

HAND EXERCISES FOR KNITTERS/CROCHETERS

Most individuals wouldn't consider knitting strenuous, but finger and wrist dexterity, flexibility and stamina are all necessary components of knitting. Continually grasping and balancing knitting needles, thread and the object being knitted takes a bit of coordination. Holding the fingers curled inward while grasping needles can place a strain on the muscles of the fingers, hands and wrists. Start off each knitting session with a few basic exercises, and take a break once in a while to repeat them, for hours of knitting enjoyment.

Clenching

Hold the hands out in front of you, palms sides down. Make a fist with each hand, clenching the fingers in a tight fist. Hold the contraction for between five and 10 seconds and then release, stretching the fingers straight out from the palm. Repeat this exercise about five times on each hand.

Finger Stretch

Lift your right hand in front of you, palm facing away from your body. Place the palm of your left hand against the palm-side fingers of your right hand. The fingers of your right hand should be close together and straight. Very gently, press against the fingers of the right hand with the palm of the left, stretching the hand toward your body. Hold that stretch for about five seconds and then release. You'll feel a gentle stretch in the back of the fingers and in the wrist. Repeat this exercise five times and then switch and repeat on the left hand.

Making Circles

You can do this exercise one hand at a time, or at the same time. Place the hands in front of your body, elbows bent at about a 45 degree angle. Moving slowly and steadily, circle or rotate the wrists, so you're making large circles in the air with your hands, exercising and lubricating the wrist joint. The forearms, elbows and shoulders remain still. Circle five times in one direction and then reverse direction and repeat five more times.

The Block

Sit comfortable and then interlace your fingers, palms facing you. Rotate the hands so that now your palms are facing outward, the fingers still interlocked. Try to straighten your elbows as you push your hands away from you. Hold that stretch for about 10 seconds and then relax. This stretch is excellent for the finger and wrist flexors, and will also help improve circulation and relieve tension and strain.