

Dalarna Stitch

Dalarna stitch, named for a find in Sweden, is part of the family of stitches that creates little loops on the back side of the fabric. It is surprisingly dense and warm, and the finished fabric has an almost woven look to it.

1. Thread the needle, then wrap the end of the yarn twice around your index finger. Make an overhand knot by passing the end of the yarn over and through the 2 loops.
2. Place the first loop over your thumb, gently holding the second loop against the pad of your thumb. The working thread should lie in the space between your thumb and index finger.
3. Pass the tip of the needle over the outer side of the loop on the back of your thumb and under the inner side of that loop.
4. Bring the tip of the needle under the thumb loop on the outer side. This will cause that loop to slip off your thumb.



5. Turn the needle and pass under the working thread, pulling tight to form a new loop on your thumb. (Continue to support the work on your thumb with your index finger.)



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6. Looking down at the back of your thumb, you will see 2 small loops next to each other. Pass the needle tip through the inmost loop.



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7. Pass the tip of the needle under the outer side of the thumb loop and then under the working thread, once again pulling tight to create a new thumb loop (just like step 5.)



Continue in this way until the length of your "caterpillar" is sufficient for your project. Now it is time to join it into a ring. Nålbinding naturally twists, some stitches more than others.



Before joining, it is important to straighten out the twist. Beginning at your thumb, gently run the caterpillar between your fingers until you reach the end. Hold onto it.



8. Turning your thumb horizontal-ish in front of you, bring the end of the caterpillar around to rest just beneath your thumb, holding it in place with your index finger. You will notice that the side of the caterpillar that was resting against your thumb is now the outside of your work.



9. Put the tip of the needle through the first or second loop of the caterpillar.



10. Then put the tip through the inmost loop on the back of your thumb. Keep supporting the work.



11. Bring the tip of the needle under the thumb loop (like step 5).



12. Then pass the needle under the working thread and pull tight.



13. Pick up the next loop of the caterpillar and repeat steps 10-12.



- Continue around in this way to complete your project. The second row of nåbinding is usually tighter than the caterpillar stitches. Make a few stitches more than you think you need before you join the work into a ring.
- Unlike knitting, nåbinding is made with short pieces of yarn. At some point, you will need to add more. This is why it is important to use 100% wool (feltable, not super wash wool). Moisten the ends of the new yarn and the old yarn. Overlap them and rub vigorously between the heel and ball of your hands.
- At some point, you will probably want to increase or decrease. To increase pick up a loop from the base and make a stitch. Pick up the same loop again and make a second stitch.
- To decrease, skip one of the base loops before making the next stitch.