

Introduction to Nåbinding

Nåbinding, or needle-looping, is a method for creating a fabric by making interlocking loops, using a single needle. The technique is found in cultures around the world, including the Middle East, Russia, Peru, and at many Viking sites. It remained popular in Scandinavia for thousands of years.

Unlike crochet, a modern single needle method to create fabric, nåbinding requires the worker to pass the entire thread or yarn through the active loops. This limits the practical length of yarn that can be used. Because of this, yarn must repeatedly be joined as the article progresses. This is done by felting the strands together.

There are many nåbinding stitches. New stitches are created by varying the number of loops passed through, the direction in which the needle is passed, and whether or not the loops are twisted. Artifacts have been found with thread passing through as few as one and as many as nine loops.

These are directions for 2 of the easiest stitches. They work well with a variety of yarn weights. It is easiest to learn these stitches using a bulky yarn. **NOTE: Nåbinding tends to untwist the yarn if using singles. Check your strand often and re-twist when needed.**

Oslo: (UO/UOOF1) Begin by making an overhand knot, but do not pull it tight. Wrap the needle end of the yarn around your thumb from left to right. Pass the needle through the loop on the back of your thumb, turn and pass the needle under the thumb loop. You now have one loop on the thumb and one on the back of the thumb. Pick up the back-of-thumb loop from front to back. Turn and go under the thumb loop and the working thread. Once you have made a long enough chain, join in a circle and continue by passing the needle under the next loop in the chain, then through the back of thumb loop, etc. – called an F1 connection. Be careful not to twist the chain when joining.



overhand knot on the back of the thumb with the working yarn to the left (toward top of photo)



Pass needle thru back of thumb loop from front to back.



Turn and pass the needle under thumb loop and working yarn.



To join, pick up the first loop of the chain. Then pick up the first back of thumb loop, turn; go under the thumb loop & working yarn.

York: (UU/OOOF2) Make a loop and wrap the working thread around to make a thumb loop. Go through the back-of-thumb loop from back to front, then through the thumb loop. After you have a long enough chain, join and continue with an F1 connection or for better results, with F2 – picking up a new loop and the previous loop from the chain. York is very twisty – be careful to get all the twist out when you join.



Go thru the back of thumb loop from back to front, then under thumb loop and working thread.



Joining with F2 connection