make sure all the fibers are saturated. Some people use a little mild soap at this step. I usually don't.

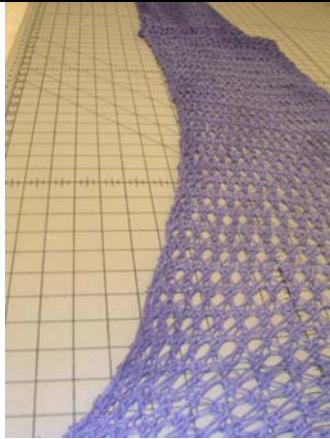
Once your knits have soaked, you can do one of two things. 1) Roll your knitting in a dry towel to get all the excess water out, or 2) place your piece into a washing machine and spin out all the extra water. I prefer the spin method. It's quick and painless and gets the job done gently enough.



Step 2

Step 2:

Once your knitting is spun or towel "dried" to get all the extra water out, take some large towels big enough for all your knitting and place them on the floor. As I mentioned at the beginning, I have a Sew-EZ blocking board. Either one is fine.



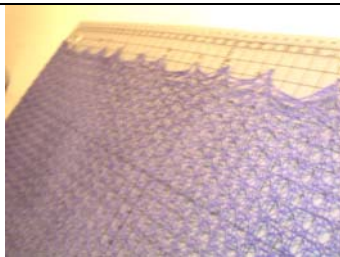
Step 3

Step 3:

Place your wet knitting onto the towel or the blocking board. If your piece is a fitted garment, you may want to pin it into shape.

Most patterns will have finished measurements included. I like to pin things like sweaters into the size it is supposed to be finished. Chest will be pinned to 36 inches wide, for example. Arms to 22 inches long...and so on. This insures the knitting eases into the shape it's meant to and also makes the stitches lay flat and the texture of the fabric come out.

If you're working on a scarf or something that doesn't really need to be fitted, however, you can just simply lay your damp knitting down and flatten into shape with your hands.



Step 4:

If you are pinning your knitting, go along the edge and pin to the correct measurements. If you are using a towel, place the measuring tape over your knitting and stretch it into shape and then pin.

Once you've pinned every couple inches, I go back and pin in between. You should have many pins along the edge. You can see the knitting on the left is in mid-pin. I do one more pass around the edge with pins between to make it nice and smooth.

Step 5:

Let your knitting completely dry on the towel or board. Bone dry!

Step 6:

Un-pin from the towel or board.

Notes:

The Waves of Lace Shawl from LoomKnittingDesigns.com should definitely be blocked. Without blocking, the shawl never gets to its full lacey potential!