

**Inspiration:** Talvi Knits blog: *How Stretchy is Stretchy? Updated Comparison of 20 Bind-off Methods Aug 2020*

### Why do you need a Stretchy Cast On?

- Primarily: Sock Cuffs & Lace. (Also pullover necklines, hats, mittens.)
- Not stretchy: blanket squares, pocket edges, buttonholes.
- Sock cuffs need to stretch 50% to go over heel diagonal (more for people with high insteps).

#### WHAT I DID:

- 2x2 Rib Swatches, identical except for Cast On method:
  - All worked ITR with Cascade 128 SW yarn, 48 sts on 5.5mm (US 9) needles.
  - Cast on using 5.5mm needles except for a few cases noted
  - same no. of rows 2x2 rib, no BO (live sts on lifeline)
- Measured diameter of swatches:
  - Resting diameter top & bottom (to assess flare)
  - CO edge while stretching swatch to maximum.
  - Compared that to a) resting diameter b) 18cm (arbitrary mid-calf diameter)
- Repeated some swatches
- Caution: Measurements are “squishy”
  - Results highly dependent on execution!
  - List is far from comprehensive!!

### Cast On Families:

- *Backwards Loop; Slipknot CO (aka Jeny’s Stretchy Slipknot CO)*
- Knitted: *Knitted; Cable; Tillybuddy’s Very Stretchy CO*
- Long Tail: *Standard Long Tail CO; LTCO in pattern; German Twisted LTCO (aka Old Norwegian CO); Channel Islands; Latvian; Patty Lyons Elastic CO for Lace*
- Crochet: *Crochet; Chinese Waitress; I-cord*
- Tubular: *Tubular; Alternating CO for 2x2 Ribbing (by June Hemmons Hiatt, Faux Tubular)*

### A Word or Two about Long Tail Cast On (LTCO):

- Thumb yarn controls the stretch. Space your stitches.
  - Increasing needle size doesn’t equal more stretch.
- All LTCO variants are about getting more yarn in thumb yarn.
- Backwards Loop + 1 row = LTCO.

### Resources:

- YouTube videos: *Roxanne Richardson; Suzanne Bryan; Patty Lyons; VeryPink Knits; 10rowsaday & others*
- Blog: *Techknitter; Talvi Knits*
- Book: *Cast On, Bind Off: 211 Ways to begin and End Your Knitting* by Cap Sease



20. I Cord



19. Alternating CO for k2p2 Rib



18. Tubular



17 (&10). Standard Cable



16 (& 13). Crochet



15. Chinese Waitress



14. Latvian



12. Long Tail CO in pattern



11. Knitted



9. Tillybuddy's Very Stretchy CO



7 (& 6). Standard Long Tail



5. Patty Lyons Elastic CO for Lace



4. Channel Islands (2x thumb yarn)



3. Slipknot CO



2 (& 8). German Twisted LTCO



1. Backwards Loop

#### WHY CHOOSE A PARTICULAR CO?

- Edge appearance
- Sturdiness
- Elasticity
- Flare
- Symmetry with BO
- Yarn choice
- Can you remember it?

RANK	NAME	FAMILY	FLARE	STRETCH (absolute)	STRETCH (vs.18cm)	Would I use it?
	<i>(2x2 ribbing, no cast on )</i>			287%	82%	
1	Backwards Loop, CO 5 for 6				60%	Y
2	German Twisted LTCO #2	LTCO			58%	Y
3	(Jeny's Stretchy) Slipknot CO	n/a			56%	possibly
4	Channel Islands (double thumb yarn)	LTCO	23%		52%	unlikely
5	Patty Lyons Elastic CO for Lace	LTCO			51%	possibly
6	Standard Long Tail #1	LTCO			49%	Y
7	Standard Long Tail #2	LTCO			47%	Y
8	German Twisted LTCO #1	LTCO			44%	Y
9	Tillybuddy's Very Stretchy CO *	Knitted		varies	*41%	possibly
10	Modified Cable <sup>1</sup>	Knitted		261%	37%	N
11	Knitted	Knitted		to	37%	Y
12	Long Tail CO in pattern k2,p2 *	LTCO		72%	*36%	Y
13	Crochet (sloppy)	Crochet			36%	N
14	Latvian	LTCO			34%	N
15	Chinese Waitress	Crochet	18%		33%	possibly
16	Crochet (tight) <sup>2</sup>	Crochet			29%	Y
17	Standard Cable	Knitted			28%	Y
18	Tubular	Tubular	25%		23%	unlikely
19	Alternating CO for k2,p2 Rib	Tubular			11%	possibly
20	I-cord	Crochet	22%		5%	N

<sup>1</sup> Used 7mm needle as spacer

\* Should be stretchier? Might be an execution issue.

<sup>2</sup> Used 4.5mm needle & 4mm hook to CO

## WHAT DID I LEARN FROM ALL THIS??

1. You don't need all these fancy & obscure cast ons.
2. All cast ons are stretchy, it's just a matter of degree.
3. Standard LTCO can probably be made as stretchy as you want (although you might not like the edge).
4. You still need to pay attention to stitch spacing even with the stretchy LTCO variants!
5. Execution has a big impact on outcome!
6. Rox's Backwards Loop tip (CO 5 for 6) is genius.
7. My favourite COs haven't really changed: *(German Twisted LTCO & Backwards Loop or Knitted for stretchiness, Crochet & Cable for a firm edge. Std LTCO/LTCO in pattern for work horse COs, although I usually use Cable as my default.)*
8. I did learn several new cast ons which I may play with in the future.