Converting a Flat Knitting Pattern to Work it in the Round
Tricia Ennis – 2023 Retreat "We Walk Better Together"

The Important Points:

1. Any flat patterns that will end up as a tube after seaming can be modified to be knit in the round: hat, mitt, sweater, etc. Also if you have a scarf pattern (long rectangle) and want to try making matching mitts, converting to circular makes that possible.
2. Any stitch pattern can be converted from flat to circular knitting, including stitch pattern panels or samplers or repeats from any chart.
3. General note: "Round" or "circular" knitting is actually spiral knitting as each 1st stitch brings the piece up stitch in the same place every time. This can create a "jog". There are many ways to overcome this jog that you can find on YouTube.
4. Think about the structure of the piece - is this modification a good idea? Sometimes seams add structure, e.g. heavy cotton might weigh down too much.
   a. Subtract two stitches for every seam (the first and last stitch of the row). Good designers often add 2 sts to their pattern (if there is one) which get lost as the piece is seamed when you use a mattress stitch join. BULKY would need to be carefully evaluated.
5. In flat knitting of 28 sts, you word stitches 1 through 28 then turn your work and work back from st 28 back to the first stitch. In the round, you start every row (now a "round") with stitch 1 and work through 28.
6. Therefore, you need to convert wrong-side rows to right-side rounds AND reverse the order of the stitches from last st. to first st. WS ONLY so you need to know whether the even or odd rows are front or back of the work. Usually row 1 is the right side but not always so just watch out for that.
7. Depending on the complexity of the pattern, you might want to write it out on a separate piece of paper.
8. If you need help, schedule a private lesson with the knitting teacher at your local yarn shop.

Additional Resources:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UmRwA3_4JGg Presenter takes you through a "live" pattern conversion.
Roxanne Richardson
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eBdw9BVcVFI   Basics, Part 1
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PYMFqHj2eWM&t=335s Basics, Part 2
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7FnCJ7VS8Y Basics, Part 3

Montse Stanley "Reader's Digest Knitters Handbook"

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- In flat knitting, you knit from R to L on RS rows and from L to R on wrong side rows. In circular knitting, EVERY ROUND starts at the beginning of the 'row' so, e.g., when using charts, they are read from R to L for every row.
    - E.g., a 28-stitch pattern is worked from st. #1 through #28 on the RS. Then turned and worked back from st. #28 back to st. 1.
    - In circular knitting every round (row) starts at stitch #1.
    - So, when converting and changing the WS rows, it is also necessary to reverse the stitch order in addition to the "type" of stitch
- On a repeat pattern even when not using a chart, remember that, on what would be a WS row, (where you would normally be knitting from L to R), in circular you will be working from R to L on all rounds so you will need to reverse your overall row in addition to reversing the actual stitch, in order to convert the row to a circular RS round.

Flat	vs	Circular
Row 1: K3, P1, turn		Round 1: K3, P1 – do not turn
Row 2: K1, P3		Round 2: K3, P1

- Read the pattern first and get a picture in your mind as to what it is.
- Rewrite or notate the pattern for knitting in the round. It ends up being easier than trying to change things in your head as you go. It might be advantageous to create a chart if you prefer working from charts.
- Make your swatch in the round if you are making your garment in the round.
- Changes are only made to the wrong side rows.
- When converting, knits become purls and purls become knits on the WS only.
- An SSK (left leaning) on the wrong side row of your flat pattern, becomes a P2tog (right leaning but as the wrong side would be the right side in flat knitting, it needs to reverse direction).
- Side stitches (used for seaming) are not required in circular knitting so can be eliminated from a pattern.
- If you want to use a charted pattern for, say, a cardigan and convert it to a sweater in the round, remember that you will need to continue your charts from side to back to other side. That is, charts will need to be 'combined' to become one seamless chart not three charts which would then be seamed to create one continuous garment.
- When changing a pattern with repeats, (knit x, purl y) x # of times, first write out the brackets, then the number of times to repeat the pattern and then work the changes from right to left within the brackets.
- Cables in flat knitting will usually simply say to knit the knits and purl the purls as they face you. In circular knitting, you end up doing the exact same thing – i.e. working the

stitches as they face you. The cross-overs are usually on the RS of the flat knitting so you will not need to change these. That being said, cabled work needs to have careful attention paid to it and it most likely candidate for charting to you can check your pattern.

- For your first attempt, choose a simple pattern – you will most likely have to frog more than once but – maybe not if you write out your instructions first and let the appearance of your work guide you. You already know what it 'should' look like.
- Stitch Markers are highly recommended to avoid confusion.
- If in doubt, chart it out.
- From the point of dividing the sleeves or neck, pattern is worked back and forth. Or, if more advanced you can modify to remake shoulder into raglan sleeves.

Allover stitch patterns: mult of x sts

Process is the same as with a panel of stitches. Pattern can be repeated for as

Triangular stitch, p. 28 of A Treasury of Knitting Patterns

RS Row 1: *P6, k1, rep from *.
WS Row 2: *P2, K5, rep from *. _____ *P5, K2*
Row 3: *P4, k3, rep from *.
Row 4: *P4, k3, rep from *. _____ *P3, K4*
Row 5: *P2, k5, rep from *.
Row 6: *P6, k1, rep from *. _____ *P1, K6*

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Row 5: *P2, K5, rep from *. _____ *P1, K6*
Row 6: *P6, k1, rep from *.

Key

RS: knit
WS: purl

RS: purl
WS: knit

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General Methodology:

First, delete any edge stitches. For example, if your panel pattern tells you to 'Cast on a multiple of 5 plus 4′, omit the 'plus 4′. You will only need to cast on any multiple of 5. In flat knitting, the 'plus′ stitches are to even out the edges of the pattern; in circular knitting you are knitting in a continuous spiral and have no side edges.

Note if there is an extra stitch for seaming panel pattern – drop it from the pattern.

Note: For example, if flat pattern reads.
             ROW 1: RS **k1**,K4 *p10, k4* Rep from * to * to last 10 sts, P10, **K1**
             ROW 2:WS Purl

Change the WS Purl rows to 'RS' Knit rounds but note the number of sts in the RS rows given which constitute the actual pattern – 1K st at the beginning and end need to go as pattern is actually K4,P10…. Watch for side stitches/rows (used for stabilization or seaming).

Change the WS rows in the knit pattern to be RS rows. In circular knitting, the front of the fabric (RS) always faces the knitter so you will ONLY be knitting RS rows. Therefore you change the WS ones to become RS ones. If the WS rows are just purl rows, simply change those rows to knit rows.

*Pay attention to the end of one row and the beginning of the next to make sure the flow is what you want, especially if you have decided to use a panel pattern. This is where charting can come in handy as a chart provides a good visual. An example would be if you have a 2X2 Uneven rib. In the flat that would be

Row 1: K2, *P2, K2, repeat from * to EOR
Row 2: P2, *K2,P2, rep from * to EOR

Circular
Rnd 1: K2 *P2, K2, rep from * around
Rnd 2: K2, *P2, K2 , rep from * around

Either drop the K2 or add an additional P2

Charts:

Either an individual chart for a sampler or the highlighted part of a repeat on a charted pattern:

Check whether or not the WS rows are included on the chart (they often are not)

Check for edge (stabilizing) stitches at the top, bottom, and sides edges and remove if necessary.

Check that you have a stitch key

In FLAT knitting a chart is worked from top to bottom, starting in the lower right corner and working back and forth to accommodate the WS. If only RS rows are given on the chart every row that is charted starts at the right side and works to the left..
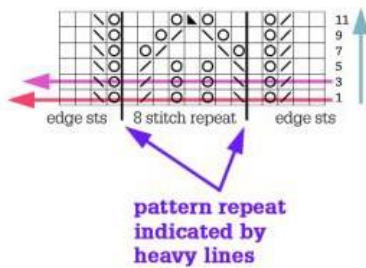
FLAT KNITTING requires working back (all purl) on the reverse to get back to the RS charted row. These are usually not shown on the chart below. Note the 1, 3, 5…

To work the above chart in **a circular fashion**, you would simply work the charted row (round in circular knitting) from R to L and **knit the next round**, putting you back at the beginning of the round again.

Some charts give every row so, again, watch for that.

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Examples of Stitch "Opposites"

Garter Stitch FLAT:
Row 1(RS) – Knit
Row 2 (WS) Knit

Garter Stitch CIRCULAR
Round 1 – Knit (RS row so does not change)
Round 2 – PURL (WS rows so it needs to be 'reversed' to become another RS row in circular knitting)¶

Stocking or Stockinette Stitch FLAT
Row 1(RS): Knit all stitches (Right Side)
Row 2 (WS): Purl all stitches (Wrong Side)

Stocking or Stockinette Stitch CIRCULAR
Round 1 (RS): Knit – Right side rows do not change.
Round 2 (WS): Knit – WS rows need to be 'reversed.'

2 X 2 Rib – Flat (even # of stitches with a multiple of 4)*
Row I (RS) Knit 2, Purl 2 across entire row.
Row 2 (WS) Knit 2, Purl 2 across entire row.

2 X 2 Rib – Circular (even # of stitches with a multiple of 4)
Round 1: K2, P2 around
Round 2: K2, P2 around

Seed Stitch – Flat – A plain on top of a purl, on top of a plain

Row 1:(RS): K1, P1 across
Row 2:(WS) P1, K1 across

Seed Stitch – Circular
Round 1 (RS): K1, P1 around
Round 2 (WS): P1,K1 around

K2 tog becomes P2tog
YO remains a YO (advantage in circular is that all YO's are the exact same size as they are all RS YO's

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Convert to Circular Knitting :13 stitches - Odd are right side, even are wrong side. Converting turns ALL rounds into RS rounds. Key for the chart is an empty box for a K stitch and a dot for a purl stitch and because you are converting to a chart, the First Row (round) would be charted at the bottom of the chart. This is not a complete pattern.

<u>Flat Pattern Rows</u>   <u>Circular Pattern Rounds</u>

RS Row 1: K6, p1, k6

Row 2: P6, k1, p6

Row 3: K5, p1, k1, p1, k5

Row 4: P5, k1, p1, k1, p5

Row 5: K4, (p1, k1)twice, p1, K4

Row 6: P4, (k1, p1)2x, k1, p4

Row 7: K3 (p1, k1)3x, p1, k3

Row 8; P3, (k1,p1)3x, k1, p3

Row 9: K2, p1, k1, p1, k3, p1, k1, p1, k2

Row 10: P2, k1, p1, k1, p3, k1, p1, k1, p2

Row 11: (K1,p1)2x, k5, (p1, k1)2x

Row 12 (P1, k1)2x, p5, (k1, p1)2x

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Rounds													
12													
11													
10													
9													
8													
7													
6													
5													
4													
3													
2													
1													
Sts.	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1