

# City & Guilds Foundation Programme - Knitting



## CGF.M2.L07.7T: Shape – Edgings – Added (stitched on) edgings – Tasks

### Objective

In the previous lessons we've been creating stylish edgings to our projects using a variety of stitches, techniques and shapes. Now we'll be looking at stitched-on edgings and how these are designed and incorporated into our knitting.

### Stitched-on edgings

Stitched-on edgings are, as the name suggests, made entirely separately from the main knitting then stitched on afterwards. This very versatile technique allows us to explore different shapes and patterns much more freely as we are not reliant on the main fabric to provide the base for our edging. As we will see from the practice examples, we can take our stitches in a different direction, use yarns with different characteristics (tension and so on) and even use other materials and knitting techniques to enhance our knitted fabric.

### Why use stitched-on edgings?

Although picked up and stitched-on edgings are similar in that they are both worked after the main knitting is completed, there are a number of key differences in the way that they are made and used.

### Changing tension and adding structure

Stitched-on edgings are frequently used for buttonhole bands on jackets and cardigans where the designer wants the stitches to run in line with the main fabric, but where a firmer edge is needed to support buttons or fasteners without sagging.

The preferred way to do this is therefore usually to knit a separate band, often in a rib stitch, on a smaller needle. The rib stitch adds strength and elasticity and using the smaller needle gives a slightly firmer finish. If the designer were to try to incorporate this into the main garment the differences in tension would distort the edge (and imagine changing needles every single row just for 4 or 5 stitches!).

### Task One

Try this simple button band edging:

Knitted in K1, P1 rib on 3.25mm needles this band has been stitched to the main stocking stitch fabric worked on 4mm needles. To keep the edge firm, the band has been stitched on whilst slightly stretched. This gives a good foundation for buttons or other fasteners.

#### *Main fabric*

Using 3.75mm needles and DK wool cream yarn, cast on 30 sts and work 8 rows K1, P1 rib.

At the start of the next row, place the first 5 sts on a piece of spare yarn, change to 4mm needles and red/brown DK wool yarn, then work 16 rows st st.

#### *Shaping rows:*

Rows 1 and 3: Cast off 3 sts, K to end.

Row 2 and all even rows: P

Rows 5, 7, 9 and 11: K1, Sl 1, PSSO, K to end.

Cast off.

#### *Button band edging*

Return to the sts on the spare yarn and, using 3.25mm needles and cream yarn, work in K1 P1 rib on just those 5 sts until the band is almost as long as the main fabric. Complete and fit the band as shown below.

*Task One:  
Button band edging*



## **Curves and corners**

Knitting a separate band also means that curves can be neatly followed without worrying about untidy edge stitches. Stitched edgings are also very useful for getting straight edges (“mitring”) on square corners. As bands are only working on a few stitches it is a relatively simple matter to try out different shaping until a neat curve or corner is achieved.

## **Task Two**

This striped, garter stitch border is mitred at the corners then stitched onto the stocking stitch fabric. Paired decreases form the corner shape, and contrasting colours in the stripes add fun detail.

### *Main fabric:*

Using 7.5mm needles, cast on 8 sts and work 11 rows st st (starting K), then cast off.

### *Band:*

Using 7.5mm needles, cast on 29 sts.

Row 1: K14, SI 1, K1, PSSO, K1, K2 tog, K to end.

Row 2: K13, K2tog, K1, SI 1, K1, PSSO, K to end.

Row 3: K12, SI 1, K1, PSSO, K1, K2 tog, K to end.

Row 4: K11, K2tog, K1, SI 1, K1, PSSO, K to end.

Row 5: K10, SI 1, K1, PSSO, K1, K2 tog, K to end.

Row 6: K9, K2tog, K1, SI 1, K1, PSSO, K to end.

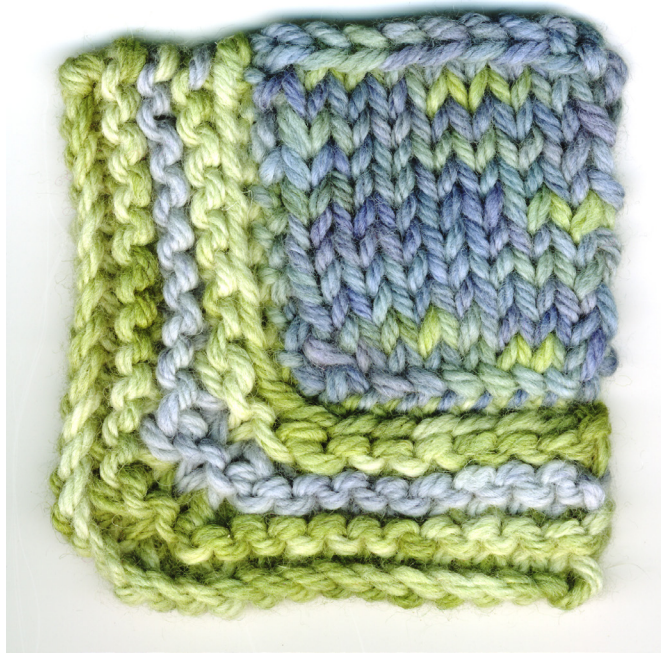
Row 7: K8, SI 1, K1, PSSO, K1, K2 tog, K to end.

Row 8: K7, K2tog, K1, SI 1, K1, PSSO, K to end.

Cast off loosely.

Fit and stitch the band to the main fabric as shown below, starting pinning at the corner to ensure a square edge.

*Task Two:  
Mitred border*



### **Changing direction**

A particularly interesting feature of a stitched-on edging is that the knitting can be worked in almost any direction. Providing care is taken with drape, weight and texture, a stitched band can be as narrow or wide as you wish. Because the band is separate, it is also possible to experiment with different stitches and to try new techniques such as cabling and colour work without any risk of spoiling the main knitting.

### **Task Three**

This sample is made entirely in garter stitch. By making the band afterwards we can take the stitches at right angles to the main knitting adding interest without even using different stitches.

*Main fabric:*

Using 4mm needles, cast on 30 sts loosely, work 26 rows garter stitch and cast off.

*Band one (bottom edge):*

Using 4mm needles and DK wool yarn, cast on 20 sts loosely. Knit 4 rows in cream, 4 rows in a contrasting colour (we've used a rainbow-dyed silk), and then 2 more rows in cream. Cast off.

*Band two (side edge):*

Using 4mm needles, cast on 5 sts loosely in cream, then work 30 rows garter stitch. Change to a contrasting colour (we've used red/brown wool), and knit 2 rows. Knit 2 rows cream. Repeat the two row stripe until 4 stripes of contrasting colour have been made. Knit 4 rows cream and cast off.

Pin and stitch the bands as per the instructions below.

*Task Three:  
Garter stitch border*



### **Fitting and stitching on your band (all samples)**

So you have your main fabric and band, but you're not quite done yet! Taking a little extra time fitting and pinning/tacking your band before stitching it may seem like a fuss but is well worth the effort.

To finish your band don't cast off, but stop knitting when it is slightly shorter than the main fabric. Pin the band carefully in place, slightly stretching it. Use lots of smaller pins rather than one or two large ones. Putting the stitches on a spare piece of yarn while you pin makes fitting much easier.

On large pieces it is often better to pin then tack the band in place before stitching. For tacking use a smooth contrasting thread so you can remove it easily afterwards. As with a short edge, stop knitting when the band is a little short but don't cast off. Put the stitches on a piece of spare yarn or holder to make fitting easier. Pin the band in place. It should be firm but not pulling in. With RS tog, tack carefully in place.

If after pinning/tacking the band is long enough, put the stitches back on the needles and cast off. If it is too long, rip back some rows, or add more if it is still short. Re-pin/tack if necessary before casting off. Once you are happy with the fit, overcast (overstitch) neatly in place.

### **Which stitch?**

Oversewing (overcasting) is a useful stitch for bands as it is flatter than backstitch. Mattress stitch is not always suitable as you may not be stitching row to row or stitch to stitch so it is difficult to align the stitches neatly. For heavily textured yarns, try a smoother yarn in a matching colour as this makes stitching easier and neater. Stranded tapestry wools can be useful for this as they come in many colours. Combine more or fewer threads to give the right thickness. (See the reference pages for information on stitches for making up).

## **TOP TIPS**

- Aim to build a collection of interesting stitch patterns and edgings. If you have internet access there are many free stitch “libraries” online with lots of fun stitch patterns to try. No computer? No problem! Your local library is a great place to look for interesting knitting books and most libraries offer a book ordering service (sometimes for a nominal fee) if you have a particular title in mind.
- When swatching, try your edgings on your swatch. It will save time and effort later.
- Be creative with colour or add beads, sequins, and other embellishments. If you have an eyelet-maker, add metal eyelets to your bands. You could even thread with ribbon/leather thongs or a braid.