

Tuck stitch

This technique allows you to create horizontal tucks on the stockinette stitch fabric, so that in the end your garment has soft drapes everywhere. This kind of fabric is also known as cloque.

The effect is created by knitting stitches from the current row together with the same stitches several rows below. The number of the rows is usually double the number of the stitches – for example, if a tuck is 5 stitches, then you knit together with the stitches from 10 rows below.



The full pattern repeat usually includes two series of tucks. In the second one, the stitches that separated tucks horizontally are used to create tucks. So if in the first part of the pattern you knitted 7 stitches together with 7 stitches from 14 rows below, then knitted 13 stitches, then again 7 stitches' tuck, in the second half, you will knit 10 stitches (7 stitches of a previous tuck plus 3 stitches to keep the symmetry), then make a tuck with 7 stitches, etc.

You can play with the number of the stitches that separate tucks horizontally, and with the number of rows that separate the tucks vertically, to create various degrees of creasing. In example below, there are 8 stitches and five rows between each two tucks, so the drapes are quite mild.

This tutorial will show you the method I personally found as the easiest to create tucks without mistakes. There are other ways, too. For example, some knitters do not mark the lower stitches of a tuck at all, they just count back the rows when about to knit together.

So here we go.

Our pattern (based on Shar-Pei mitts), is knitted in round over 48 stitches, which are two full repeats. Vertically, the full repeat is 32 rows. As this pattern is knitted in round, there are no right and wrong side rows, so tucks are made both in odd and even rows. If you were knitting a cloque fabric flat, you'd need to adjust the number of the rows so that the tuck (knit-together) row is always on the right side (knit) row.



Here's the stitch pattern itself:

Rounds 1-5. Knit.

Round 6. (K5. Mark the five stitches you've just knit in the previous round. You can use a safety pin or two stitch markers, k 19) twice.

Rounds 7-15. Knit.

Round 16. (Knit first five stitches together with the respective five stitches from round 5 that you have marked, k19) twice. I recommend using a cable needle, or any extra needle of an appropriate size to pick up those stitches from row 5, and knit them together with current stitches as you would when doing a three-needle bind-off.

Rounds 19-21. Knit

Round 22. (K17. Mark the last five stitches you've just knit in the previous round. You can use a safety pin or two stitch markers, k 7) twice.

Rounds 23-31. Knit

Round 32. (K12. Knit the next five stitches together with the respective five stitches from round 21 that you have marked, k 7) twice.

Here are instructions with photos on how to perform a tuck.

Step 1.

Knit five rounds. We need to mark the stitches of the 5th round, but it's easier to do while knitting round 6.

Step 2.

In round 6, knit 5 stitches. Now we need to mark the first five stitches of the previous round. I recommend using safety pin. You can also use paper clip-like or split ring stitch markers to mark the first (and possibly the last) of the five stitches, but in my experience as you work on the next rounds they tend to slip out and get lost. That's why I ended up using two safety pins— one for each pattern repeat.



Turn your knitting with wrong side facing you. Starting from left, insert the needle of the pin into the bump of the stitch of the previous round.

Continue in the same fashion, so that all five bumps are on the needle.



Close the pin. Knit the rest of the 19 stitches of this repeat and 5 stitches of the next repeat. Use the second pin to mark those five stitches in the same way. Finish the round.



Step 3.

Knit the next ten rounds.



Step 4.

Now, in round 16, we will knit the stitches of the current row with the marked stitches from 10 rounds below to create a tuck. Although you can do without it, it's much more convenient to pick up the marked stitches on a spare needle. I made the mitts using two circulars, so I used the "resting" circular. You can also use a dpn, a cable needle, or any other needle of a suitable size.



Turn the work so that the wrong side is facing you. Open the safety pin.

Insert the needle in the first stitch going from right to left and from top down. Take that stitch off the pin.



Continue in the same fashion to move all the stitches from the pin onto the extra needle.

Turn the work so that the right side is facing you. Align the two needles next to each other, as you would in a three-needle bind off.





Insert the right needle into both stitches to knit them together.

Pull the yarn out through both stitches.



Take them off the needles.



Continue until you have knitted the five stitches. Your tuck is done.



Knit the next 19 stitches. Repeat for the second tuck. Finish the round.

Now you have finished 16 rounds of the 32 of the full pattern. The second half is done in exactly the same way, only the tucks will be placed horizontally in between the tucks we've just made.