

Date: Thu, 1 Jan 2004 20:21:14 -0500
To: <annie@modeknit.com>
Subject: frustrated

Dear Annie,

I'm a beginner, I'm having a problem with a scarf I finished for my husband, it started to curl on the sides. It looks like a tube.

what did I do wrong??? all that hard work.

frustrated. :(

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Date: Thu, 1 Jan 2004 20:21:14 -0500
To: <frustrated>
Subject: frustrated

Dear Frustrated,

I feel your pain. Really, I do! I'm so sorry that you're having a problem!

The reason your scarf is curling is all part of the fascinating (and at times frustrating) physics of knitting.

Stockinette Stitch - which I'm assuming your scarf is knit in - is created by knitting one row, then purling the next on straight needles. This makes a smooth and beautiful fabric, but it does curl in at the sides and up at the top and bottom. This is the reason why sweater hems roll up if they're not worked in rib or another hem treatment. It's also how to make an easy rolled collar on a sweater (just knit around the neckline in St st!)

To create a fabric that *won't curl* here is the magic rule:

**Thou shalt distribute the stitches to allow a
matching number of knit & purl stitches
in any 2 rows**
(when viewed from the right side)

What this means is that when you look at any two row section of the right side of your scarf you should see as many knit stitches as you do purl stitches. In all but the first example below you'll notice this is true.

I'm so sorry that your scarf is curling - believe me, I know how frustrating and demoralizing it can be! Unfortunately, there's no way to block it flat because the scarf will fight (and win) the battle to curl back onto itself. This is especially true if it's been knit rather tightly.

You might try crocheting a few rows around the entire circumference of the scarf, but this might not work well. There is no easy fix for this dilemma, I'm sorry to

If you had knit your scarf in **basket weave stitch** (knit 2 sts, purl 2 sts on both sides for 2 rows, then purl 2 sts, knit 2 sts on both sides for 2 rows) it would lay flat -

```
~~VV ~~VV ~~VV ~~VV
~~VV ~~VV ~~VV ~~VV
VV  ~~VV  ~~VV  ~~VV  ~~
VV  ~~VV  ~~VV  ~~VV  ~~
~~VV  ~~VV  ~~VV  ~~VV
~~VV  ~~VV  ~~VV  ~~VV
```

This is 2 x 2 basket weave stitch

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Or if you had knit your scarf in **traveling rib stitch** (see instrux below) it would lay flat -

```
VV  ~~VV  ~~VV  ~~VV
V~~VV  ~~VV  ~~VV  ~
~~VV  ~~VV  ~~VV  ~
~VV  ~~VV  ~~VV  ~V
VV  ~~VV  ~~VV  ~~VV
```

This is 2 x 2 traveling rib stitch

Row 1 (RS): K2, p2, work to end

Row 2 (WS): K1, [p2, k2] rep between []'s to end

Row 3 (RS): p2, k2, rep to end

Row 4 (WS): p1, [k2, p2] rep between []'s to end

These are just a few ways that you can distribute your stitches to allow a matching number of knit and purl stitches in any two rows (when viewed from the right side). You can experiment and make up your own pattern - and as long as you follow the rule your scarf will NOT curl!