5 reasons knitting is good for you

The slow, shivering descent into winter means one thing: time for the woollens. But it’s not just wearing them that can give you a warm glow, making them can too...

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So summer has finally shuffled into autumn, and soon enough, autumn will hurtle into winter.

But if you haven’t yet bought your cold weather-ready wardrobe, don’t panic; embrace this National Handknitting Week and make one instead.

Not only will you be saving yourself money, you’ll also be...

Fighting off dementia
It’s been scientifically proven that using your hands in a productive way triggers activity in 60% of your brain, and a 2011 study from the Journal of Neuropsychiatry & Clinical Neurosciences revealed that crafts like patch-working or knitting during middle age decreased the odds of later cognitive impairment and memory loss by 30 to 50%.

Staying calm
However exciting the thought of creating your scarf may be, the repetitive actions of knitting will stop your adrenalin overheating, by activating the parasympathetic nervous system and dampening down the body’s "fight or flight" response.
Getting fit
Ok, maybe not ‘fit’ fit, but certainly fitter than you would be if you didn’t knit; an hour of needle clanking burns around 55 calories.

Getting happy
In a study of 3,500 knitters, by The British Journal of Occupational Therapy, 81% of respondents with depression said they felt happy after knitting - more than half took it even further and said they felt "very happy".

Psychiatrists believe this is thanks both to the fact you’re instantly (hopefully) creating something useful, and the fact knitting’s been shown to release dopamine, a feel-good neurotransmitter normally associated with pleasurable activities like sex and eating.

Being trendy
Cara Delevingne, Sarah Jessica Parker, Ryan Gosling, Cameron Diaz. All big fans of a ball of wool, apparently.
Naturally, the ‘celeb effect’ has filtered down to us normal people, and recent research by the **Craft Yarn Council** reported a rise in younger people reaching out for the wool, with 18% of members now aged between 18 and 34.

Not enough? Still need-le more inspiration to get purling? Then how about the thought you could create something like these...

*Credit: WTF Knits by Gabrielle Grillo and Lucy Sweet, published 23 October by Bantam Press*