



Six tips to enjoy pain-free knitting

If you're an avid knitter, you may have experienced strain in your hands, wrists, neck or upper back from being in the same position for an extended time. Like sewing and typing, knitting is a repetitive motion activity that can lead to strains and injuries. In some cases, you can also end up with carpal tunnel syndrome if you don't grip and position your wrists properly.

Tips and Techniques for Pain-free Knitting

Take frequent breaks:

The single most important thing you can do to prevent injury is to take frequent, regular breaks. Change the position of your body and look up often from your work and into the distance.

When you get immersed in a project, remembering to take a break can be difficult. If you aren't good at taking breaks, consider setting a timer to remind you.

Sit up straight:

Sit in a chair with your feet on the floor and try not to hunch over. Try to use your stomach muscles when you adjust your posture.

Sit in a comfortable but supportive chair. Consider placing a small cushion, rolled up towel or sweater between your chair and the curve in the small of your lower back to help you sit up straight.

The tools you use matter:

Consider using smooth, lightweight needles. Circular needles are best for large projects. When crocheting, use ergonomic hooks.

Switch it up:

Learning to switch easily between English and Continental knitting styles will help you to keep on stitching, while reducing the risk of a repetitive strain injury.

Stretch:

In addition to standing up and moving around, stretch your fingers every once in awhile. To stretch your fingers, clench your hands and then spread your fingers as far as you can.

Follow these steps to stretch and strengthen your wrists with simple curls:

- Lay your forearm on a flat surface with your wrist at the edge.
- While holding a small hand weight, let your wrist fall over the edge and then lift the weight up towards you only bending your wrist.
- The rest of your arm should remain flat on the table.

Make small, efficient movements:

Practice how small you can make your movements. Keep the working yarn close to the tip of your needles. Grasp your yarn gently. A consistently relaxed grip will help you keep a constant gauge, while reducing unnecessary strain on your neck, shoulders and wrists.

It's also helpful to hold your projects away from you. This position will help you relax and avoid muscle and eye strain.

