



Do you do machine knitting?

No – but we can arrange this. We work mainly with machine knitters in the Midlands or Scotland, but there are also several others, specialists for smaller quantities. See below for a small selection of contact details, try online search or contact us for further information. Machine knitting, like weaving, is incredibly versatile!

In order to have a successful outcome, you need to discuss your plans with the machine knitter and then give us the agreed specification for the yarn, which we then make to order and can send direct. Machine knitters have a range of specialities and we can discuss the most appropriate person for you to work with.

The best option – for all your machine knitting – is to visit, see samples, discuss your fibre and work directly. The machine knitting company will be able to suggest possible ideas, colour-ways, textures and what is fashionable, classic or traditional and can show you a wide range of options. Some may even make up a small sample for you.

All **hand machine knitting** is comparatively expensive, and to get a reasonable price it is necessary to have a small batch of things made, not just a single item. For single items in the UK, it is best to approach the Guild of Machine Knitters, which is recently merged with the Knitting and Crochet Guild – look for specific mentions of machine knitting at <https://kcguild.org.uk/sharing-knowledge/guilds-groups-and-other-resources/kcg-branches/>.

You may consider learning yourself, and there is very useful information at <https://kcguild.org.uk/sharing-knowledge/machine-knitting/> Also try Andee Knits for equipment and advice <https://www.machine-knitting.co.uk/>

For machine knitting, a yarn can be similar to a hand knitting yarn but will work better if:

- for a fine yarn, it is made with a slightly higher twist, for strength, then steamed to calm down any tendency to kink
- for a thicker yarn, it is made with a lower twist to avoid kinking
- it is left unwashed after spinning and is also waxed
- it is finished on cones

It is possible to wind hand-knitting yarn onto bobbins and to feed it through waxed discs for a home-based knitting machine.

Woollen or worsted spun yarns will work when machine knitted in the same way as if hand knitted, with a bulkier, lighter fabric from woollen spun yarns and a more drapery one from worsted spun yarns.

Many machine knitting companies require fine worsted spun yarns. For sock knitting, it is normally essential to have a fine worsted spun yarn around 2/12NM to 2/14NM with 10% nylon added. For other machine knitting it depends entirely on what the particular knitting company has: individual knitting machines have a single gauge at which they work, so it depends on what speciality the maker has.



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Knitting of garments and shawls, rugs, etc., is fairly straightforward. Working on finer fabrics, such as for base layers, T-shirts or sweat shirts, requires either flat or circular knitting machines. It is possible to do circular knitting on a home machine with some practice and probably some lessons!

For finer fabrics however, a very fine yarn, perhaps 2/29NM, is required and this is something which is technically only possible with fine fibres of less than 20 microns and is also very expensive from us as it takes a very long time to spin. We are not aware of anyone in the UK who currently spins to these specifications, so it is probably necessary to go to Italy for suitable yarns.

PLEASE CONTACT US FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR CALL DIRECT TO:

Socks

- J. Alex Swift, Loughborough

01509 842284 <http://www.jalexswift.co.uk/>

- Bradford Sock Company, Bradford

01274 727283 <https://www.thebradfordsockcompany.co.uk/>

You will also find a range of UK sock makers and suppliers listed at <https://makeitbritish.co.uk/top-ten/top-20-british-made-sock-brands/> and this is worth a look and some research on what others are doing.

Other items

There are many UK knitwear manufacturers, so here are just some with whom we have worked.

- Jack Masters, Leicester

0116 283 7300 <https://www.jackmasters.co.uk/>

- Crystal Knitwear, Mansfield

01623 628605 <http://crystalknitwear.co.uk/>

- B&B Knitwear, Long Eaton

0115 972 2471 no website, but helpful for small batches

- Gilbert Wilson, Hawick

01450 377558 <https://www.gilbertwilsonofhawick.co.uk/>

We have also worked with John Smedley, Charles Kirk, Corgi Knitwear, Ramnation, Eribé Knitwear ...

Some of these are on a list of knitwear manufacturers at <https://makeitbritish.co.uk/top-ten/british-knitwear/> which may give you ideas and more contacts.

- Raj Ved at Aristo Knitwear is very helpful for fine circular knitting of jersey fabrics: <https://aristofabrics.com/>

- for historic fine lace, you can try <https://www.ghhurt.com/> who will also require very high quality yarns

- for help, tuition and small runs, try Rachel Astor at Chiltern Wool <https://www.chilternwool.co.uk/>

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