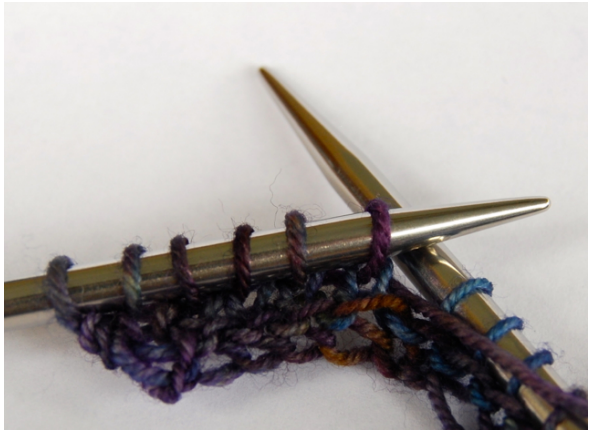
Notes on Russian Knitting

Russian knitting = Combination Continental

When I am knitting back and forth (vs. in the round), the stitch mount is so that the most forward leg (the right-most leg) is in front.

The opposite is true for stitches that have been purled. The most forward leg (the right-most leg) is behind.



- Thus, a full-sized yarn over for knit must start at the front and wrapped up and over the needle and brought to the back. If you don't do it this way, less yarn will be used and the YO will be smaller. Opposite for purl.
- **To make a right-slanting decrease:** knit 2 together, reseating stitchmount. Transfer stitches back and forth between needles to reset the stitchmount, and then K2tog: This means your needle will enter the **leftmost** stitch first, from the front, stabbing the needle **left to right.** In other words, you are "entering the door" from the left. This is the equivalent of K2Tog in instructions.
- **To make a left-slanting decrease:** you do **not** need to reset the stitchmount. You simply you knit 2 together but enter from the right side, stabbing the right stitch first and going right to left. (Some people call this "going through the back loop".) **This is the equivalent of SSK in regular instructions.**

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General Rule of Left-Leaning vs. Right-Leaning

What makes a stitch lean left vs right is the *direction* the needle is traveling when entering two stitches. That is, if the needle goes from right to left (the normal way) the stitches will lean left. If the needle goes from left to right (opposite what you usually do) the stitches will lean right. Sometimes, in order for the needle to go in one of these two directions, it is necessary to change the stitchmount so that the stitches are not twisted. But the fact is, in traditional Russian knitting, they don't care if the stitches are twisted, and they only worry about left-leaning vs. right-leaning.

On a technical level, twisted stitches may be slightly smaller (although Russian knitters adjust for this on those stitches without even thinking about it) and do have a slightly different appearance than untwisted stitches.

Basically, just remember:

- Needle direction determines lean.
- If you care about twisted stitches, then do what it takes to keep them from twisting.

Centered Double Decrease

I have run into trouble with doing a centered double decrease because the stitch mount is different for Russian knitting. A s2kpsso means slip 2 stitches knit a stitch and pass the slipped stitches over the newly knitted stitch. But **it's really important that the center stitch winds up on top.** In order to make that happen, you have to **reset the stitch mount of the slipped stitches and then slip the stitches as if you were doing a K2tog.**

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