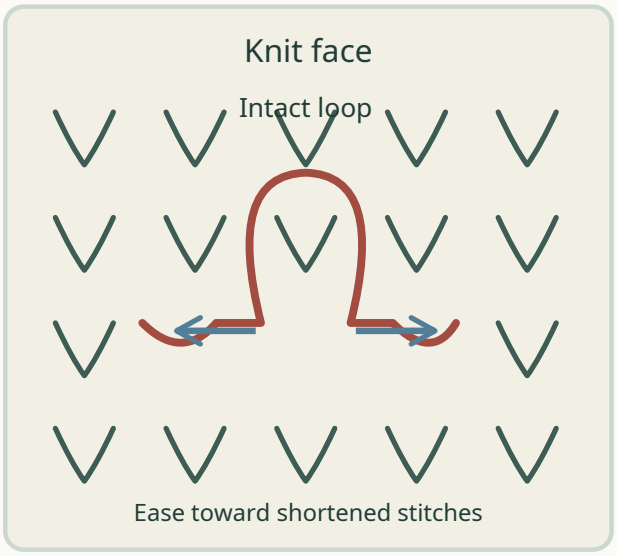
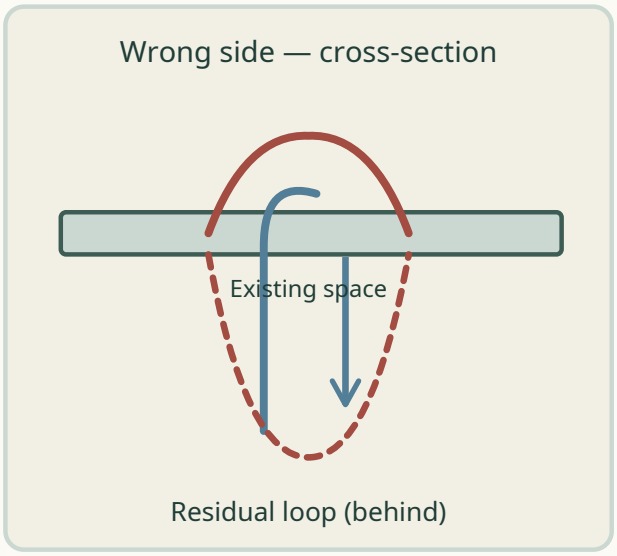
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MEND / KNITS, SOCKS & DARNING

Repair a Snagged Sweater Without Cutting the Loop

Recover the intact snag, not a cut thread





Use a smooth tool; never pierce or cut the continuous yarn.

Recover an intact snagged yarn on a simple sweater and settle any residual loop on the wrong side without cutting it.

14 practical steps • Original diagrams and repair records

Illustrative repair plans — not physical test results

Before you start

A sweater snag can be part of a continuous knitted yarn rather than an expendable loose thread. Cutting it may break several stitches. This guide is for a small accessible intact snag in ordinary simple stockinette knitting. A dropped stitch, broken yarn, extensive pulled course, delicate lace, hairy yarn that cannot be traced or felted material calls for a different method. Work with the sweater off the body.

Materials

Clean sweater, diffuse light, magnifier, smooth blunt tapestry needle, suitably small smooth crochet hook or purpose-made snag tool, locking stitch marker if a live loop is found, comparable knitted scrap, paper and ruler. Scissors are not needed for an intact snag.

Plan the repair

Examine the knit face and reverse. Trace the pulled yarn and identify the adjacent shortened stitches in the same course. Gently redistribute excess yarn into the original loops in small increments without stretching the whole fabric. If a small residual intact loop remains and can be moved without damaging the knit, use a smooth hook from the wrong side through an existing inter-loop space near the snag. Draw the loop through to the wrong side, not through a yarn strand. Do not cut, tie tightly or pull it free. Seek advice if a long internal loop would catch or if yarn is broken.

Steps 1–2

1. Lay out the knit

Set the sweater on a supported table, with the affected panel relaxed and other layers out of the way. Locate the snag and avoid hooking it with jewellery or tools.

2. Identify a continuous loop

Trace both legs of the snag into the knitted course. If the yarn identity cannot be established, leave it intact. Do not treat it as loose lint.

Steps 3–4

3. Inspect the surrounding loops

Use light to look for a live dropped stitch, missing yarn, broken strands or weak fibres. Secure any visible live loop with a locking marker and refer if the yarn is damaged.

4. Mark the original course

Follow adjacent knitted loops to identify where the yarn has been drawn from. Sketch the snag and any narrowed Vs on paper. Compare with nearby sound fabric.

Steps 5–6

5. Choose a smooth tool

Use a blunt tapestry needle or appropriately small smooth hook. Practise on a similar knit scrap; the tool must pass through existing spaces without splitting strands.

6. Redistribute the excess

Begin next to the snag. Ease a small amount of excess yarn back into the nearest shortened stitch in the same course. Lift only enough to restore its natural loop size.

Steps 7–8

7. Work along the course

Repeat in small increments on either side where the yarn can move freely. Compare the Vs with neighbours after each adjustment. Do not drag the yarn against resistance.

8. Assess the residual loop

If the face is relaxed and the snag has settled, leave it alone. If a small intact loop remains and the surrounding yarn is sound, consider wrong-side recovery.

Steps 9–10

9. Isolate the panel

Turn or support the sweater so the wrong side of the affected knit is accessible. Keep the opposite panel clear; do not pierce it with the hook.

10. Move the loop gently

Insert the smooth hook from the wrong side through an existing inter-loop space close to the snag. Catch the intact loop and draw it through to the wrong side. Stop if it resists or distorts adjacent stitches.

Steps 11–12

11. Settle the wrong-side loop

Let the recovered loop lie softly against the knit. Avoid a tight knot, a long snag-prone float or cutting the loop. If it remains prominent or likely to catch, seek compatible stabilization advice.

12. Check both faces

With the sweater relaxed, inspect for a new hole, tightened stitch course, twisted loop or displaced yarn. Do not pull the repair to test its strength.

Steps 13–14

13. Remove working aids

Remove hook and any temporary aids used for a completed snag repair. If a live stitch required a marker and remains unsecured, keep it secured and do not wear the garment until repaired.

14. Record the outcome

Note the original course, redistribution and residual loop. Recheck in ordinary wear and permitted care. If snagging recurs or yarn breaks, stop using the sweater pending assessment.

Fix, care and preserve

The snag becomes longer

Stop. The tool may be drawing yarn out of more stitches. Only redistribute excess toward its original loops if they are sound and readily move.

A narrow stitch row remains

Work along the same original course in tiny increments, not by stretching the sweater. Refer if the yarn is felted, abraded or fixed.

The recovered loop catches inside

Do not trim or knot it. A specialist can secure it with a compatible flexible technique without sacrificing its length.

A yarn breaks or a live loop drops

Secure visible live loops with a locking marker. Use a suitable separate reconstruction method or refer; do not keep pulling.

Originality and evidence boundary

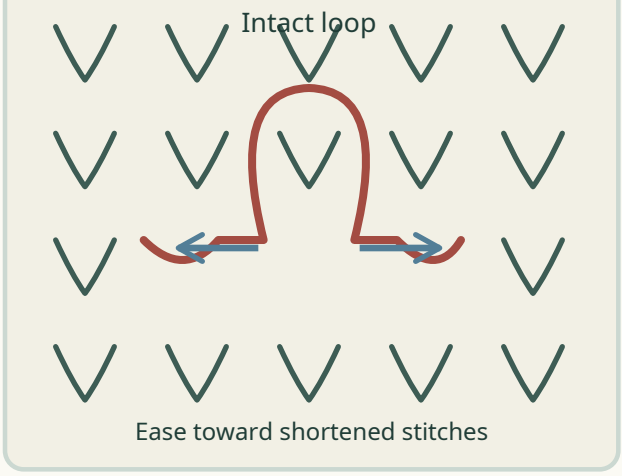
Original Steadleaf English prose, design, diagrams and records. Follow the actual item, textile and tool instructions. No physical repair, durability, load, strength, washing, flame-resistance or compatibility testing was performed by the publisher. Ordinary adult garments and non-technical household textiles only; no safety or performance certification.

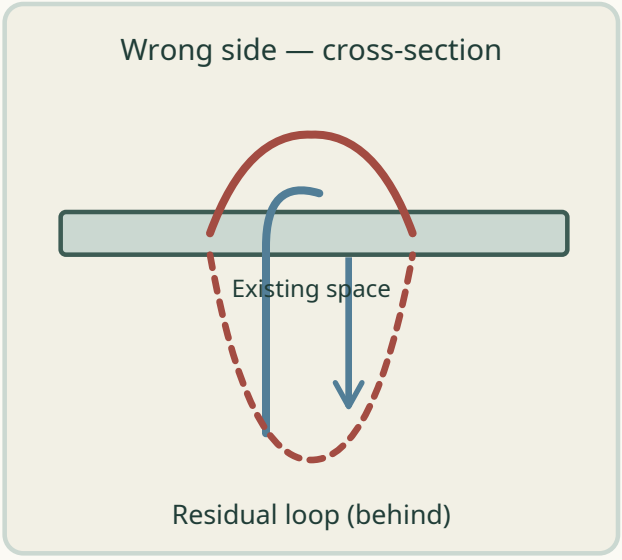
Print the following pages separately if desired. Schematics are illustrative, not full-size cutting patterns. Record only actual observations.

Pattern 1

Wrong-side recovery: a snagged loop on the knit face is part of a continuous course. Arrows show redistribution toward neighbouring shortened stitches. If a residual loop remains, a smooth hook passes from the wrong side through an existing space and draws the intact loop behind the fabric. No yarn cutting.

Recover the intact snag, not a cut thread





Use a smooth tool; never pierce or cut the continuous yarn.

Pattern 2

Comparison guide: a relaxed intact course after redistribution, a small residual loop laid on the reverse if compatible, and a broken or unidentified yarn requiring referral. Compare both faces; a long snag-prone reverse loop is not a finished repair.

Keep, settle or refer

Intact, relaxed course
No residual loop or new distortion.

Small intact loop on reverse
Keep it intact; ensure it does not catch.

Uncertain or broken yarn
Secure live loops if accessible; refer.

Long internal loop or tight course
Do not trim or force; seek a suitable mend.

Observe both faces; no pull or strength test.

Record 1 — Materials and repair plan

Record actual observations only. Use UNKNOWN or NOT CHECKED for anything you have not established.

Sweater / knit type / care

Snag location and course

Both legs traceable?

Neighbouring loop condition

Tool and scrap observation

Redistribution direction

Wrong-side recovery suitability

Decision: recover / refer

Record 2 — Finish and follow-up

Record actual observations only. Use UNKNOWN or NOT CHECKED for anything you have not established.

Actual redistribution

Residual loop location

Relaxed stitch size / appearance

New break or live loop?

Temporary aids removed or secured?

Ordinary wear / care observation

Decision: continue / refer

Date / follow-up