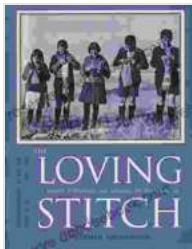


# A Comprehensive History of Knitting and Spinning in New Zealand

The art of knitting and spinning has a rich and fascinating history in New Zealand, intertwined with the cultural heritage of both the Māori people and the European settlers who arrived in the country. From the traditional techniques employed by Māori craftspeople to the influence of British colonization and the rise of contemporary fiber artists, knitting and spinning have played a significant role in New Zealand's textile landscape.



## The Loving Stitch: A History of Knitting and Spinning in New Zealand

by Heather Nicholson

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 12346 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Lending : Enabled  
Print length : 320 pages



## Māori Textile Arts

Māori textile arts, known as raranga, have a long and distinguished history, dating back centuries. Māori craftspeople used natural fibers such as flax, wool, and feathers to create intricate and versatile textiles, including garments, mats, baskets, and wall hangings.



The process of raranga involved spinning fibers into yarn and then weaving or plaiting them together. Māori also used a technique called twining, where two or more strands of yarn were twisted around each other to create a sturdy and durable fabric.

### **Settlers' Influence**

The arrival of European settlers in New Zealand in the 19th century brought new influences to the textile arts. Settlers introduced knitting, a technique that was unknown to the Māori people. Knitting quickly became popular among both Māori and European women, as it was a relatively easy and efficient way to create garments and other textiles.



Knitting became popular among both Māori and European women in New Zealand.

Settlers also brought with them new types of fibers, such as wool from sheep. Wool was well-suited to the New Zealand climate and quickly became a staple of the country's textile industry.

### **The Wool Industry**

The wool industry played a major role in the economic development of New Zealand in the 19th and 20th centuries. Sheep farming became a lucrative

industry, and New Zealand wool was exported around the world.



The wool industry also had a significant impact on the textile arts in New Zealand. Wool was used extensively for knitting and spinning, and New Zealand became known for its high-quality woolen products.

### **Modern Knitting and Spinning**

In the mid-20th century, the textile industry in New Zealand began to decline. However, knitting and spinning continued to be popular hobbies, and a new generation of fiber artists emerged.



Spinning wool is a popular hobby in New Zealand.

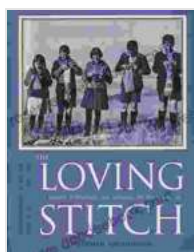
Contemporary fiber artists in New Zealand are experimenting with new techniques and materials, creating innovative and unique works of art. They are also drawing inspiration from traditional Māori textile arts, blending ancient techniques with modern aesthetics.

## Contemporary Fiber Artists

There are many talented contemporary fiber artists working in New Zealand today. Some of the most notable include:

- **Adrienne Sloane** is a weaver who uses traditional Māori techniques to create contemporary art.
- **Robyn Kahukiwa** is a knitter who creates colorful and intricate garments inspired by Māori patterns.
- **Felicity Ford** is a spinner who uses a variety of fibers to create unique and textured yarns.

The history of knitting and spinning in New Zealand is a rich and diverse one, reflecting the country's unique cultural heritage. From the traditional techniques employed by Māori craftspeople to the influence of European settlers and the rise of contemporary fiber artists, knitting and spinning have played a significant role in New Zealand's textile landscape.



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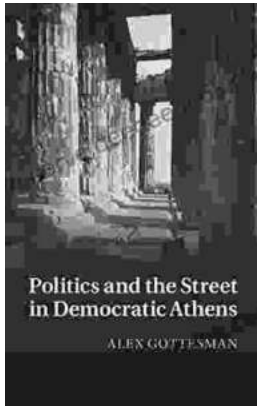
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