

# Short Row Magic

Short rows are extra rows that can be added anywhere. In some cases these rows add length, in others they shape your knitting. To start, knit to one edge of the section to which you want to add a short row. Then wrap and turn your work, knit or purl back to the other edge of the section, and turn your work again to knit back. This adds two extra rows of knitting. The key to not having holes at the turns is to “wrap” one stitch at each end.

## Wrapping and Turning:

1. Knit (or purl) the number of stitches in your first short row. Slip the next stitch purlwise.



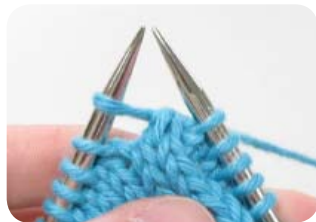
2. After you have slipped the stitch, bring the yarn forward (back if you are purling).



3. After you have brought the yarn forward (or back), return the slipped stitch to the left needle.

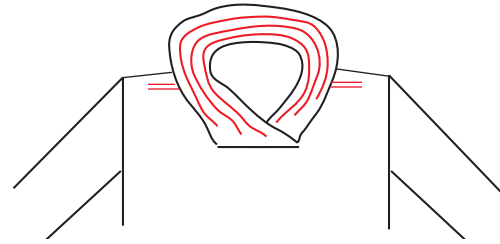


4. Return the working yarn to the back (or front). You have just wrapped a stitch. **Keep wraps comfortably loose to easily pick up later.** Turn your work 180 degrees and purl (or knit) to the end of the section. You now have one short row.



## Common uses for short rows

These are a few of the most common uses for Short Rows. The diagrams are a representation of the shaping the short rows create in each application.



### Shape shoulders and shawl collars

Short rows at the neckline allow the shoulder to follow your natural slope. Shawl collars need more fabric gradually added from the inside edge to the outside edge in order to lay gracefully.

## Picking up the wraps in stockinette\*

Your wrapped stitches will appear as horizontal bars on the right side of your knitting. If you don't pick up these bars created by the wraps, you will clearly see them as you continue knitting.

### Knit side:

1. Knit across the row until you come to the stitch with a wrap around it. Insert your right needle into the wrap from the bottom up.

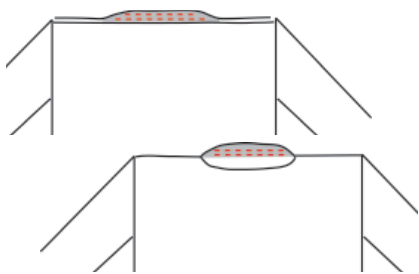


2. Next, insert your right needle into the stitch above the wrap knitwise. Knit the stitch and then pass the wrap over the stitch.



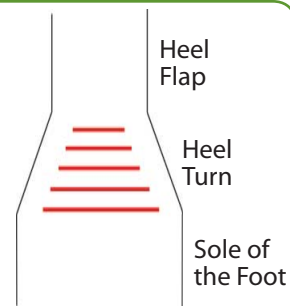
Your completed stitch will look long and will be twice as tall as the stitch to the right of it. This will even out as you continue knitting.





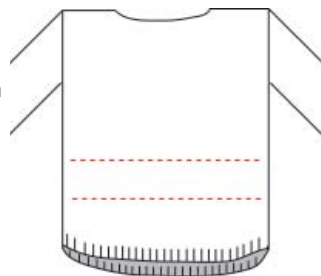
## Raise up the back of neck opening

One of the fitting tricks that is the special delight of hand knit garments. In most cases, a single set of short rows will raise the back neck enough for comfort. This is particularly effective with boat necks.



## Add length to the back of sweaters or vests

Oftentimes the back of a garment rides up, looking uneven and sloppy. Short rows can be added in a section a bit more narrow than the back. You only need to make short rows in a couple of places to add the necessary inch or two. Knit regularly for about two inches in between the two sets of short rows. It's best to add the rows in the bottom half of the sweater.



## Heel turning on a sock

In order to turn the heel of a sock you need to shape the fabric into almost a cup to curve around your heel.

## Purl side:

1. Purl across the row to the first stitch with a wrap around it. Insert your right needle into the back of the wrap from the bottom up.



2. Next, insert your right needle into the stitch above the wrap purlwise. Purl the stitch and then pass the wrap over the stitch.



Your completed stitch will be awkward on the purl side, but will erase the bar from the knit side of the work, creating a seamless short row.



## Making a short row test swatch

It is much easier to understand the mechanics of short rows if you try them out in a test swatch. Try the following example in a stockinette stitch swatch, using the techniques illustrated in this article.



Cast on 20 stitches.

Work in stockinette stitch for one inch ending with a purl row.

**Row 1:** K15, wrap and turn, P10, wrap and turn. K to end of row, picking up wrapped stitch as instructed for knit side.

**Row 2:** P all stitches, picking up wrapped stitch as instructed for purl side.

Continue working in stockinette stitch, repeating rows 1 and 2 every few rows until you are comfortable with the skills used.

## \*Garter stitch exception

Garter stitch short rows are visible because of the bumps of the purl stitches. But, you can minimize the impact. Follow the instructions above but do not pick up the wrap to knit with the wrapped stitch. Just knit the stitch like normal. The horizontal loop of the wrap looks like a purl stitch so it helps hide the merging of the extra rows.