

# Yarn Weights Guide

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Handy Little Me





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# welcome!

In this Ebook, you will learn everything you need to know about yarn weights.

If you are a beginner who is learning how to knit or crochet then you are probably still figuring out yarn weights and their categories.

For those who are new to buying yarn and choosing knitting or crochet patterns, you might just buy yarn you like because you fall in love with it – with no idea what you can actually make with it!

This guide will help you to understand the yarn weights you can use for particular projects.





### **Why Are Yarn Weights Important?**

When it comes to yarn weight, it has nothing to do with the weight of the yarn but everything to do with how thick the yarn strand is.

When you chose a pattern it is important to know that you have selected the right yarn and needles/hooks for the pattern, so that you will have the same gauge and that it will turn out as expected.

If for example, the pattern asks you to use a DK yarn (Light 3) and you choose to use a super bulky yarn (super bulky 6) the size of the finished piece is going to be drastically different.

You don't want to spend hours making something for it to then turn out the wrong size or shape.

### **Checking Your Gauge**

Gauge is when you check how many rows and stitches fit within a measurement – for instance, it might say 3 rows in 1" – so you know that 3 rows of knitting should fit into 1".

Checking your gauge is important, especially when making garments.

Must makers make a gauge swatch before they start a garment, to make sure it will turn out in the size it is supposed to according to the pattern measurements.

### **What Is Ply?**

Yarn ply is slightly different from the yarn weight and years ago was more commonly used to mean something about the weight of the yarn.

The ply was known for some sizes – for example, two-ply yarn was known as being very thin and an eight-ply yarn was much thicker.

Ply refers to the thickness of the yarn, if you see that yarn is 1 ply that means it is really thin and up to 12+ is the thickest.

A 1 ply yarn was known as a singles yarn, the singles are plied to create yarns of different thicknesses, but this is not consistent and no longer relates to the yarn's weights based on the number of plies.

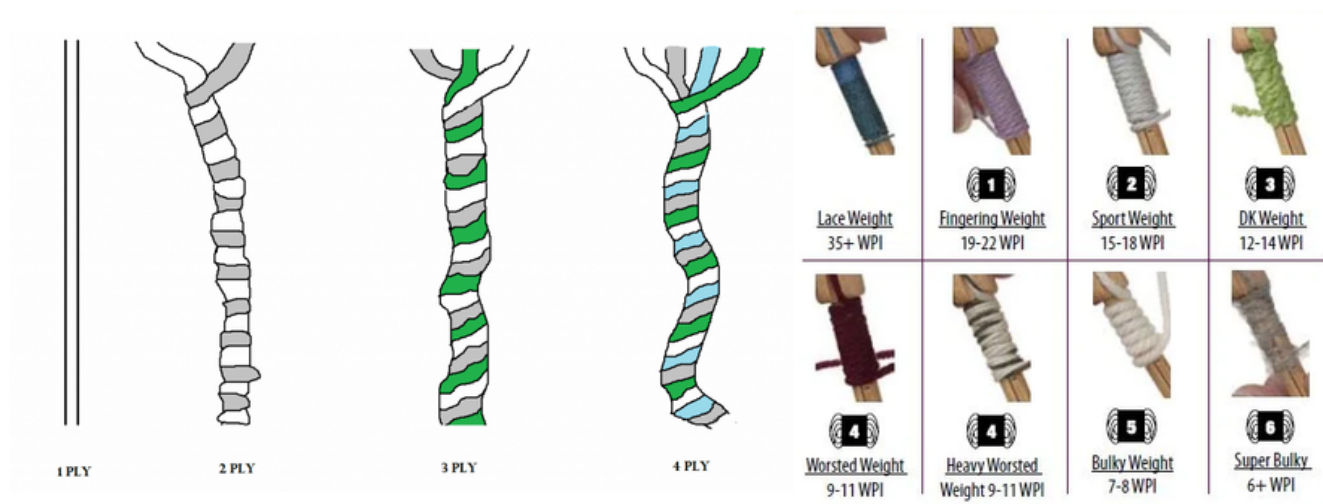


## Ply Yarn Rules

When spinners used to make yarn they would categorize it by the thickness, this was the way that people used to know the weight of yarn.

If you see knitting instructions that use ply yarn these rules generally apply:

- Two-ply yarn mostly refers to super-fine yarn.
- Four-ply yarn is lightweight – also known as DK or double knitting yarn.
- Aran yarn is not normally specified by ply but that means worsted weight or medium weight yarn.



[IMAGE SOURCE](#)

[IMAGE SOURCE](#)

## What Is WPI?

WPI is a term that means wraps per inch and is often used to determine the yarn weight if you have many scrap yarns with no labels.

it is a method often used by spinners, it can be used by knitters and crocheters too.

You can measure this by wrapping your yarn around a pencil to see how many wraps you can get in one inch.

If that sounds like too much work, there are also kits available to do this for you!



# Yarn Weight Conversion Chart

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| UK           | USA              | AUS    |
|--------------|------------------|--------|
| 1 ply        | Laceweight       | 2 ply  |
| 2 ply        | Fingering        | 3 ply  |
| 3 ply        | Sock             | 3 ply  |
| 4 ply        | Sport            | 5 ply  |
| DK           | DK/Light Worsted | 8 ply  |
| Aran         | Worsted          | 10 ply |
| Chunky       | Bulky            | 12 ply |
| Super Chunky | Super Bulky      | 14 ply |



# YARN WEIGHTS

## Cheat Sheet



### 0: Lace

Common names - thread/cobweb/lace/light fingering/fingering  
Ply - 1ply/2 ply/3ply  
WPI - 35



### 1: Super Fine

Common names - fingering/sock/baby  
Ply - 3ply/4ply  
WPI - 19-22  
Needle Size - Metric = 2.25-3.25mm / US = 1 to 3  
Hook - Metric = 2.25-3.5mm / US B-1 to E4



### 2: Fine

Common names - sport/baby  
Ply - 4ply/5ply  
WPI - 15-18  
Needle Size - Metric = 3.25-3.75mm / US 3 to 5  
Hook - Metric = 3.5-4.5mm / US E-4 to 7



### 3: Light

Common names - DK (double knit)/Light worsted  
Ply - 8ply  
WPI - 12-14  
Needle Size - Metric = 3.75-4.5mm / US = 5 to 7  
Hook - Metric = 4.5-5.5mm / US 7 to I-9



### 4: Medium

Common names - worsted/aran/fisherman/afghan  
Ply - 10ply/12ply  
WPI - 9-11  
Needle Size - Metric = 4.5-5.5mm / US = 7 to 9  
Hook - Metric = 5.5-6.5mm / US I-9 to K10.5



### 5: Bulky

Common names - bulky/chunky/craft/rug  
Ply - 12ply/16ply  
WPI - 7-8  
Needle Size - Metric = 5.5-8mm / US = 9 to 11  
Hook - Metric = 6.5 -9mm / US K10.5 to M-13



### 6: Super Bulky

Common names - super bulky/roving  
Ply - 14ply  
WPI - 5-6  
Needle Size - Metric = 11mm + / US = 11+  
Hook - Metric = 9mm + / US M13 +



### 7: Jumbo

Common names - jumbo/roving  
WPI - 0-4  
Needle Size - Metric = 12mm + / US = 17 +  
Hook - Metric = 9mm + / US M13 +



## 0: Lace Weight Yarn

Lace-weight yarn is used to make items that are worn in the warmer months.

Normally used in more delicate patterns like shawls and wraps.

You can work this yarn by holding two strands together to create a fingering weight yarn. As this yarn is very thin and normally used for more complex knitting or crochet projects, it is not an ideal choice for a beginner.

Lace patterns for shawls and wraps often include complicated motifs that look like leaves, flowers, diamonds, chevrons, and other geometric shapes. This yarn is also sometimes used to make hats, gloves, and sweaters.

Sweaters are less common because the thickness of the yarn makes the projects difficult to work on. When lace-weight yarn is used in knitting or crochet projects, the fabric is normally very thin. Yarns with this texture have a gauge of 8 or more stitches per inch. The needle or hook size recommended to use with this yarn is very small – 2.25mm (US 1) or smaller. But most patterns will give a larger needle or hook size so that when the patterns are worked, the stitches stand out.

Most knitters or crocheters prefer to use worsted weight or more bulky yarns, as thinner yarns can be difficult to work with. It is likely that the lace yarn will break during knitting or crocheting, and this can also happen when a piece is being blocked. You can also get a lot for your money, as the lace-weight yarns are very economical – with 50g or 100g having much more yardage than other balls of similar size and weight.

### **What Number Is Lace Weight Yarn?**

This is known as 0 – and has other common names; thread, cobweb, lace and light fingering. The standard yarn weight system puts all very fine yarn into the lace weight category. Fingering weight yarn, which is used for socks is thicker than lace and is known as ‘superfine’.

### **What Ply Is Lace Weight Yarn?**

This is 1ply/2ply or 3ply yarn.



### 1: Super Fine/Fingering Yarn

Fingering yarn, often known as superfine weight yarn, is a bit heavier than lace-weight yarn and creates a slightly heavier fabric.

It has a fine gauge and is perfect for any openwork patterns.

This yarn is also known as fingering, sock, and baby yarn.

knitting on circular needles in fingering yarn

#### **What Is Super Fine Weight Yarn?**

You may be more familiar with the term fingering weight rather than superfine, but they are the same thing.

This yarn is commonly used for socks and shawls.

It has a yarn weight symbol of 1 and a gauge of around 6.75-8 stitches per 1 inch on US 1-3 (2.25-3.25mm) needles.

#### **Socks**

Socks have a particular type of yarn that is used to make sure that they are durable. There are many different types of sock yarns out there, with all different types of fibers. Always read the yarn label and make sure that it is what you want before you start.

#### **Baby**

Baby yarns can have many different types of fibers and thicknesses, for example, cotton, superwash wool, and more. They are normally really soft and available in many colors and always hypoallergenic.

Baby yarn is preferred for baby projects over other popular yarn weights like bulky weight yarn, Aran, worsted weight yarns, and medium weight yarn.

#### **What Ply Is Fingering Yarn?**

This is 3ply or 4ply yarn. The ply doesn't always mean that the weight of the yarn is heavier or thicker. There are different yarn weight categories numbered from 0-7, going from lace to jumbo. These yarns should produce a certain amount of stitches when using a needle size that has been recommended.



## 2: Fine Weight Yarn

Fine yarn weight has a symbol of 2 and gauge of around 23-26 stitches per 14 inches on US 3-5 (3.25-3.75mm) needles.

### Types of Yarns

#### *Sport*

Sport yarn is a little thicker than superfine yarns, like fingering, but is still a very lightweight yarn to work with.

Mainly used to make socks, wraps, baby items, and garments.

It can also be used for lightweight afghans.

#### *Baby*

Some **baby yarns** are in this category as they are very fine to work with.

This yarn is a bit heavier than super-fine baby yarn but is still super soft and can be used for blankets etc.

### What Ply Is Fine Weight Yarn?

This is 4ply or 5ply yarn.



### 3: Light/DK Weight Yarn

#### **What Is Double Knitting Weight Yarn?**

Double knitting yarn is a 3 Light yarn weight along with light worsted yarns.

It's heavier than 2 Fine yarns (aka sport weight yarn) and thinner than 4 medium yarns (aka worsted weight yarn).

You might hear DK weight yarn called "baby yarn" or "light yarn."

Originally it was used for double knitting with a nice color design on both sides.

There are many yarns that are DK/Light Worsted/8 Ply, including Pima cotton, superwash wool, and baby alpaca.

#### **Can I use Worsted instead of DK?**

You could also use two strands of DK weight yarn together while knitting or crocheting to substitute a worsted weight yarn.

Be sure to make a knitting gauge swatch or crochet gauge swatch before starting your project.

The gauge may vary depending on the type of fiber you use also – for example, wool, cotton, or acrylic yarn.

#### **What number of yarn is DK?**

DK yarn has a symbol of 3 and a gauge of 21–24 stitches per 4 inches using 5-7 US needles and UK 4mm or 4.5mm knitting needle size.

#### **What Ply is the double knitting weight yarn?**

Sometimes people ask – 'Is worsted weight the same as 8-ply yarn?' and the answer is no.

8-ply would normally refer to double knitting yarn.

Depending on which country you are in, there are many different terms for yarn weights.

In the USA you would probably see this called a medium weight yarn or DK yarn, in the UK DK yarn or 8 ply, and in Australia also 8 ply.



#### [4: Medium/Worsted Weight Yarn](#)

##### What Is Worsted Weight Yarn?

Worsted weight yarn is classed as a medium-weight yarn according to the standard yarn weight system from the [Craft Yarn Council](#).

When you buy worsted-weight yarn, it will normally say the weight of yarn, needle size, crochet hook size, and tension on the yarn label (or ball band).

There are many different fibers you can get, including wool, alpaca, acrylic, cotton, and blends. The knitted fabric often can give crafters great stitch definition.

There are many knitting projects you can try using this yarn; either knit with a single strand of yarn or with two strands together to make a heavier weight.

Even beginner knitters can use this yarn to make a number of projects, like dishcloths, shawls, and more.

##### How Do I Know If It's Worsted Weight Yarn?

The yarn weights vary from lace to jumbo yarn (0-7) and worsted yarn falls right in the middle, it's a medium weight yarn (4). Thicker than DK (double knitting) yarn (3) but thinner than bulky yarn (5); also, in the same medium group, we will find other yarns such as Aran and afghan, which are a little heavier than worsted but not enough to move into the next group. The worsted yarn has a knitting gauge of 16-20 sts per 4 inches using 7-9 (US) knitting needles.

##### What Is Worsted Yarn Used For?

Worsted yarn is one of the most famous yarns as its medium weight makes it easy to work with; you can knit up your project quickly without adding bulk.

Also, one of the perks of its popularity is that it is very easy to substitute if you choose a pattern to follow that requires worsted yarn. But, if you don't have access to this particular yarn or you just don't like it, there are hundreds of other yarns of the same weight for you to choose from. You can knit or crochet pretty much anything with it, a pair of mittens, dishcloths, blankets, baby blankets, sweaters, scarves, shawls, and a pair of socks, the prospects of this yarn are pretty much endless.



## 5: Chunky/Bulky Weight Yarn

### **What number is bulky weight yarn?**

There are eight yarn weight categories for you to choose from, from lace to jumbo (0-7), thinnest to thickest. Bulky is on the thicker side of yarns, thicker than worsted yarn, about double its size, and thinner than super bulky yarn. It has a yarn weight symbol of 5.

### **What is considered bulky yarn?**

Bulky yarn can be referred to by other names, such as chunky yarn, craft, or rug yarn. It has a yarn weight symbol of 5 and a gauge of 12-16 stitches per 4 inches (10cm) using 5.5mm to 8mm (US) 9-11 knitting needles.

### **What can you make with bulky weight yarn?**

Choosing to make something with bulky yarn has a lot of advantages as it's thick, so it knits up quickly, covers a lot of yardage, and knits up easier than thinner yarns. Moreover, there are a lot of bulky yarns in the market for you to choose from, but thickness might vary from yarn to yarn.

If you are planning to make something with bulky yarn and you want to stray a little from the pattern and choose a different yarn from the recommended one, it's always good to make a stitch swatch so you can see if there are adjustments that need to be made.

### **What ply is bulky weight yarn?**

Bulky weight yarn is 12 ply.

### **What can you make with bulky weight yarn?**

Choosing to make something with bulky yarn has a lot of advantages as it's thick, so it knits up quickly, covers a lot of yardage, and knits up easier than thinner yarns. Moreover, there are a lot of bulky yarns in the market for you to choose from, but thickness might vary from yarn to yarn. If you are planning to make something with bulky yarn and you want to stray a little from the pattern and choose a different yarn from the recommended one, it's always good to make a stitch swatch so you can see if there are adjustments that need to be made.



## 6: Super Bulky Weight Yarn

Super bulky yarn falls into the thick spectrum, as it was actually the thickest yarn until the jumbo yarn was added.

### **Super Chunky Yarn – For A Variety Of Projects**

This weight of yarn is seen as a quick yarn often used for afghans, accessories, scarves, blankets, and more. It is also used for arm knitting and finger crochet. It comes in many different fibers, including wool, acrylic, cotton, polyester, nylon, and alpaca blends.

### **What is super bulky weight yarn?**

Super bulky yarn is a thick yarn that is used to make heavier knits with a cozy chunky fabric. When we are following a knitting pattern with a thick yarn, as super bulky is, it is always good to be mindful to match the gauge of the project to that provided in the pattern. This is because thicker yarns add a lot of bulk to a project, and that might throw you off your measurements. This might not be a big deal if you are making a blanket, for example, but it's very important when you are making a garment where sizing is essential.

### **What number is super bulky weight yarn?**

Super bulky yarn also has the symbol 6 and a gauge of 7-12 stitches per 4 inches using 9mm- 12mm (US 13-17) knitting needles.

Another term you might hear for it is super chunky yarn.

### **What ply is super bulky yarn?**

Super bulky yarn is 14 ply.

### **What can I do with super bulky yarn?**

There are a variety of things you can knit or crochet with the super bulky yarn. It's perfect for bigger home decor projects like a big floor pillow, a rug, or a blanket. A winter blanket knitted with super bulky yarn can be the must-have home accessory for you or your friends if you decide to gift it.

Smaller knitted items like hats, mittens, and cowls can also be made, which are going to knit up pretty fast as the yarn is very thick.



## 7: Jumbo Yarn

### **What is jumbo yarn?**

Jumbo yarn is the last category, therefore, the thickest yarn.

It has a symbol of 7 and a gauge of 6 stitches and fewer per 4 inches using 17 or larger (US) knitting needles.

As a matter of fact, it was recently added to the yarn weight system by America's Craft Yarn Council in 2014 to accommodate the thick yarns that kept popping up in the yarn market but couldn't be considered super bulky yarns.

### **What can I make with jumbo yarn?**

There are a lot of big stitch projects (both knitting and crochet patterns) you can do with jumbo yarn, especially in home decor.

Due to its thickness, it adds instant drama to your projects, so you can knit up blankets, throws, big floor pillows, pillow covers, rugs, baskets, and winter wear such as chunky sweaters, ponchos, and hats.

In addition, jumbo yarn is perfect for arm/hand knitting as it is very thick; you can make a cowl with just your arms and a jumbo yarn ball.

Or, if you are a more experienced knitter, you can make bigger and more complicated patterns with your chunky yarn.

This weight of yarn is normally knit on a large needle size of 25mm (US 50).

Arm knitting is a very good starting point if you want to teach a child how to knit.

### **What is the thickest yarn you can buy?**

There are many different types of jumbo yarns for sale, including popular yarns from Loopy Mango. This is often made from merino wool and comes in large thick strands of soft fibers. It has many names, including giant wool yarn, chunky arm knitting yarn, and wool roving. Jumbo yarn can be substituted by knitting with two strands of super bulky yarn together.





## *Thank You...*

Thank you so much for your support - I really appreciate your download of this Ebook, for visiting my website, joining the Facebook group, and for following me along on my creative journey.

It means so much that my patterns make you want to pick up your needles and make something!

Knitting and/or crocheting is an amazing way to spend your free time, bringing lots of fun times into your life. I don't know where I would be if I didn't have my blog and my projects!

So go and choose your first pattern, think of the colours you will use, the yarn choices you have to make and get excited to make something for yourself or to gift to others!

*I love the way yarn brings people together.*



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