

# A Beginner's Guide to Making Baby Sweaters

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*For my Mother-in-Law so she can knit sweaters for my niece's baby-dolls!*

If you can knit (or purl or both) rectangles and can use some basic fractions then this method may be a good way for you to start to make very basic sweaters for newborn-sized dolls.

This guide/worksheet will take you through the math required to make whatever size you wish. I assume you know how to knit/purl, cast on, cast off and sew pieces together.

## The Very Basic Boat Neckline Sweater

This type of sweater is great because there is no designated front or back. It can be worked in a number of different pieces or even all in one piece. I tend to knit this type of sweater either in 3 pieces. You will only need 3 measurements to complete this project. The remaining dimensions can be calculated on the worksheet below. Here is a website that shows the average sizes for premature and newborn infants based on the number of weeks old. <http://www.heartfeltangels.com/Sizes.html>

## The Pieces

This particular sweater consists of two main pieces and two sleeves for a total of four pieces. Each piece should be knit from the bottom up until you are familiar with making the following calculations.

## Calculating the Gauge

Every knitter alive will cringe when they read this but here goes...don't bother swatching. Yes you read that right. It's just a sweater for a doll so sizing doesn't have to be perfect. Don't waste time making a swatch unless you don't have the needles the ball band recommends.

1. Using the ball band (or your swatch if you insist), determine the number of stitches required for 4 inches (or 10 centimetres). \_\_\_\_\_ stitches per 4 inches (or 10 centimetres)
2. Divide the number of stitches by 4 (or 10) to give you the number or stitches per inch (or centimetre). Round to no more than 2 decimal places. \_\_\_\_\_ / 4 = \_\_\_\_\_ stitches per inch OR \_\_\_\_\_ / 10 = \_\_\_\_\_ stitches per centimetre.

## Calculating the Dimensions

- A. Determine how long you want the sweater to be. The torso measurement is the total length:

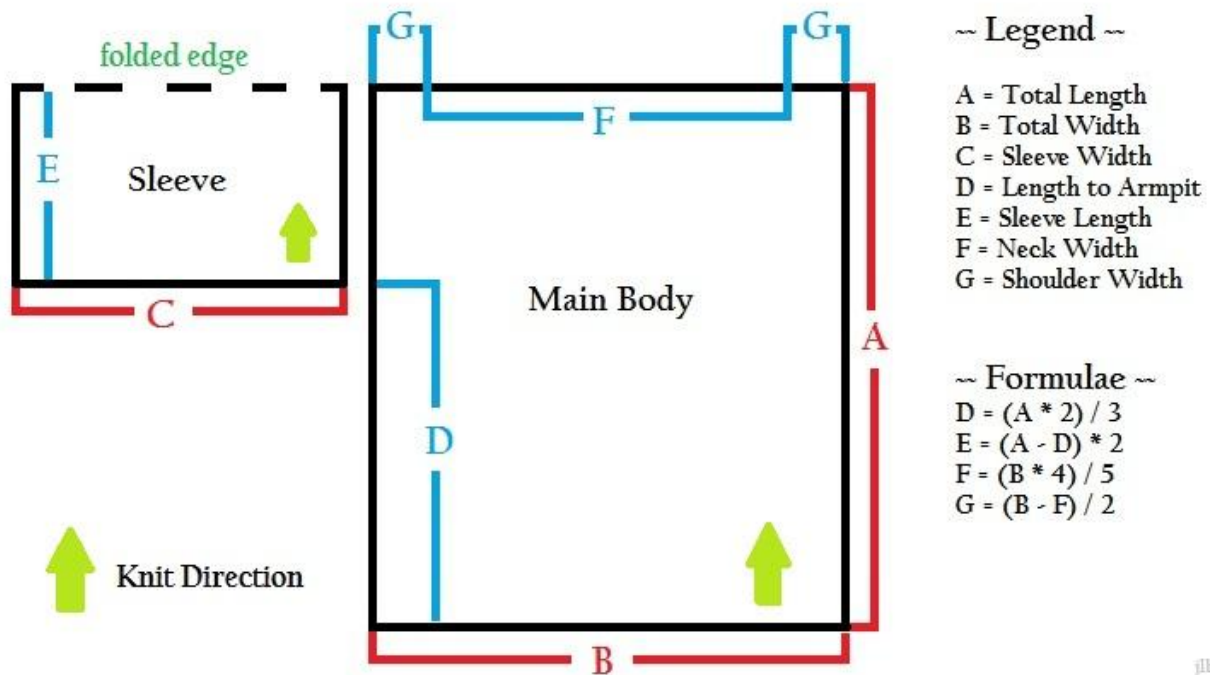
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- B. Determine how wide you want the sweater to be. To get the width of the piece, divide the chest circumference in half. The chest circumference divided in half is the total width:

\_\_\_\_\_

- C. Determine how long you want the sleeves to be. The underarm length is the sleeve width:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- D. The length of the garment from the bottom to the underarms is 2/3rds of the total length.  
\_\_\_\_\_ \* 2 / 3 = \_\_\_\_\_
- E. The length of the sleeves is total length less the length to the underarms multiplied by 2.  
(\_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_) \* 2 = \_\_\_\_\_
- F. The width of the neck hole is 4/5ths of the total width. \_\_\_\_\_ \* 4 / 5 = \_\_\_\_\_
- G. The width of the shoulder is the total width less the width of the neck hole divided in half.  
(\_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_) / 2 = \_\_\_\_\_ (round down to the nearest stitch)

## Basic Sweater with Boat Neckline



### Calculating the Cast-On Values

- To determine the number of stitches to cast on for the front and back pieces, simply multiply the number of stitches per inch (or centimetre) by the total width of the piece (from step 2 above). \_\_\_\_\_ \* \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ stitches (round up to nearest stitch).
- Determine the number of stitches to cast on for the sleeve width. Multiply the number of stitches per inch (or centimetre) by the total width of the sleeve (from step 3 above). \_\_\_\_\_ \* \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ stitches (round up to the nearest stitch).

## Knitting

**Main Piece (make 2):** Cast on the required number of stitches (from step 1 – cast-on values) and proceed in whatever pattern you choose until you have reached the calculated length from bottom to underarms (step 4 – dimensions). Place a marker (or add a line of colour if you choose). This is where you will sew in the sleeves. Continue until piece measures from the bottom the total length. Cast off loosely.

**Sleeve (make 2):** Cast on the required number of stitches (from step 2 – cast-on values) and proceed in whatever pattern you choose until you have reached the calculated sleeve length (step 5 – dimensions). Cast off loosely.

## Sewing

With right sides facing, attach the main pieces at the shoulder, sewing in from the side edge the calculated shoulder width (step 7 – dimensions).

Pin the side of each sleeve between the markers on the main pieces and attach them to the main pieces.

Sew the underarms and sides of the sweater to complete it.

## Making it Fancy

Perhaps you want to take this simple pattern and make it a little less plain. Here are some things you can do:

- Add ribbing to the bottom of the main pieces. Knit 1, Purl 1 until the end of the row for about 1 inch.
- Make the bottom wider by using needles 4 to 5 sizes bigger. Decrease a needle size evenly until the underarms. Start off with a larger needle to make the sweater more of an A-shape.
- Use a seed stitch or moss stitch instead of stocking or garter.
- Add rows of colour
- Use up scraps by making each piece a different colour
- Add buttons or other notions