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# LYCRA® WAISTBANDS

## Part 10 of Sharon Nani's Knitting for Profit series

**L**YCRA® is the registered trademark of Dupont. It is the "state of the art" stabilizer. I discussed the general properties of Lycra® in my article "Polishing up with Stabilizing Agents" in the last issue of Machine Knit America. Please refer to this article for threading and "problem solving" information.

Practical uses of Lycra® are first on the agenda. A very practical use of Lycra® is in waistbands. This type of waistband fits several sizes. It is soft to the touch, and is comfortable to wear. In a production situation, a band knitter has his machine threaded to knit the Lycra® bands. The clear Lycra® is knitted with all colors – therefore, there is only "one set up time" for threading the Lycra®. All bands are in the 1:1 needle bed set up – therefore, there is only "one set up time" for arranging the needles in working position. There is no casing to knit, hanging of hems, or inserting of elastic. In analysis, it is easy to see why this method of making a waistband is desirable. It is efficient, cost-effective, and has "hanger appeal." Hanger appeal is the term used to mean that it looks nice hanging on a hanger in a store for display. It has a professional appearance.

### KNITTING DIRECTIONS

Always swatch and steam to obtain correct stitch and row gauge.

You control the amount of "stretch" by how you hand feed the Lycra® as you knit, and by choosing to use 1 or 2 strands of Lycra®. No, you do not have to purchase two cones of Lycra® to use two strands (ends). Use a yarn winder that has a "cone base" on which you can leave the rewound yarn. An example of this would be the Brother/Knitking jumbo yarn winder. Do not thread the Lycra® through the tension disk. In other words, just let it glide through your fingers, through the yarn guide, bypass the tension disk, and hook to the empty cone. Wind, causing no stretch on the Lycra®, as it rolls off your finger and onto the empty cone. Now you have one end of Lycra® from the original cone and one end of Lycra® on the rewound cone. Place them next to each other and thread them together as if they were one strand of yarn.

I knit in 1:1 Rib (Passap E6000 Cast on 1) For my example I am using Tamm,

Estillo yarn. 2/14: 60% Acrylic/40% Nylon, 3670 yds/lb.

*Note: Directions are given for Passap knitting machines; where appropriate, the comparative term for the Japanese manufactured-machines are enclosed in brackets [ ].*

Racking Handle up [full pitch]  
Thread Lycra® as described in previous article.

### METHOD ONE: WAISTBAND KNIT TO OPEN STITCHES OF SKIRT WAISTLINE

Skirt Panels are knitted from the hemline to the waistline. The open stitches of the waistline are removed on 6 rows of scrap or waste yarn in preparation of rehang the skirt panel and knitting the waistband to it.

Rehang one half of skirt on the front bed [main bed] on the number of needles for the desired waistband size. Example: medium would use 144 needles on the front bed – #72 left to #72 right.

Move the locks [carriages] to the left side of the knitting by making a free pass: Passap = GX/GX [both part/slip buttons in]. Set Stitch Size to 6[5].

Passap must use black strippers for the "seaming row." Remember this one row is done on a single bed. Therefore, the stripper rule is: black strippers for single bed or tubular knitting. All machines should use claw weights. Passap uses both strippers and claw weights!

Set locks to GX/N [Knit]  
Knit 1 row (seaming row) from left to right. This is the row that joins the skirt to the waistband and is always known as the "seaming row."

Transfer every other needle to the back bed [ribber bed] manually or with the transfer carriage.

Orange strippers (use cast-on combs and weights).

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Set locks to N/N [knit/knit]  
Stitch Size 3.5/3.5 [2.5/2.5]

Insert Lycra® into the same feeding eye-let [sinker plate] as the yarn. Hand feed as described in the last issue of **Machine Knit America**. Knit the appropriate number of rows for the waistband, ending on the left hand side. Remove the Lycra® (Lycra® is not in the cast-off row). Knit the final row on St S 8/8.

Scrap off. (Knit 6 rows with scrap yarn.) Remove from machine. Latch tool bind off in ribbing, off the machine. Or do bind off of choice, making sure it is elastic enough to stretch over the hip line.

**NOTE:** I do not transfer all stitches to one bed and latch off on the machine. This would be latching off in stockinette stitch instead of ribbing and would not be elastic enough. There are several methods of latching off (casting off) in ribbing. I refer to "The Latch Tool Bind Off." I will include my detailed instructions for this bind off for double and single bed in the next issue of **Machine Knit America**.

**NOTE:** With light weight yarn, one strand of Lycra® will give enough stretch. Heavier yarn needs 2 strands of Lycra®. You must experiment to see what you like. Also remember, **YOU MUST STEAM YOUR SWATCH AND YOUR FINISHED BAND TO GET THE APPROPRIATE STRETCH AND APPEARANCE.**

A production factory may choose to knit the waistband as a separate piece instead of rehang the skirt or pant. In cut and sew situations, the band is knit by starting with a tubular cast on of 1:1 rib (E6000=Cast on 1) and knitting the appropriate rows for the waistband. Use Lycra® in all rows. Finish by knitting six rows of scrap yarn (the term is: scrap off) and removing from the machine. After the bands are steamed, they are simply serged to the garment. Both of these methods are an effective way of using Lycra®.

SIZE	# OF STS TO CAST ON	# OF ROWS=2"	WIDTH AFTER STEAMING
Small	132 sts	60 rows	11½"
Medium	144 sts	60 rows	12½"
Large	156 sts	60 rows	13½"