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# Spin + Knit

a special issue from Interweave

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*we're batty*  
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3 Ways to Spin  
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Insider's Guide  
**FIBER FESTIVALS**

- Shop Like a Pro
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# Spin+Knit

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## Fiber at Your Fingertips

The first time I gave any thought to learning to spin, I was standing outside one of the vendor barns at a sheep & wool festival when a friend pulled out a package that caught my eye. It was a purple wool/silk hand-dyed top, and I remember how the silk glistened in the autumn afternoon light. I put my hand inside the bag and petted the fiber. It took a few years and a lot more fiber-petting (and wool-huffing) before I considered myself a

true spinner, but sure enough I was bitten by the bug.

Over the years, I've been unable to keep my hands off an ever-growing list of fibers. As a spinner and knitter, I have the joy of feeling these fibers at least four times: When I give in to the temptation to buy them; when they pass through my fingers on the way to becoming yarn; when I enjoy the yarn as I knit it into fabric, and when I wear or use the textile I make.

This issue combines the joys of spinning and knitting—two wonderful crafts that are perfect complements. Within these pages, you'll find patterns that use small and large amounts of handspun yarn; that use yarn fat and skinny; that shout with color or whisper in neutrals. There are articles about making the most of colorful batts and about using fiber from a sheep you meet. There's a section on exploring a sheep and wool market and one on using wildly textured art yarns. I hope you'll find delight, education, and connection in this issue—more of the things that lead us back to spinning every time.

Happy spinning (and knitting!),

Anne

Our deepest thanks to the Town of Estes Park, Colorado, and the Estes Park Wool Market for allowing us to photograph their event this year. Here, master shearer Tom Barr finishes shearing a Jacob ewe, backed by the the Rocky Mountains.

Learn more at [www.colorado.gov/pacific/townofestespark/signatureevents](http://www.colorado.gov/pacific/townofestespark/signatureevents)

Photo by George Boe





# Spin + Knit

a special issue from Interweave

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# SPINNING ON THE GO



▼ When hitting the road with your handspinning gear, space is usually at a premium. Crafted from solid American black cherry wood, **Akerworks' Lazy Kate** folds flat for transport and holds up to four bobbins—even the company's jumbo bobbins! Akerworks, [adan@akerworks.com](mailto:adan@akerworks.com); [www.akerworks.com](http://www.akerworks.com).

▼ Spinning tools can be rather bulky, but **Katrinkles' 1-Yard Collapsible Travel Size Bamboo Niddy Noddy** takes up almost no room at all in your spinning bag. It fits together quickly and securely. This useful accessory will make winding class samples into skeins a breeze! Katrinkles, [info@katrinkles.com](mailto:info@katrinkles.com); [www.katrinkles.com](http://www.katrinkles.com).

▲ Don't let a broken drive band or tension spring keep you from enjoying your spinning class. **Ashford's Maintenance Kit** has everything you need to keep your wheel in tip-top shape for spin-ins, festivals, or guild meetings. When on the go, keep one of these handy kits in your spinning basket.

Foxglove Fiberarts Supply, 8040 NE Day Road Suite 4F, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110. (206) 780-2747; [www.foxglovefiber.com](http://www.foxglovefiber.com).



◀ Where is that knitting needle gauge when you need it? With a **Malojos Knitting Needle Gauge Ring**, it is literally within your grasp. Available in ring sizes 4–14, and in needle size ranges from 000–4 (1.5 mm–3.5 mm) to 5–10.5 (3.75–6.5 mm), it's the perfect gift for the knitter in your life.

Malojos, [www.malojos.com](http://www.malojos.com).





► Need a bobbin for your miniSpinner that is both lightweight and durable? **HansenCrafts Black Spoked Standard Bobbin** breaks down for easy packing, and the jumbo size makes it perfect for plying on the fly! With a simple twist, these bobbins effortlessly assemble and disassemble.

HansenCrafts, 710 East Park Avenue, Port Townsend, WA 98368. (360) 747-7746; support@hansencrafts.com; www.hansencrafts.com.



▼ Spinners know a well-oiled wheel is a joy to use. **Tri-Flow Pin Point Lubricator**, with a single-drop precision tip, enables easy access to those hard-to-reach spots. This special formula also removes dirt and contaminants. Bonus—it is refillable!

Tri-Flow. (877) 487-4356; www.triflowlubricants.com.

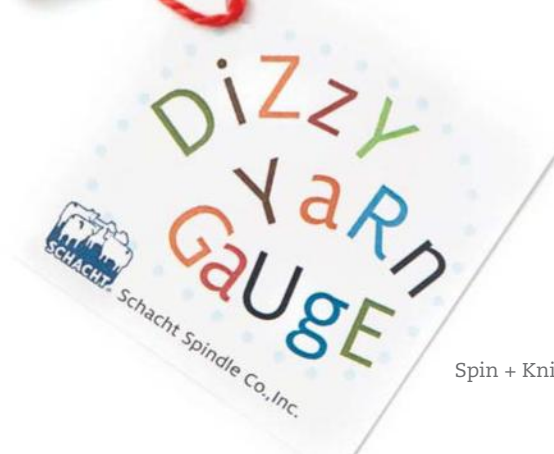


▲ Some spinning classes have less than optimal lighting. A high-contrast lap cloth can help you see the drafting zone more clearly. **Nancy's Knit Knacks Spinner's Contrast Lap Cloth** is black on one side and white on the other, which makes seeing your fiber easier no matter what color you're spinning. This thoughtful design also features a useful pocket to keep all of your tools close at hand.

Nancy's Knit Knacks, 104 Hobblebrook Ct., Cary, NC 27518. (800) 731-5648; info@nancysknitknacks.com; www.nancysknitknacks.com.

► Multipurpose tools are a necessity when packing light. **Schacht's Dizzy Yarn Gauge** combines a wraps-per-inch tool with both ½" and 1" measurements and a diz for making uniform sliver for handspinning.

Schacht Spindle Company, 6101 Ben Place, Boulder, CO 80301. (800) 228-2553; www.schachtspindle.com.



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FIBER

Did you ever wish a hand-dyed yarn came in a different weight, or that it was spun just a bit differently, or maybe that it came as an art yarn or chain-ply? Be the master of your yarn! Many of your favorite indie yarn dyers offer spinning fiber in the same colorways you know and love.



▲ Manos del Uruguay, Yarn: Maxima, 100% Merino wool, 219 yd (200 m)/100 g skein; Spinning Fiber: Hand-Dyed Extrafine Merino Top, 100% extrafine Merino wool, 100 g; shown in fractal.

Fairmount Fibers, (888) 566-9970; info@fairmountfibers.com; www.fairmountfibers.com.



▲ Woolly Wonka, Yarn: Gaia Silk Sock, 70% superwash Merino wool/30% silk, 435 yd/100 g skein; Spinning Fiber: 55% superwash Merino wool/20% nylon/20% alpaca/5% silk, 4 oz; shown in hyacinth.

Woolly Wonka, www.woollywonkafiber.com.



▲ Lorna's Laces, Yarn: Shepherd Sock, 80% superwash Merino wool/20% nylon, 430 yd/100 g skein; Spinning Fiber: Shepherd Wool Top, 100% superwash Merino wool, 5 oz; shown in giddings.

Lorna's Laces, (773) 935-3803; yarn@lornaslaces.net; www.lornaslaces.net.



▲ SweetGeorgia, Yarn: Tough Love Sock, 80% superwash Merino wool/20% nylon, 425 yd (388 m)/4 oz skein; Spinning Fiber: BFL+Silk, 75% BFL/25% Silk, 100 g; shown in tapestry.

SweetGeorgia Yarns, (604) 569-6811; www.sweetgeorgiayarns.com.



▲ Anzula, Yarn: Nebula, 84% superwash Merino/16% Stellina, 400 yd (365 m)/100 g skein; Spinning fiber: 84% superwash Merino/16% Stellina, 4 oz; shown in blueberry.

Anzula, www.anzula.com.





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# SPINNING *Basics*

---

by Maggie Casey

*Several years ago, a friend and I took Rita Buchanan's drop spindle retreat session. During the class, we challenged each other to make something out of our spindle-spun yarn. My favorite mittens are the result of that challenge. Rita's retreat and those mittens renewed my love affair with handspindles, and here are some tips to make you fall in love, too.*

Your first spindle should weigh 2 to 3 ounces. Many beautiful lighter-weight spindles are available, but wait before you try one because a medium-weight or heavier spindle will keep turning while you learn to draft out the fibers. Don't choose one that is too heavy, however, or you will learn why they are called drop spindles. A well-balanced spindle is a delight, so check to see how well yours spins—tie on some yarn and give it a twist. The spindle should turn smoothly without a lot of wobble and continue to spin for some time.







---

**(1)** Once you have chosen a spindle, take a piece of plied wool yarn about 18" long and tie it onto the spindle shaft (leader). **(2)** If you have a top-whorl spindle, tie the leader underneath the whorl, bring the leader up and over the whorl, and catch it with the hook. You can wrap the yarn around the hook once for security, if you like. **(3)** With a bottom-whorl spindle, tie the leader above the whorl and then spiral the yarn up the spindle shaft. **(4)** If your spindle has a hook (rather than a groove), catch the yarn with it and you are ready to go. If you have a groove, you will have to make a half-hitch knot to hold the yarn to the spindle.



**(5)** On bottom-whorl spindles, some spinners tie the leader above the whorl and bring the yarn down under the whorl, around the bottom of the shaft, and then back up to the top. Both ways work; see which one you like best. **(6)** Once the leader is on, start practicing with the spindle. Remember that most singles yarns are spun clockwise (to the right). Most spinners hold the fiber in the left hand and the spindle in the right hand, but try both ways and see which feels comfortable to you. Hold the leader in one hand and with the other hand, give the spindle a twist.

Practice until you can get the spindle to turn smoothly. Periodically you will have to let the leader unwind so you don't accumulate too much twist. **(7)** Wool is the easiest fiber to spin; carded wool is much easier to spin than combed. A nice, clean, medium wool is lovely to work with. Before you use the spindle, practice drafting out the fibers. Take a handful of wool in one hand and with the other hand, gently pull some of the fibers away from the mass, then add some twist by twisting the fibers in one direction between your fingers.





**(8)** That is what spinning is all about—drawing out the fibers and adding twist until you have created a stable yarn. Continue to pull out the fibers (drafting) and add more twist. If you don't have enough twist, the yarn will fall apart. If you have too much twist, you won't be able to draw out the fibers. Spend a few minutes drafting out the fibers and adding twist—you will need to be able to maintain a comfortable rhythm when you start spinning. Once you are comfortable drafting out the fibers and

twisting the spindle, put these actions together. Start by sitting down, if you're not already, because your lap will be a valuable tool. **(9)** Before you start to spin, fluff out the end of the leader. **(10)** With one hand, hold a handful of fiber and the leader together. **(11)** With the other hand, twist the spindle clockwise. Watch the twist run up the leader and grab the fibers in your hand. You've just made a join.



**(12)** After you have made the join, twist the spindle and then stop it in your lap so it can't go backward. Slide your twisting hand above the spindle, pinch the leader, and draft out some fibers. **(13)** Once the yarn is the right size, open up the pinching hand and let the twist run up and stabilize the fibers you have just drafted. Continue to twist the spindle, stop it in your lap by holding the shaft between your knees, pinch, and draft. You determine the size of the yarn by how much you pull the fibers out. A

few fibers make a fine yarn; many fibers add bulk. If too much twist gets into the fiber, slide your fiber hand a little and then draft out those fibers. **(14)** When the yarn is longer than your arms, it's time to wind it onto the spindle. Keeping the yarn taut, wind it on the spindle clockwise and make a cone under the whorl on a top whorl and an upside-down cone on top of the bottom whorl. The neater you wind the yarn on, the easier it will be to remove from the spindle. **(15)** Pinching the yarn keeps the





15



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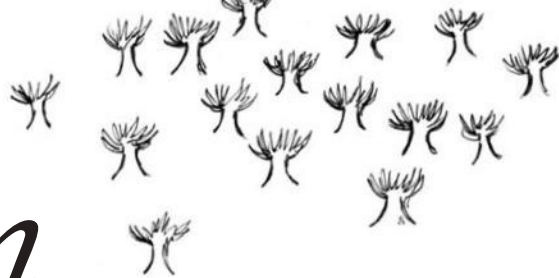


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twist from running up into the fiber source. The twisting/ pinching hand keeps the twist under control while the fiber hand drafts out the fibers to the correct size.

**(16)** After you feel comfortable spinning the spindle and stopping it on your lap, it is time to spin with the spindle suspended in the air. Continue to draft the fibers out the same way, but instead of stopping the spindle in your lap, let it keep spinning. When it stops of its own accord and starts to twist counterclockwise, add more clockwise twist. If the spindle keeps going backward, the twist will come out of the yarn and turn it back into fluff, and the spindle will drop. **(17)** Soon you will have a spindle full of yarn. Now you can wind the yarn off the spindle and into a skein. Use a shoe box with holes punched in either side to hold the spindle. A niddy-noddy (pictured here) works for making skeins, but so does a chair with a straight back: Gently loop the yarn around and around the chair back until the spindle is empty. Tie the two ends of yarn together and before you take the yarn off the chair or niddy-noddy, put a couple of figure-eight ties through the skein.

# FIBER FESTIVAL *Fun*



*It's the highlight of many a fiber lover's year: the fiber festival. Call it a wool market, sheep show, or whatever you like, a regional gathering of fiber producers and fiber artists is uniquely exciting. Here are some of our favorite ways to experience your next sheep and wool event.*

## HOW TO *Shop* AT A FIBER FESTIVAL

*(when you want to bring home goodies)*

### Get there early.

Many fiber festivals have lines outside the gate in the hour before the show officially opens. Some popular booths will have crowds and lines within minutes of the gates opening. (Needless to say, shop the first day.)

### Do your homework.

Most festivals post a list of their vendors in advance. If there are booths you'd like to see, go there first. You can even contact vendors in advance and ask if they can bring something special that you have in mind.

### Bring an extra bag.

Some vendors will have polished and spacious bags, while others may have minimal packaging. Make sure you don't lose a precious small purchase in overfull hands.

### Bring business cards and a pen.

In the frenzy of shopping, you might wind up with a bag of fiber and a handwritten receipt that doesn't have the

Find a list of festivals in the United States and Canada at the Spinning & Weaving Group website:

[www.spinweave.org/news-events/festivals](http://www.spinweave.org/news-events/festivals)

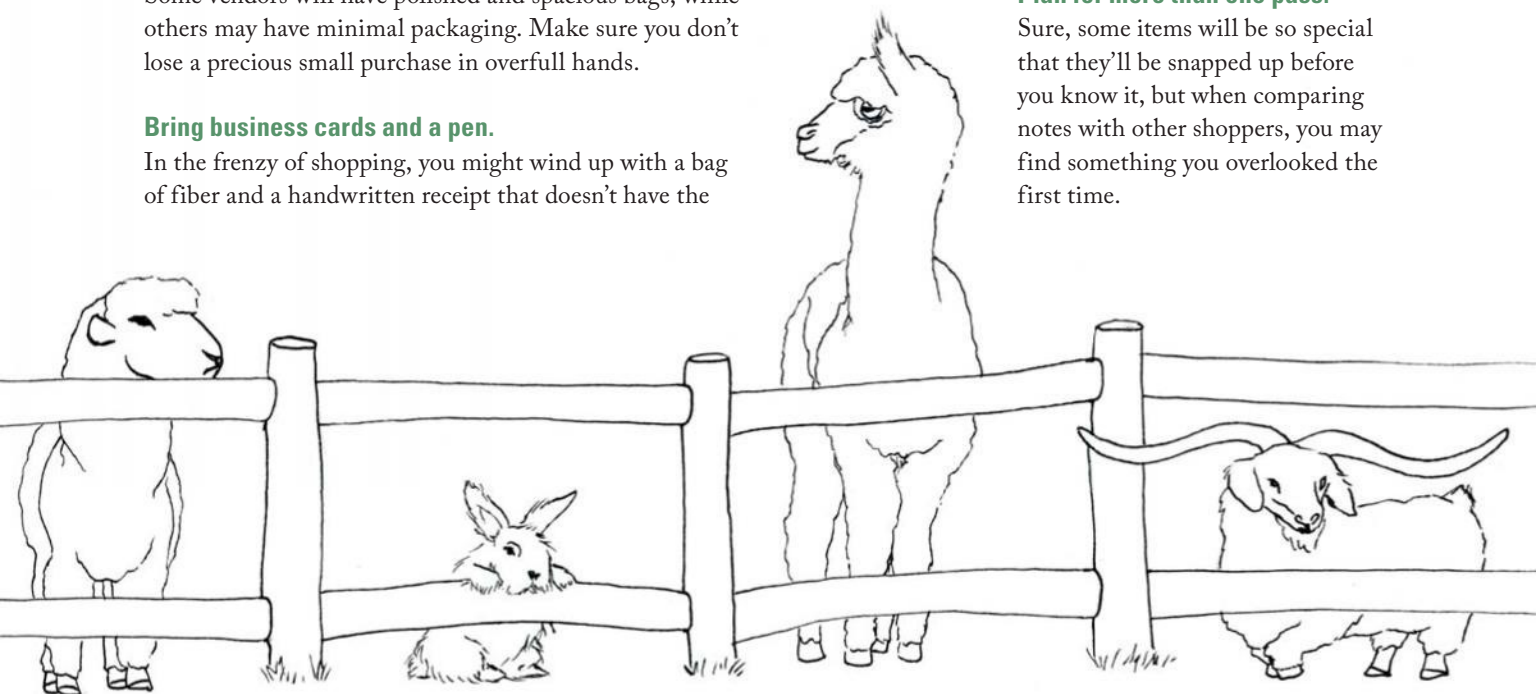
name of the vendor. Take a card from the vendor and jot down notes on the receipt so you'll remember what you bought when you get all your goodies home.

### Bring a checkbook and cash!

More and more vendors have mobile credit card readers, but some still do not (and the Internet connection can always go out). Checks are generally accepted and in some cases preferred, but cash is the gold standard.

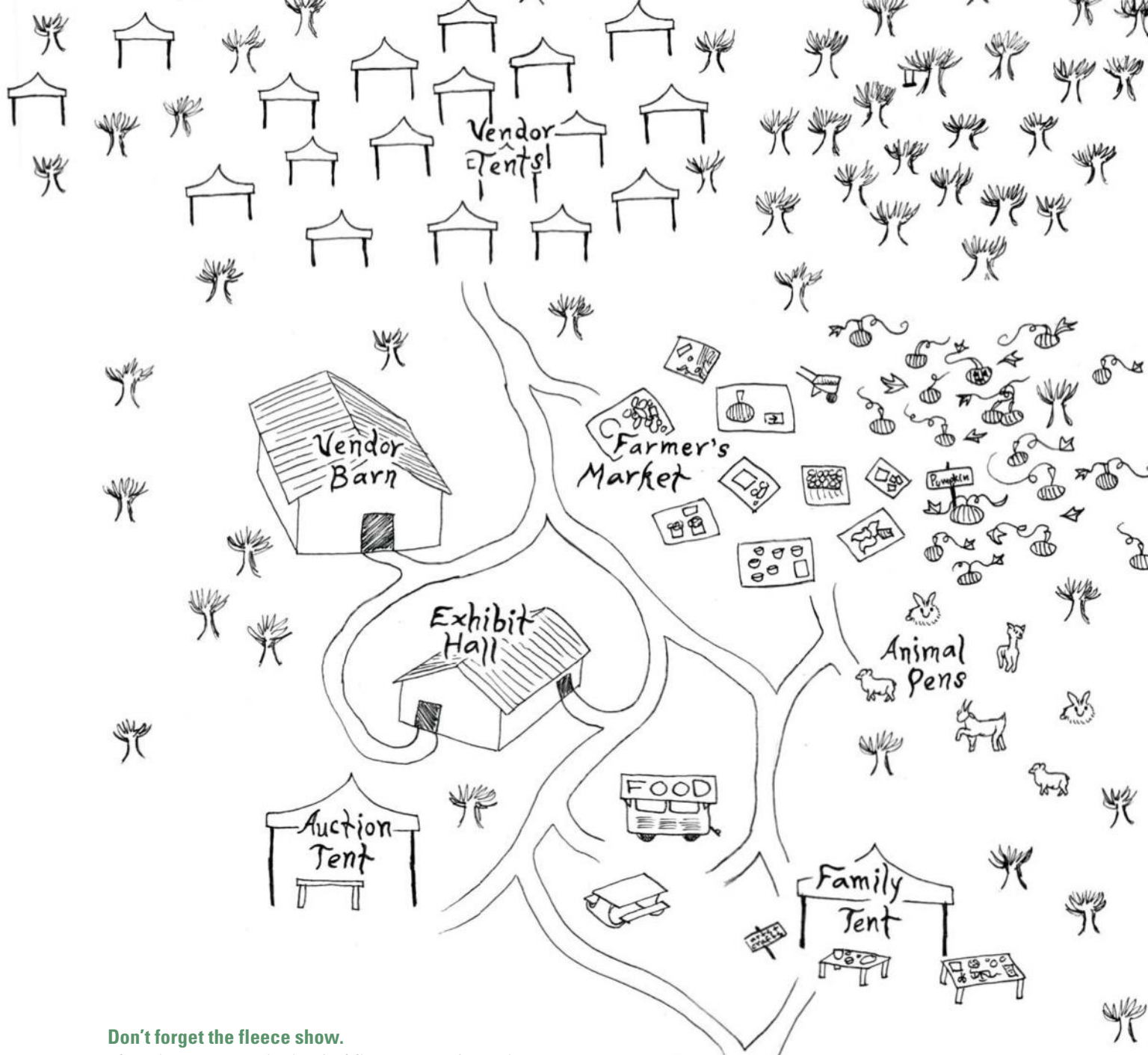
### Plan for more than one pass.

Sure, some items will be so special that they'll be snapped up before you know it, but when comparing notes with other shoppers, you may find something you overlooked the first time.



Illustrations by Laurel Johnson





**Don't forget the fleece show.**

If you have a particular kind of fleece in mind, get there early. Some people have even been known to meet up with trusted shepherds just before the show to have first pick. Natural colors and rare breeds are often the first to go.

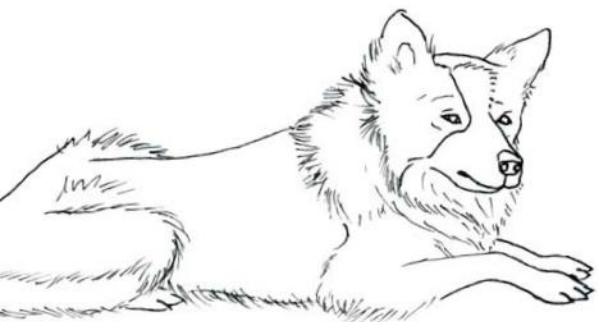
**Watch for equipment deals.**

Spinners who have wheels, drumcarders, and other tools to sell may put up signs at the event. Some of these may be available to take home right there and then.

**Make a plan for hauling home.**

Fiber is voluminous. Spinning wheels are even more so. If you carpoled with three other people in a compact car and each of you buys three fleeces, you may be sitting on fleece all the way home.





## HOW TO *Enjoy* A FIBER FESTIVAL *(when you have limited funds or space)*

### Hit the barns first.

While other people descend on the vendor area, pay a visit to the animal shows. It's fun to see the fiber animals, and you may find some good deals among the fleeces. (Test them out for yourself, and don't assume that a great fleece necessarily commands a high price.)

### Bring cash.

The easiest way to limit your spending is to decide on an amount in advance and stop spending when your wallet is empty. (Make sure to budget for meals and other incidentals in addition to fiber and tools.)

### Bring a small bag and buy no more than you can fit.

If you're traveling from far away, don't bring your roomiest suitcase on the trip. Bring a medium-sized backpack. Take the bus, so that your only storage space will be on your lap. Arrive by bicycle or motorcycle.

### Be a shopping enabler.

You can still enjoy the thrill of finding something great . . . just do it with someone else's wallet. Help a friend find the perfect thing.

### Try it out.

Toolmakers small and large will bring their wares to the show, some to sell on the spot and some for demonstration. This may be your chance to try an incredible custom spinning wheel and talk to the maker, or check out a type of spindle you've never seen before.

### Get on a waiting list.

Speaking of incredible custom wheels, many of them are ordered years—even decades—in advance. Some makers require a deposit to hold a place on the waiting list, while others will just take your name and contact you when your turn comes.

### Take a class.

If you'd rather take home skills and experiences than stuff, check out the list of classes available. Many festivals have internationally renowned teachers offering workshops.

### Watch the demos.

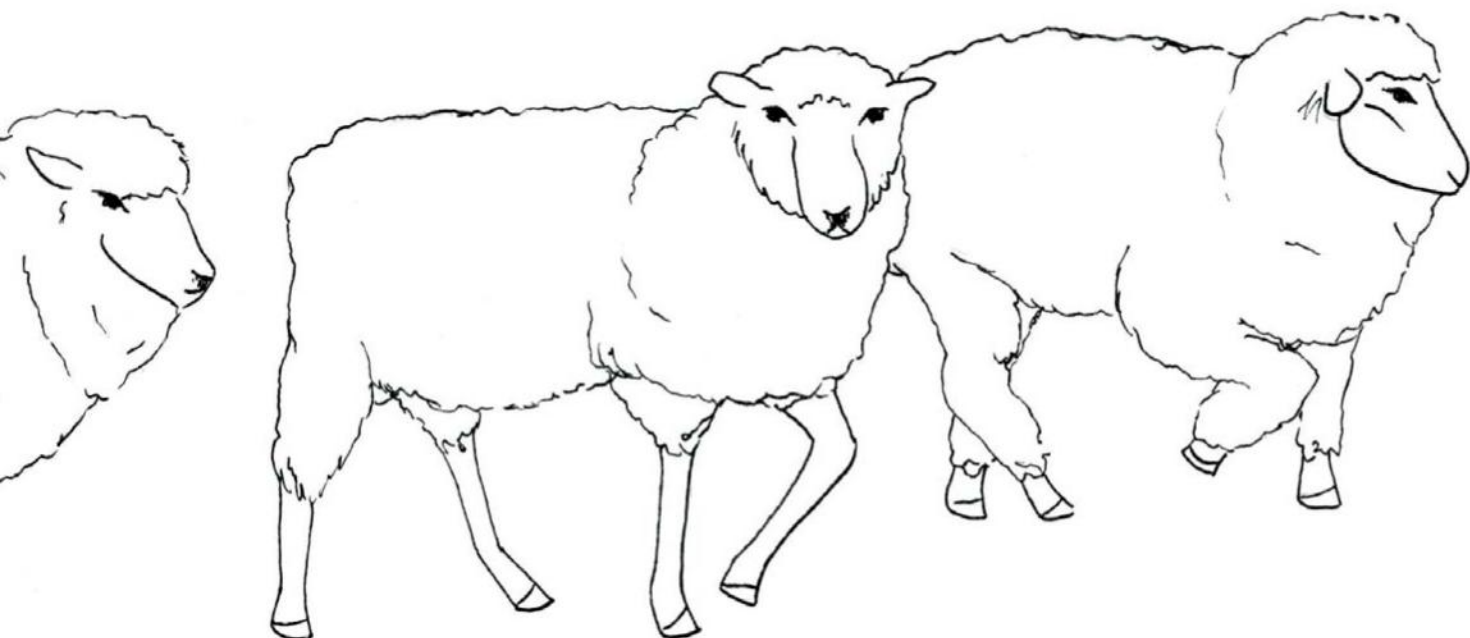
Spinning, weaving, home crafts, dyeing, felting, and more . . . If you've been looking to take up a new craft or learn more about an old one, you may find some free advice.

### Spot new trends.

Most of us scramble to finish our latest projects to wear out and about (weather permitting). See what everyone else is wearing, buying, spinning, and knitting.

### Take photos.

Snap frequently and post them to Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, or your outlet of choice, and make sure to tag them properly so others can experience the festival vicariously. You'll end up with a phone full of memories for yourself by the end of the festival.







## WHAT TO *Bring* TO A FIBER FESTIVAL

### **Water and a reusable bottle**

You may forget to keep hydrated with the excitement around you, and bottled water can be pricey at fairgrounds.

### **Snacks**

Keep your strength up!

### **Sunscreen, sunglasses, rain slicker, and an umbrella**

Weather is unpredictable and shelter can be scarce.

### **Smartphone**

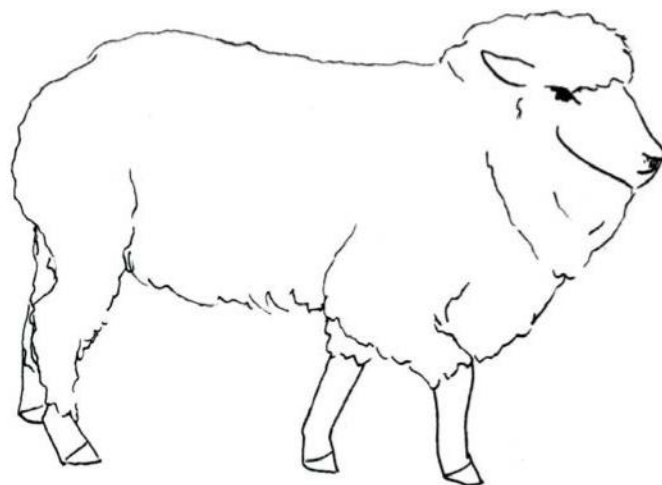
Snap photos of great things you see, share your finds, and find friends at the show.

### **Lunch (optional)**

Many festivals have “fair food” vendors—think funnel cakes, lemonade, and cotton candy. This could be a bonus or a drawback, depending on your palate. If your nutritional needs are something besides carnival fare, plan ahead. (Also, brace yourself. There will probably be lamb and possibly goat on offer.)

### **Drop spindle and/or simple knitting**

Watching other spinners and knitters, you will get the urge to keep your hands busy (and show off your latest project).



## WHAT *Not* TO MISS

### Meet-ups with fiber friends & acquaintances

Ravelry can be a great way to find group gatherings, but informal gatherings happen all over. Reach out to knitting and spinning friends and make a plan to get together, even just to admire each other's purchases.

### Food vendors

If you're up for lamb, this may be the best you ever taste. At fall festivals, an apple cider donut with a cup of coffee in the afternoon can be the perfect pick-me-up.

### Fleece judging

Even if you don't plan to buy a fleece, watching an experienced judge will teach you a lot about fiber. You may be surprised how certain fleeces score.

### Sheepdog demonstrations

The independence, obedience, instinct, and just plain brains on display as the dogs move groups of sheep are amazing to watch. It is very important, however, not to give in to the urge to take one home.

### Equipment makers

You may never see as many brands of spinning wheels, spindles, and other equipment in one place as at a

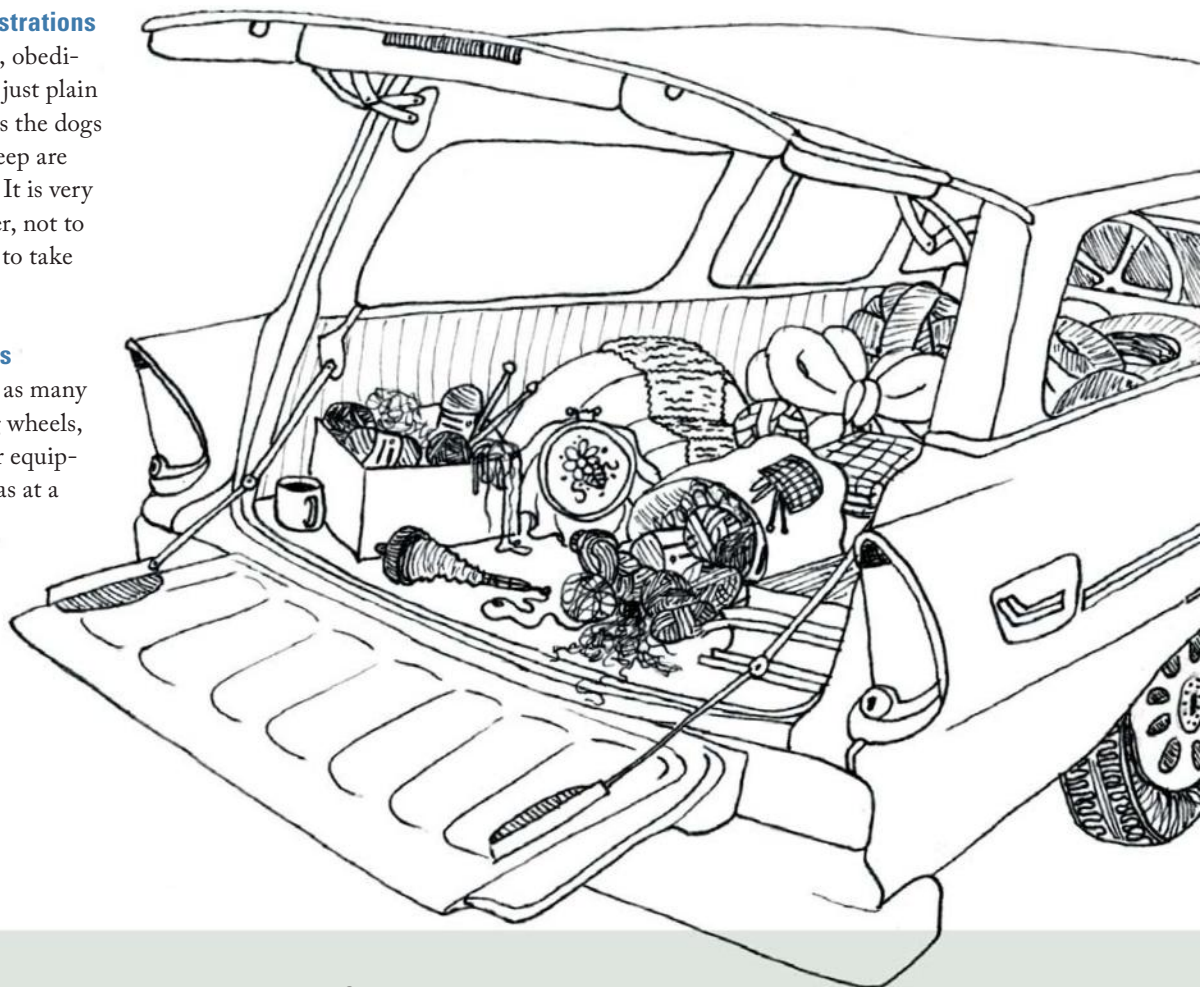
fiber festival. Now is your chance to try out a variety of tools and see which ones you like.

### Talk to vendors

Vendors come to wool festivals from all over the country, some from around the world. If they're not too busy, ask where they are from and about the story behind their fiber business. You never know where a new friend or a better appreciation for the products you're buying will come from.

### The town

Fiber festivals are often held in interesting, quirky places, and the towns around the fiber festivals may have as much to offer as the festival itself. Local (occasionally historic) restaurants, taverns, shops, hotels, inns, and so much more are waiting outside the gates of the fairgrounds.



## ENOUGH SHOPPING—*Now What?*

Animal Judging • Handspun Judging • Sheep Shearing  
Sheep to Shawl Competition • Leapin' Llama & Llama Limbo



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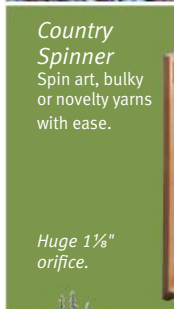
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Corriedale sheep being fed on a ranch in Montana. Photo by Bob Nichols





# WELCOME *to the* SHEEP BARN

by Deborah Robson

*Come with me into the sheep barn and meet some of the animals who grow the wool we all love. As enjoyable as the crush of the festival is outside the barn, I like to take time out and visit our suppliers. Even when there's a crowd here in the aisles between the pens, the sheep barn is usually calm and centering. At this particular (imaginary) festival, the organizers have arranged the pens by wool type, which is handy for us as we make sense of the many varieties of wool. Each time someone organizes sheep breeds, the groups form differently, depending on the criteria being used to sort them. Today we have clusters based on the fiber qualities.*

## FINE WOOLS

Let's begin in this aisle with the fine wools. One of these breeds—**Merino**—is familiar to almost everyone who has even a basic knowledge of sheep varieties, and the wools have a lot of appeal to most fiber workers. The fine wools are suitable for making next-to-skin garments; they're soft. What they are not is durable; it's a trade-off.

There are many types of Merino sheep. Having originated in Spain, the breed spread across the globe and adapted to different environments and local needs. Many of the feral island flocks include strong Merino components. Fine-wool sheep have many wool follicles per square inch of skin, and some Merino strains were bred to have wrinkled skin (think Chinese Shar-Pei dog) to increase the wool yield. Due to difficulties in shearing, the smoother-skinned varieties have won out.

Some Merinos went to France and were bred to produce a slightly different type of sheep, the **Rambouillet**. Later this became a successful range sheep in the western United States. Rambouillet wool is a bit bouncier than Merino. Another fine-wool range sheep, this one developed within the United States, is the **Targhee**.

**Cormo**, a breed from New Zealand, has become especially popular among North American spinners. The fleece tends to hold grease—a fleece that felt lanolin-free when initially washed may be slightly tacky again six months later. It's not you . . .

The **Romeldale**, a rare breed, makes a good showing in some parts of North America—enough that you might think it wasn't rare. It's just that fiber folk value it, so shepherds bring the wool where it's appreciated. The **California Variegated Mutant**, or **CVM**, is a Romeldale with a particular color pattern (called badger faced).

The next couple of breeds also work for next-to-the-skin textiles but can be easier to work with from the fleece than the previous group, and they offer a bit more durability. Both were developed by crossing longwool rams onto Merino ewes.

The **Corriedale** came into being in New Zealand, and the **Bond** in Australia. Corriedales grow a wider variety of fleece types, with some edging into the next category of medium wools. Bond fiber tends to be slightly finer and longer stapled, and Bonds are less often sighted at festivals.

A CVM lamb at the Estes Park Wool Market. Photo by Christa Tippmann



Starbuck, Carter, and Nimbus, Bond rams from Gleason's Fine Woolies in Lyons, Colorado. Photo by Joanna Gleason



Grazing Oxford ewes. ©Shutterstock.com/Willmetts



Hampshire sheep have a classic woolly face.  
©Shutterstock.com/Godrick



A Horned Dorset ram at Beech Grove  
Fiberworks in Indiana. Photo by Kate Larson



## MEDIUM WOOLS

### *The Down breeds*

This festival has conveniently put the true Down breeds together, so we can compare them, although because we're in the United States, we only have five of the six. These sheep are related to each other by history, geographic origin, appearance, and wool type. Their identities developed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the southern parts of England; they have colored faces and legs, and their wool is springy, of moderate length, perfect for woolen spinning, and difficult (or impossible) to felt. Wool from Down breeds makes great sweaters, mittens, socks, blankets, and other textiles where warmth and reasonable durability are required.

The challenge for fiber folk is getting our hands on the wool. These breeds are predominantly raised for meat, so when showtime comes, the wool is shorn in ways that show off muscle, and the fiber goes in the trash. The fleeces have little commercial value because of "contamination" by the dark hairs of the animals' faces and legs. Most shepherds don't even recoup the cost of shearing. A good Down fleece is a treasure. From a bag of Down fleeces bought for near nothing at a shearing demo, you can retrieve a usable amount of wool (and recycle the rest as compost or mulch).

The skill of identifying sheep breeds on sight is one worth playing with, although it's impossible to master with all the crosses and variants. Nonetheless, breed-spotting can be enjoyable, and the **Suffolk** is the best one I know to start with. There are a lot of these distinctive-looking sheep around. They have starkly black, wool-free heads, with large, dominant ears set at a downward angle, and black legs.

The **Southdown** is the oldest of the six classic Down breeds and led to the development of the others. It also has the subtlest coloration on its face and legs, being a soft tan or pale brown. It's not a large sheep, and the **Babydoll Southdown** is even smaller yet grows a fleece that's very similar in all regards and easier for spinners to locate.

**Hampshire** sheep originated from a blend of the local sheep, Southdown, and some Cotswold. Similarly, the **Oxford** sheep developed from locals plus Hampshire, Southdown, and Cotswold. The **Shropshire**, from an English county on the Welsh border, came about by mixing the native sheep with Southdown and possibly Leicester and Cotswold.

There's a gap in our pens here, because as far as I've been able to determine, there are no **Dorset Down** sheep currently in the United States. There are, however, the Dorset Down's white-faced cousins, the Dorset Horn and the plain or Polled Dorset, so we can turn the corner and begin our encounter with the next group of medium-wool breeds.

### *Other medium-wool breeds*

We have a whole flurry here of medium-grade, versatile wools. They differ in feel, lock shapes, and availability, but within a fairly narrow range. Uses are the same as for the Down wools we just encountered: in general, fine for next-to-skin wear but without the softness of fine wools.

First we have five breeds of British origin:

- The two white-faced Dorsets from southern England, the older **Dorset Horn** and the hornless **Dorset** (or Polled Dorset).
- Two from western England and Wales, the **Kerry Hill** and **Clun Forest**, both with distinctive and different markings.
- The **Cheviot**, from the borderlands of northern England and Scotland.

Four breeds that originated in the United States:

- The **American Tunis**, with a lot of history behind it.
- The **Columbia**, a longwool/shortwool combination bred to thrive on the western rangelands.
- The **Montadale**, developed from the Columbia with an addition of Cheviot.
- The **Polypay**, a fairly recent breed created with Targhee, Dorset, Rambouillet, and Finn genes.

And two that came from continental Europe:

- The **Texel**, a modern variation of a traditional breed from the Netherlands.
- The German **East Friesian**, known for high milk production. The wool is generally an afterthought but can be excellent to spin. It may be a bit coarser than the others in this group.



The Columbia was developed in the high desert climate of the American West. Imperial Stock Ranch in eastern Oregon has bred Columbias for generations. Photo by Anita Osterhaug



A Jacob from Fair Adventure Ranch at the Estes Park Wool Market. Photo by George Boe



A Border Leicester from Moose Mountain Ranch at the Estes Park Wool Market. Photo by George Boe

### *A handful of distinctive medium-wool breeds*

The next four types of medium-wool breeds have unique characteristics that place them here, although they are also very distinct from each other.

The **Finn** grows an easy-to-prepare silky wool that comes in clear white and a variety of colors. It's generally next-to-skin soft, with a gentler hand than other fleeces of similar micron counts.

**Jacob** sheep have brown-and-white or black-and-white spotted coats, and the fleeces cover a broad range, from soft to sturdy.

One of the few breeds that holds its dark color as it ages (although the tips may turn red in the sun), the **Black Welsh Mountain** has wool that tends to have a bit of a crisp hand.

The **California Red's** fleece may look and feel a lot like, say, that of an American Tunis (although more tan than white in color) or it may be speckled with short red hairs, a reminder of the hair sheep (**Barbados Blackbelly**) that is one of its ancestors.

## LONGWOOLS

### *Versatile longwools*

We'll begin our exploration of the longwools with a trio of breeds that produce what might be called perfect sweater wools. Of course, they can also be used for a lot of other projects. They tend to have more luster and greater fiber lengths than the medium wools, along with greater durability. They make great introductory wools for people new to handspinning, and they also draw experienced spinners as repeat customers because they're easy to process, pleasant to handle, and versatile. If you're examining fleeces, know that each has a range of types, so you can evaluate individually for fineness or sturdiness.

The **Romney** and **Border Leicester** are English breeds, one from the southeast and one from the northeast on the border with Scotland.

The **Coopworth** was developed in New Zealand from a combination of Border Leicester and Romney, so there's little surprise that it groups with them!





A pair of Bluefaced Leicesters at the Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival. Photo by Deborah Robson

Next comes a breed you've probably heard of because of its success in the yarn and the roving and top markets. Its fiber is significantly finer than that of the previous three breeds but is also versatile, trading durability for softness. The **Bluefaced Leicester** may be the most recognizable breed after the Merino. Some of the fleeces, especially from lambs, can be challenging to hand process because the locks are so fine and spiral-shaped.

#### *Classic longwools*

Next we meet three breeds that can be difficult to tell apart and that all grow fleeces that are sturdier, longer, and shinier than the previous set. The wool can be spun into heavy yarns that work well in rugs and cushions or it can be spun fine and smooth for unusual laces. Colors tend to concentrate in the white-gray-black range, including a lovely gray that's called English blue.

**Cotswold, Leicester Longwool, and Lincoln Longwool** may all be shorn twice a year because they grow such lengthy fleeces. They can be a delight to process and spin.



Grace and Elizabeth Corrette of Event Horizon Ranch show a pair of Lincoln Longwools. Photo by George Boe





Gotlands feature curly gray locks. Photo by Joy Dally, Shepherds Lane



Teeswater (here, with a black nose) and Wensleydale lambs have long, ringletted locks. Photo by Christa Tippmann



Creighton Wood from Pinonwood Ranch Farm with a Shetland ram. Photo by George Boe



An Icelandic ewe. Photo by Nancy Kelley



*Longwools introduced through upgrading*

Now here are three interesting breeds that are in North America through *upgrading*, in which imported semen of the targeted breed is used with longwool ewes already established here, in a process that gradually increases the percentage of the target breed in the offspring. I'm thus referring to them as the American versions of the breeds because they incorporate other genetics.

The **American Gotland** has developed through upgrading a breed that originated in Sweden. Although somewhat similar to Bluefaced Leicester in hand, it is generally easier to hand process. It's characteristically gray.

The next two breeds grow extra long, shiny fleeces that are more supple than the classics and sturdier than the Bluefaced Leicester and Gotland, and they are often shorn twice a year.

**American Wensleydale** and **American Teeswater** wools hang in curly ringlets, resembling Bluefaced Leicester on a larger scale. They can be spun into a variety of smooth or textured yarns.

*Specialty*

Now we come to some more unusual fleece types. Their uses vary—as do the colors for the first four. Shetland,

Icelandic, Karakul, and Navajo Churro sheep all offer some of the widest ranges of colors and patterning.

There's so much variety in **Shetland** sheep that individual flocks or animals could be placed in the fine-wool or medium-wool groups, or with the double-coated types. All types of Shetland wools are delightful to work with—it's just a question of matching the fleece to the project, whether it's a superfine lace shawl, a sweater or hat, or a sturdy blanket.

The mix of undercoat and outercoat in **Icelandic** fleeces makes them both lofty and sturdy. They're great for making lightweight but warm garments, yet you can separate the coats to produce a sturdy, sleek yarn (from the outercoat) and a soft, matte yarn (from the undercoat).

The **Navajo Churro** sheep supports three textile traditions in the southwestern United States—Diné (Navajo), Hispanic, and Puebloan. The fleece combines a balance of outer- and undercoats in an unusual mix of both cushiony feel and durability. Best known for use in rugs and blankets, some fleeces also work well for making sweaters, hats, and mittens.

Here's a treasure to stretch your fiber world: **Karakul**. Like the others, it's a dual-coated breed, although this time the shiny outercoat dominates. A superb rug yarn, it

Navajo Churro from Prairie Rose Woolen Works. Photo by George Boe



can also encourage the making of smaller textiles such as pillows and bags that take advantage of its colors and durability. It felts like a dream.

At the end of this last aisle, we find pens with four breeds that only occasionally show up in a festival's sheep barns. If you see them, it's a blue-ribbon day for sheep-spotting.

The tiny, agile **Soay** look more like deer than stereotypical sheep. They have very soft wool, most often accompanied by both hair and kemp. Basic colors are dark phase (deep brown) and light phase (caramel colored). They rarely appear in a "parade of breeds" because they are skittish. Their pens may also have tarps or other stimulus-reducing aids on the sides to help them feel more comfortable in a public situation.

**Hog Island** sheep reflect a blend of English-origin breeds that were brought to an island off the coast of Virginia. A few flocks live on the mainland in the eastern United States. Their wool is springy and spins up more nicely than a first glance would suggest.

**Gulf Coast Native** and **Florida Cracker** sheep call the southeastern states their home. Unusual for wool-bearing sheep, they tolerate heat well. The wool can be a treat.

The **Santa Cruz** is a feral breed associated with Santa Cruz Island off the coast of California. Although they no longer live there, a handful of flocks are scattered throughout the United States. Their wool has unusual elasticity and falls between the fine and medium categories in handling qualities.

With all this abundance of options, where to start? If you're at a fleece show, give yourself time to wander through the aisles and look at the fleeces. Touch them, but don't disturb the lock formation without asking the shepherd first. Pick one that sticks in your mind after you've seen the array; you may have to retreat to a quiet place for a few moments to determine which fleeces are calling you most strongly. (Don't worry if there's a fleece-buying frenzy going on. There are always good fleeces left after the hordes depart—they'll just be the less commonly recognized breeds.) Then take it home and get to know it. Meanwhile, all the sheep will get on with growing fleeces for you to enjoy next season.

### RESOURCES

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Robson, Deborah, and Carol Ekarius. *The Fleece and Fiber Sourcebook: More Than 200 Fibers from Animal to Spun Yarn*. North Adams, Massachusetts: Storey, 2011.

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Soay sheep. Photo © arinahabich08 | Dreamstime.com

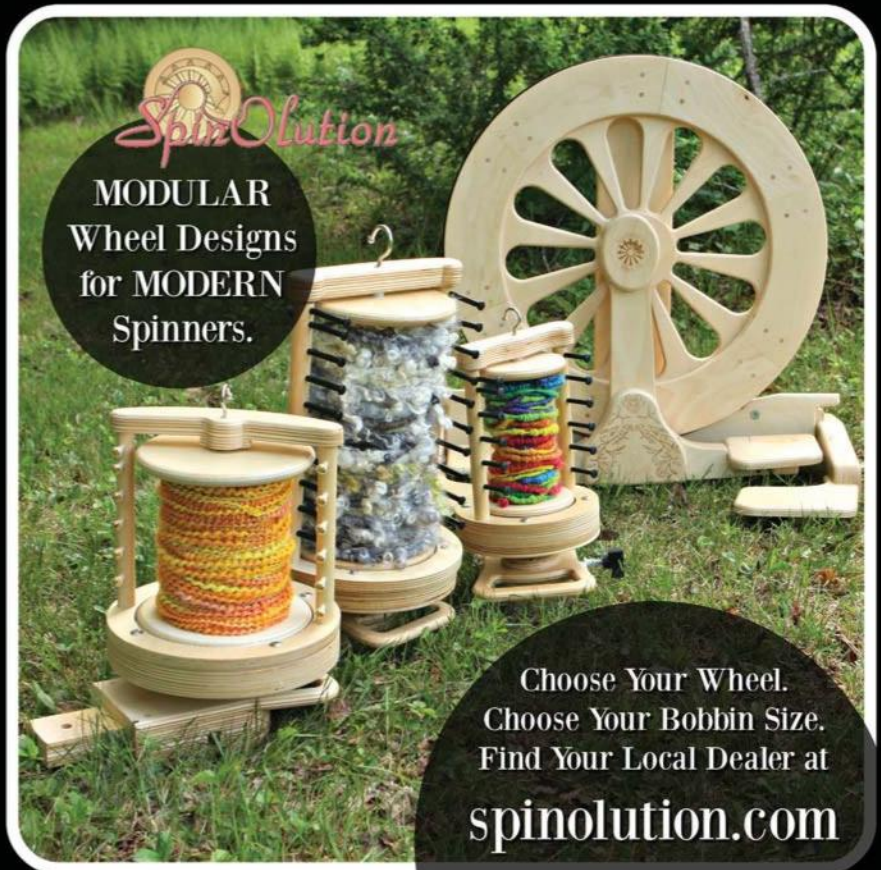


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Angora goats at the Estes Park Wool Market. Photo by George Boe



# CASHMERE, MOHAIR, PYGORA

## Giving Goat Fibers a Fair Chance

by Carol Huebscher Rhoades

*Perhaps you've heard this warning: "The goats are very cute, but it's too hard to spin their fibers."*

Don't listen.

Three types of goats to look for are mohair-producing Angora goats, cashmere-bearing goats, and Pygoras. Goats produce fibers from very coarse hair to softest down, with each breed yielding special fiber qualities. Selecting, preparing, and spinning goat fibers takes thought and practice, but you will be rewarded with new skills and wonderful yarns.

### CASHMERE

About sixty-eight types of goats can produce cashmere-quality fiber (18.5 microns and finer). Cashmere fiber, crimped and averaging 1½ to 2½ inches long, is usually sold in prepared form as batts, roving, or tops. Avoid cashmere that feels woolly or cottony or that has mixed soft undercoat and coarser outercoat.

If you haven't spun cashmere before, practice with

cotton roving. If possible, use a high-speed whorl and reduce the take-up tension to a minimum so the yarn draws onto the bobbin smoothly and without pulling. To start, draft backward and treadle slowly, but speed up when adding twist to the fiber before it winds on. Make sure the yarn has enough twist to hold together well but not so much that it tangles and breaks.

### MOHAIR

Mohair seems to be the goat fiber most feared. It is graded from softest fall kid to coarse adult, but each quality serves a good purpose. Fall and spring kid mohair is slick and soft, with an easy-to-handle length (3 to 5 inches). I gently wash the fleece, card rolags, and spin long-draw woolen for a soft, haloed yarn. Adjust your wheel with a medium-speed whorl and medium take-up tension. If you prefer short-draw worsted spinning, feed the yarn in quickly so twist won't build up. High twist can make even the softest mohair feel wiry. For long, coarse mohair, a slow whorl

Members of Gunnison, Colorado's 4H Get Your Goat Club present a cashmere doe, kid, and buck at the Estes Park Wool Market. From left, Josie Bifano, Marissa Hatch, Madeline Igo, Ava Cody, fleece judge Wendy Pieh, Cole Hatch, Nick Bifano, Kaytlin Camp, Tyler Tucker, and Lydia Anderson. Photo by George Boe



and slow treadling but fast take-up should yield a strong but not wiry yarn. Check periodically to make sure the slippery mohair yarn holds together.

### PYGORA

Pygora goats resulted from a cross between registered Angora and pygmy goats. Fiber from these small goats is classed in three types: Type A is angora-like, with 6-inch or longer fibers hanging in curly locks, similar in quality to fine mohair. Type B, the most common, is double-coated, with a cashmere-style undercoat and mohair outercoat. The crimped fibers average 3 to 6 inches long and can be lustrous or matte. Type C is a cashmere type with very fine matte fiber 1 to 3 inches long. Keep these

distinctions in mind when choosing pygora. Prepare and spin pygora as for the goat fiber it most resembles.

All of these fibers blend wonderfully with fine wool, adding luster, halo, strength, and drape to the wool's softness and elasticity.

Relax, practice spinning each type of fiber, and enjoy the fibers of those cute goats.

*For any goat fiber, buy fiber from a doe or wether, not a buck (that smell won't wash out), and avoid mixed under- and outercoat fleeces.*



A Pygora goat enjoying a treat before being shorn at Little Hawk Farm, Baldwin City, Kansas. Photo by Ruth Hawkins



Sheared type B Pygora includes both the soft undercoat and silky outercoat. Photo by Ruth Hawkins, Little Hawk Farm



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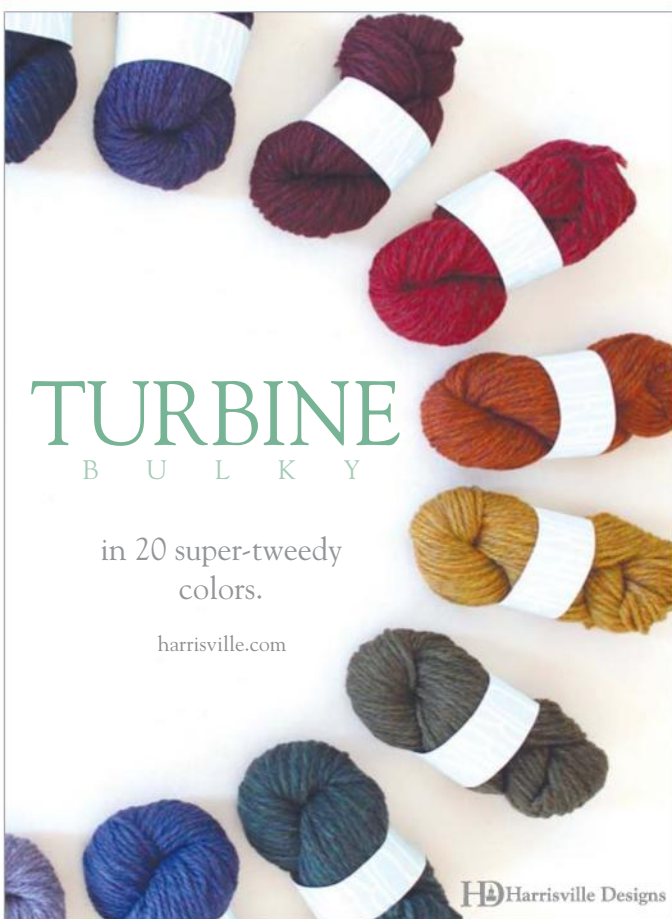


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The blanket, or prime fleece, has been shorn from this llama from 711 Ranch. Photo by George Boe



# ALPACAS *and* LLAMAS *and* PACO-VICUÑAS!

by Chris Switzer

*My husband Phil and I have been raising and showing llamas and alpacas for many years. The most frequently asked question we receive when people see these creatures is, “What’s the difference between a llama and an alpaca?”*

Even though they share many traits with all other camelids (including the double-padded feet with toenails), it’s easy to tell llamas and alpacas apart on sight. Llamas are taller and weigh more, up to 6 feet tall and 250 to 500 pounds, with long ears, straight back, and high tail set. Alpacas are shorter and smaller, 5 feet tall and 120 to 190 pounds, with wool on legs, neck, and head—either woolly huacaya alpacas or silky, long-haired suri alpacas. Alpacas have shorter, pointed ears, a curved back, and low tail set.

## THE COLORS OF CAMELIDS

The alpaca industry in Peru recognizes as many as twenty-two different natural colors, including cream (natural); beige (light to dark, called “fawn” in the alpaca industry); golden, reddish brown; light to dark browns; mahogany (a purple-brown); the grays (silver, regular gray, charcoal, and rose-gray with brown mixed in); and even true black (with no sun fading). Llamas have less variety of colors in their fleeces, probably because breeders (at least in the United States) are more likely to select for fineness rather than hue.

## LLAMAS

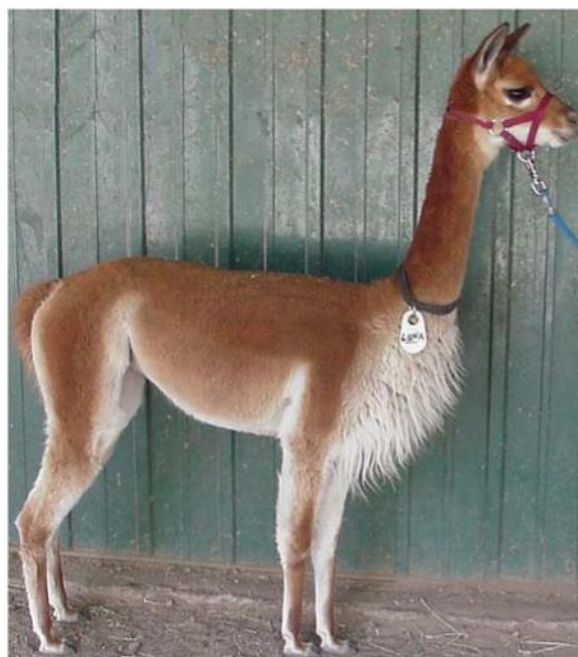
Llamas have a double coat with long, coarse guard hairs—not what most spinners are looking for. For my own use, I hand-brush the softer undercoat, which leaves most of the guard hairs behind. If llamas have been shorn, the fiber will be hairy, though some mills do a good job of dehairing the fleece. (For more on fiber mills, see page 92.) If you have a hairy llama fleece, you can pull the guard hairs out by their tip ends.

## ALPACAS

Alpacas have fewer coarse guard hairs than llamas, thanks to many centuries of having been bred for their fiber. We breed our huacaya alpacas for fineness, softness, uniformity, crimp, and density as well as color. A very dense fleece means less dirt and vegetable matter. The first shearing of an alpaca will be the finest, and “baby” alpaca is much sought after (though the name may not refer to the



A dark brown Argentine llama from Llamas of a Coral Dawn.  
Photo by George Boe



Paco-vicuñas look extremely similar to their wild cousins, but they retain some alpaca traits (including a calm demeanor). Photo courtesy of Chris Switzer



(Top) Huacaya alpaca. Photo by Fred Gan

(Bottom) HFS Jeremiah, an award-winning suri male. Photo by Tim Sheets, Heritage Farm Suri Alpacas

fiber from a baby animal). As the animal ages, its fleece tends to become coarser and develops more guard hairs.

Huacaya alpacas are fluffy, and their fiber has crimp. They must be shorn every year or two to yield about a 3-inch length of fleece. Suris, on the other hand, have long, straight, lustrous fiber, like silk. I hand-clip suris with blunt-end scissors, leaving more fiber along the backline for coverage.

All fleeces are not created equal. It's very important to look over a whole fleece and then skirt it. Use the flat of your hand, not just your fingers, to feel for guard hairs and imperfections. Remove thicker areas and separate out different shades; many fleeces will have more than one color.

### PACO-VICUÑAS

Paco-vicuñas are found in the wild. A paco-vicuña is a cross between an alpaca and a vicuña. In the wild, the colors are the same as those for vicuñas (tan/brown faces, with a rich, tawny brown fleece and light-colored underbelly); with domestication and specific breeding, a variety of colors of fiber appear. We raise paco-vicuñas for finer, softer fleece; it's like spinning a cloud. The fleeces from our herd range from 13 to 20 microns; by contrast, an average alpaca fleece measures 25 microns. Paco-vicuña is a specialty fiber and a new industry, with only about 700 animals and eighteen farms across the United States.

Adapted from "A New World Camelid Primer," *Spin Off* Winter 2016.



A huacaya alpaca with her cria (baby) at Mountain Sky Ranch, Berthoud, Colorado. Photo by Joe Coca





# BETTER *Know a* BREED

Explore the possibilities of a particular breed by following the fiber to the source: processing the fiber or choosing it directly from the producer, then pairing carefully handspun yarn with the perfect design.

## Timberlane Cowl

*Eileen Lee*

A Star Alpacas 100% alpaca roving

The incredible warmth and softness of alpaca make it a perfect fiber for a cowl to keep out chills without scratchiness. Slipped stitches create a two-color pattern despite using only one color per row.

*See Page 44*







**Montadale Beanie**

*Benjamin Krudwig*

100% Montadale fleeces, hand carded, spun, and dyed

A breed less than a hundred years old, the Montadale produces medium-soft fleece that is exceptionally white in color, making it beautiful to dye.

**See Page 44**



## North Road Hat

*Kate Larson*

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Jamieson & Smith 100% Shetland  
wool combed top

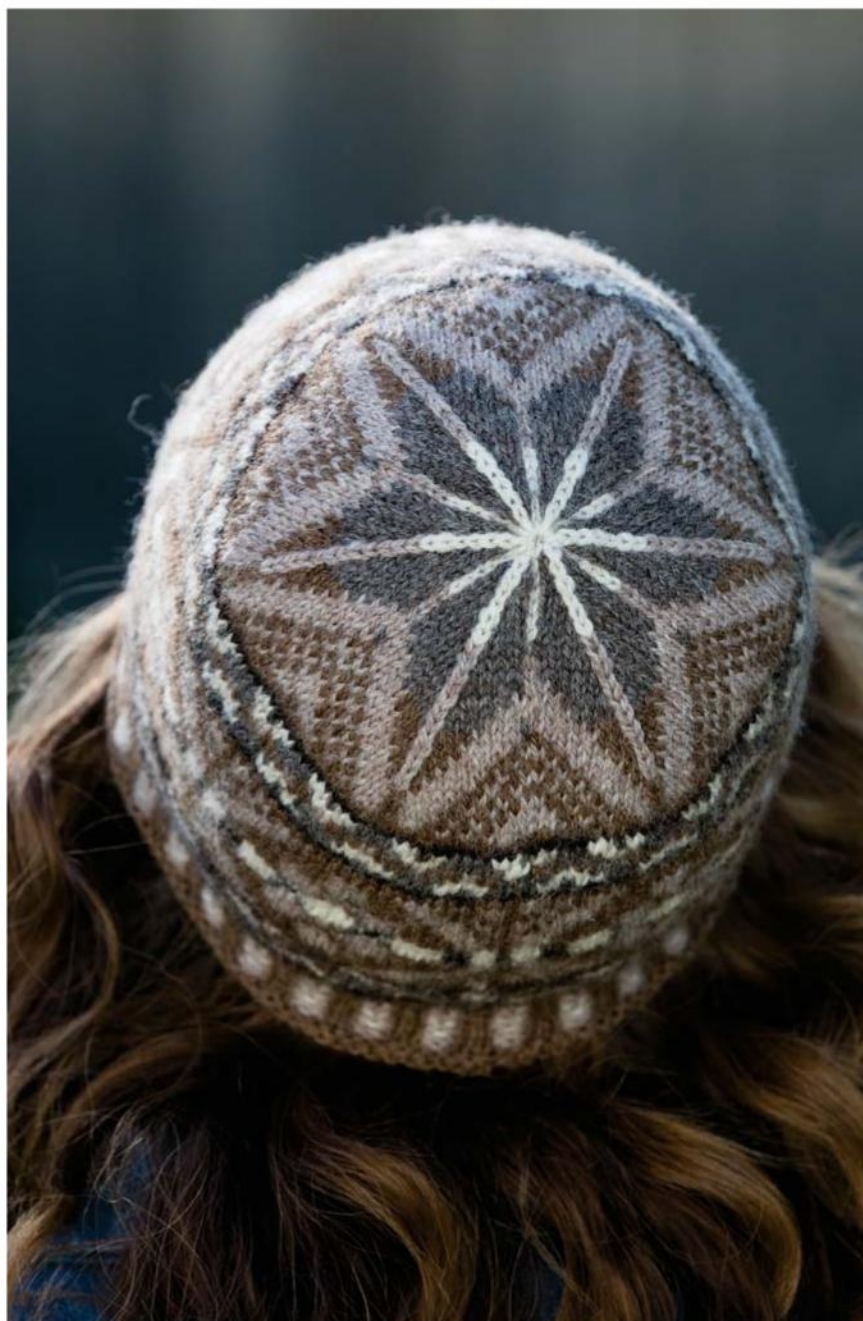
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Known locally as the Wool Brokers, the world-famous Jamieson & Smith has been working with Shetland's sheep producers since the 1930s to develop markets for their fleeces and to make these special fibers available beyond Shetland's coastlines. As you spin their combed tops, you can dream about the sheep, grazing amongst the peat cuts in an ancient landscape.

**See Page 45**









## COLUMNS HAT



## A Pair of Jacob Hats

Leslie Ann Hauer

Originally published in *Spin Off*  
Winter 2015

100% Jacob fleece, carded and  
spun from the lock

What's not to like about Jacob  
sheep? They are adorable: small  
in size and with double horns, a  
goatish set extending up and a  
sheepish set that forms a curl.  
And the best part: Jacob fleeces  
come in colors that will not fade  
or bleed.

**See Page 47**

## WEDGES HAT







## Swatch Mitts

Kate Larson

Originally published in *Spin Off* Spring 2013

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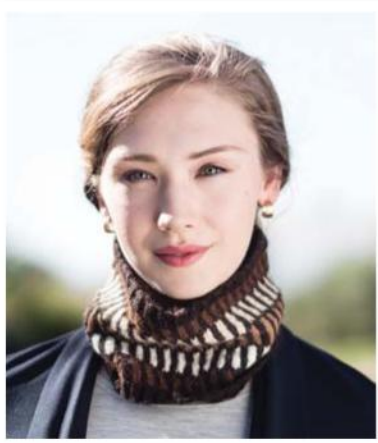
100% Shetland wool

Love it or hate it, we can learn so much from small samples. With these gorgeous handwarmers, Kate Larson developed a wearable swatch that allows the same color sequence to be sampled in different types of motifs.

**See Page 49**







## TIMBERLANE COWL

Eileen Lee

A Star Alpacas 100% alpaca roving

*Inspired by a trip to visit a local prizewinning alpaca farm, Eileen decided to celebrate the range of colors that alpacas produce. With colors ranging from white to true black, the fleece combined with the pattern of this cozy cowl makes a dramatic impact.*

### MATERIALS

**Fiber** 3½ oz A Star Alpacas 100% alpaca roving in five natural colors: black (MC, 2¼ oz), dark brown (CC1, ½ oz), light brown (CC2, ¼ oz), medium brown (CC3, ¼ oz), and white (CC4, ¼ oz).

**Yarn** 2-ply; 1300 ypp; 13 wpi; sport weight. MC: 185 yd; CC1: 40 yd; CC2, CC3, and CC4: 20 yd each.

**Needles** U.S. size 4 (3.5 mm): 16" circular (cir). Adjust needle size if necessary to obtain the correct gauge. While needle size is not critical for this project, it may affect the amount of yarn used.

**Gauge** 29 sts and 64 rnds = 4" in sl st patt.

**Notions** Tapestry needle; marker (m).

**Finished Size** 20" circumference and 7" wide.

See [knittingdaily.com/glossary](http://knittingdaily.com/glossary) for terms you don't know.

### KNITTING NOTES

- This cowl is worked in the round in a slip-stitch stripe pattern. Each round is worked with only one color; the other color is carried up from the round below.
- Slip all stitches purlwise with yarn in back.

### COWL

With MC, CO 144 sts. Place marker (pm) and join in the rnd. **Next rnd** \*[K1tbl] 2 times, p2; rep from \* to end. Rep last rnd until piece measures 1" from CO. Knit 1 rnd. Work sl st stripe patt as foll: Join CC1, do not break MC. **Next rnd** \*Sl 2 sts (see Notes); with CC1, k2; rep from \* to end. **Next rnd** \*With MC, k2; sl 2 sts; rep from \* to end. Rep last 2 rnds 7 more times. Break CC1. With MC, knit 1 rnd. Join CC2. **Next rnd** \*With CC2, k2, sl 2 sts; rep from \* to end. **Next rnd** \*Sl 2 sts, with MC, k2; rep from \* to end. Rep last 2 rnds 7 more times. Break CC2. With MC, knit 1 rnd. Join CC3. **Next rnd** \*Sl 2 sts; with CC3, k2; rep from \* to end. **Next rnd** \*With MC, k2; sl 2 sts; rep from \* to end. Rep last 2 rnds 7 more times. Break CC3. With MC, knit 1 rnd. Join CC4. **Next rnd** \*With CC4, k2, sl 2 sts; rep from \* to end. **Next rnd** \*Sl 2 sts, with MC, k2; rep from \* to end. Rep last 2 rnds 7 more times. Break CC4. With MC knit 1 rnd. rejoin CC1. **Next rnd** \*Sl 2 sts; with CC1, k2; rep from \* to end. **Next rnd** \*With MC, k2; sl 2 sts; rep from \* to end. Rep last 2 rnds 7 more times. Break CC1, cont with MC only. **Next rnd** \*[K1tbl] 2 times, p2; rep from \* to end. Rep last rnd until ribbing measures 1". Loosely BO all sts in patt.

### FINISHING

Weave in ends.



## MONTADALE BEANIE

Benjamin Krudwig

Montadale fleece

*Benjamin received some washed fleece as a gift, then began immediately carding the springy wool into beautiful, fluffy rolags. Though the natural white yarn was beautiful, he opted to dye the yarn with turmeric.*

### MATERIALS

**Fiber** 2¼ oz Montadale fleece.

**Yarn** 2-ply; 99 yd; 792 ypp; 12 wpi; DK weight.

**Needles** U.S. size 4 (3.5 mm): 16" circular (cir) and set of double-pointed (dnp). Adjust needle size if necessary to obtain the correct gauge.

**Gauge** 22 sts and 32 rnds = 4" in St st.

**Notions** Markers (m); tapestry needle.

**Finished Size** 18¼" circumference and 7" tall.

See [knittingdaily.com/glossary](http://knittingdaily.com/glossary) for terms you don't know.

### SPINNING NOTES

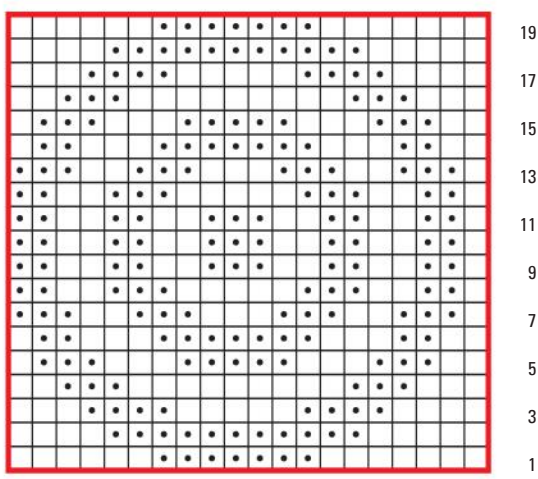
- Use a long-draw woolen technique in order to preserve the airiness of the wool.

### HAT

Using a somewhat stretchy method, CO 100 sts. Place marker (pm) and



TEXTURE



20-st rep

- knit
- purl
- pattern repeat

join in the rnd. Work in k2, p2 rib for 1¾". Knit 3 rnds. Work Rows 1–19 of Texture chart. Knit 9 rnds, or to desired length to crown shaping.  
*Shape crown:* **Dec rnd** [K2tog, k16, ssk, pm] 5 times—90 sts rem. Knit 1 rnd. **Dec rnd** [K2tog, knit to 2 sts before m, ssk] 5 times—10 sts dec'd. Rep dec rnd every other rnd 5 more times—30 sts rem. Rep dec rnd every rnd 2 times—10 sts rem. **Next rnd** [K2tog] 5 times—5 sts rem. Break yarn, leaving a 6" tail. Thread tail onto tapestry needle and draw through rem sts. Pull tight to gather sts and fasten off on WS.

**FINISHING**

Weave in ends. Block to measurements.



**NORTH ROAD HAT**

Kate Larson

Jamieson & Smith 100% Shetland wool

*It was a sunny day in June when Kate Larson first walked along the North Road in Lerwick, Shetland, to visit Jamieson & Smith. Handspun and knitted textiles produced in the Shetland Isles traditionally used both woolen- and worsted-spun yarns. To learn more, visit the textile collection at the Shetland Museum and Archives in Lerwick.*

**MATERIALS**

**Fiber** 100 g Jamieson & Smith 100% Shetland wool combed top (20 g each of five shades).

**Yarn** 2-ply; 162 yd; 1,294 ypp; 13 wpi; sport weight; moorit (mid-brown; MC): 55 yd, fawn (light brown; CC1): 55 yd, white (CC2): 15 yd, black (chocolate; CC3): 12 yd, mid-gray (CC4): 25 yd.

**Needles** U.S. size 2 (2.75 mm): 16" circular (cir) and set of 5 double-pointed (dnp). Adjust needle size if necessary to obtain correct gauge.

**Gauge** 28 sts and 34 rnds = 4" in St st after blocking.

**Notions** Markers (m); tapestry needle.

**Finished Size** 20½" circumference and 7¾" tall, after blocking and slightly stretched.

See [knittingdaily.com/glossary](http://knittingdaily.com/glossary) for terms you don't know.

**SPINNING NOTES**

- When working with natural color wool, you may find striking differences in wool character from one color to another. Spin and wash small samples of each color before jumping into the entire project to be sure that the finished yarn gauge of each color is similar. For this pattern, spin a sportweight 2-ply yarn.
- While a carded preparation and woolen-spun yarn are now commonly used for Shetland and Fair Isle stranded knitting, worsted-spun yarns were also traditionally used.

**KNITTING NOTES**

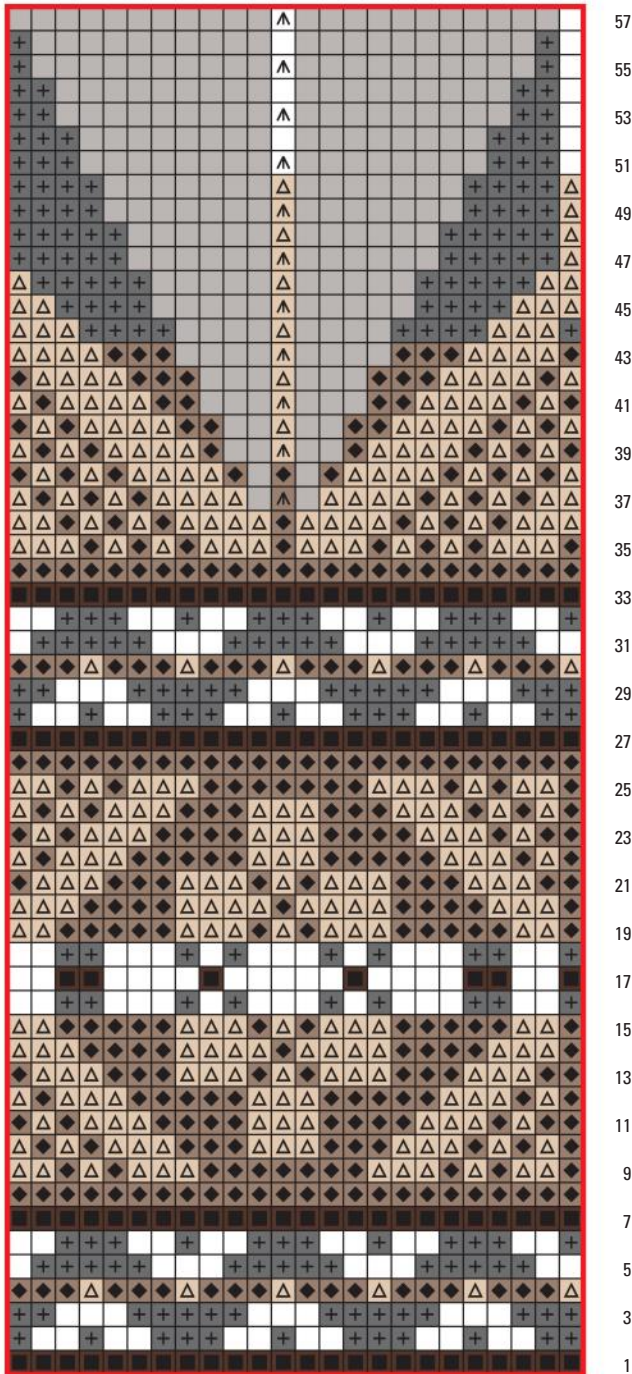
- This hat is worked in the round from the bottom up.

**STITCH GUIDE**

*M1-bl:* With working yarn, make 1 backward loop and place onto right needle—1 st inc'd.  
*S2kp2:* Sl 2 sts as if to k2tog, k1, pass 2 sl sts over—2 sts dec'd.

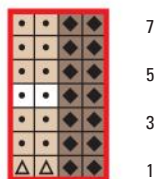


## HAT



24-st to 2-st rep

### RIBBING



4-st rep

## HAT

With MC and cir needle, and using the long-tail method, CO 136 sts. Before joining to work in the rnd, turn CO row so purl ridge is on RS. Place marker (pm) and join in the rnd. Purl 1 rnd. Work Rnds 1–7 of Ribbing chart, changing colors as indicated. **Next rnd** With MC, k13, \*M1-bl (see Stitch Guide), k16; rep from \* 6 more times, M1-bl, k11–144 sts. Work Rnds 1–36 of Hat chart. *Shape crown:* **Note:** Change to dpn when necessary. **Rnd 37** \*Work 11 sts in patt, s2kp2 (see Stitch Guide) in color indicated, work 10 sts in patt; rep from \* to end of rnd—12 sts dec'd. Work Rnds 38–57, cont to dec as indicated on every other rnd—12 sts rem. Break yarns, leaving 8" tails. With CC2 tail threaded on a tapestry needle, draw through rem sts, tighten, and secure end.

## FINISHING

Wash hat, stretch slightly, and either place over a form to block or leave flat to dry. Weave in ends.

- with MC, knit
- with CC1, knit
- with CC1, purl
- with CC2, knit
- with CC2, purl
- with CC3, knit
- with CC4, knit
- with MC, s2kp2 (see Stitch Guide)
- with CC1, s2kp2
- with CC2, s2kp2
- no stitch
- pattern repeat





## A PAIR OF JACOB HATS

Leslie Ann Hauer

*A fresh fleece, with lovely variations in shade and color, is much more inspiring than commercially processed Jacob wool, which is typically homogenized into an uninspiring medium shade of gray. Since Jacob fleeces are small, it's not at all hard to prepare and spin a Jacob fleece, and the size guarantees that it's not a lifetime project.*

### Wedges Hat

#### MATERIALS

**Fiber** 4½ oz of Jacob wool, divided equally between three colors, plus a little more of one color for the edging.

**Yarn** 2-ply; about DK weight.

**Needles** U.S. size 6 (4 mm): 16" circular (cir). Adjust needle size if necessary to obtain the correct gauge.

**Gauge** 19 sts and 40 rows = 4" in garter st.

**Notions** Marker (m); stitch holder; waste yarn for provisional CO; spare needle in same size or smaller than main needle; tapestry needle.

**Finished Size** 20½" circumference and 9¼" tall.

See [knittingdaily.com/glossary](http://knittingdaily.com/glossary) for terms you don't know.

#### NOTE

• This is as much a general idea as a

pattern and may be adjusted for more or fewer stitches, depending on the size of yarn. The body of the hat measures about 4" from the bottom edge to the point where the top of the hat curves around the head. The wedge patterns can be divided into left-leaning and right-leaning, worked all one way or the other, or randomly. Colors can be changed with each wedge or partial wedge.

#### STITCH GUIDE

**Backward yarnover (byo):** Bring working yarn between needles to back, over right needle to front, then between needles to back. Knit the

yarnover with the next st on a subsequent row, so that the yarnover is behind the next st, i.e., does not show from the RS.

#### HAT

With waste yarn and using the crochet chain provisional method (be sure to leave space for additional sts as only 38 sts are knitted in the first row), CO 40 sts. *First large wedge, right-leaning half:* Change to working yarn.

**Short-row 1 (RS)** K20, place marker (pm), k18, turn.

**Short-row 2 (WS)** Byo (see Stitch Guide), knit to end.

### Sorting and Spinning Jacob

Leslie Ann Hauer offers the following advice for preparing and spinning Jacob fleece:

Sort the fleece into three piles: light, medium, and dark. The medium shade comes from the blend of white and dark colors, and it will be a mix of dark and light fibers. Wash each color separately in a large tub of very hot water and dish soap. Make sure the entire fleece is wet and then walk away—no squeezing, wringing, or fussing. Return when the water is cool but not cold. Lift the fleece and let it drain, squeezing gently if at all. Place it in a tub of cool water to rinse. Repeat the rinse several times until the water is no longer soapy and is mostly clear. Set the fleece aside to dry, again without fussing or fiddling. The clean, dry fleece should retain most of its lock structure.

Any preparation method works, so pick, card, or comb—whatever works for you. I prefer a minimal processing method that feels faster: take several locks, open up the tips and butt ends with a flicker or dog brush, and spin from the tip. The resulting yarn can be somewhat rustic in appearance, occasionally lumpy and uneven. I usually use handspun yarn for knitting, so I ply most yarn for strength and stability. The rustic yarn's lumps and bumps guarantee inconsistency, so measuring the yarn with the McMorran yarn balance wasn't completely helpful, as results ranged from 450 to 600 yards per pound.

Wash the yarn and hang it to dry with minimal weight. The crimp in a Jacob fleece produces a springy, bouncy yarn that would be lost if dried or blocked with excessive tension.



**Short-row 3** K20, sl m, knit to 2 sts before previous turning point, turn.

**Short-row 4** Byo, knit to end.

Rep last 2 short-rows 8 more times—last turn is at m. **Next row** (RS) K20, sl m, k18 (working each yo tog with foll st), pick up a new st in provisional CO chain and work yo at turn with that st, pick up and knit an additional st in chain—40 sts; 20 sts from beg to m, 20 sts from m to top of hat. **Next row** (WS) Using the backward-loop method, CO 1 st, pm, k20, sl m, k20—41 sts. *First large wedge, left-leaning half:*

**Short-row 1** (RS) K20, sl m, turn.

**Short-row 2** (WS) Byo, sl m, knit to end.

**Short-row 3** K20, sl m, knit yo tog with next st, k1, turn.

**Short-row 4** Byo, knit to end.

**Short-row 5** K20, sl m, knit to yo, knit yo tog with next st, k1, turn.

**Short-row 6** Byo, knit to end.

Rep last 2 short-rows 7 more times—18 sts worked after m. **Next row** (RS) K20, sl m, k18, knit yo tog with next st, k1, sl m, turn. **Next row** (WS) CO 1 st, sl m, purl to end—42 sts; 20 sts before first m, 20 sts between m, 2 sts after 2nd m. **Note:** I like the variation in texture and separation provided by the St st rows between garter rows; if your preference is to maintain the garter st texture, then knit rather than purl the WS row. One large wedge measures about 4½". *Small wedge, right-leaning half:* Change color.

**Short-row 1** (RS) K20, sl m, k8, turn.

**Short-row 2** (WS) Byo, knit to end.

**Short-row 3** K20, sl m, knit to 2 sts before previous turning point, turn.

**Short-row 4** Byo, knit to end.

Rep last 2 short-rows 3 more times—last turn is at m. **Next row** (RS) Knit to 2nd m (working each yo tog with foll st), sl m, turn. **Next row** (WS) CO 1 st, sl m, knit to end—1 st inc'd after 2nd m. *Small wedge, left-leaning half:*

**Short-row 1** (RS) K20, sl m, turn.

**Short-row 2** (WS) Byo, sl m, knit to end.

**Short-row 3** K20, sl m, knit yo tog with next st, k1, turn.

**Short-row 4** Byo, knit to end.

**Short-row 5** K20, sl m, knit to yo, knit yo tog with next st, k1, turn.

**Short-row 6** Byo, knit to end.

Rep last 2 short-rows 2 more times—8 sts worked after m. **Next row** (RS) Knit to 2nd m (working yo tog with foll st), sl m, turn. **Next row** (WS) CO 1 st, sl m, purl to end—1 st inc'd after 2nd m. One small wedge measures about 2½". *Second large wedge, right-leaning half:* Change color.

**Short-row 1** (RS) K20, sl m, k18, turn.

**Short-row 2** (WS) Byo, knit to end.

**Short-row 3** K20, sl m, knit to 2 sts before previous turning point, turn.

**Short-row 4** Byo, knit to end.

Rep last 2 short-rows 8 more times—last turn is at m. **Next row** (RS) Knit to 2nd m (working each yo tog with foll st), sl m, turn. **Next row** (WS) CO 1 st, sl m, knit to end—1 st inc'd after 2nd m. *Second large wedge, left-leaning half:*

**Short-row 1** (RS) K20, sl m, turn.

**Short-row 2** (WS) Byo, sl m, knit to end.

**Short-row 3** K20, sl m, knit yo tog with next st, k1, turn.

**Short-row 4** Byo, knit to end.

**Short-row 5** K20, sl m, knit to yo, knit yo tog with next st, k1, turn.

**Short-row 6** Byo, knit to end.

Rep last 2 short-rows 7 more times—18 sts worked after m. **Next row** (RS) Knit to 2nd m (working yo tog with foll st), sl m, turn. **Next row** (WS) CO 1 st, sl m, purl to end—1 st inc'd after 2nd m. *Next wedges:* Work small wedge, 2nd large wedge, then small wedge, omitting last WS row on final wedge—3 large wedges and 3 small wedges total; 11 sts after 2nd m. Finish last RS row by working sts after 2nd m as foll: [K2tog] 5 times, k1—46 sts rem; 20 sts before first m, 20 sts between m, 6 sts after 2nd m. Place 6 sts after 2nd m on holder. Remove waste yarn from provisional CO and place sts onto spare needle.

With RS tog, join last wedge to first wedge using three-needle BO. Do not break yarn or fasten off last st, which becomes first edging st.

*Edging:* Turn work so that RS is facing. Working across bottom edge of hat, pick up and knit 1 st for each garter ridge and 1 st for each stockinette gap, making sure to end with an even number of sts. Work in k1, p1 rib for ¾". BO all sts in patt.

## FINISHING

Thread a tapestry needle with about 4" of yarn. Thread yarn through held sts and pull tight to close top. Weave in ends. Wash gently and lay flat to dry, smoothing hat to shape.

## Columns Hat

### MATERIALS

**Fiber** 3½ oz of Jacob wool.

**Yarn** 2-ply; about fingering weight.

**Needles** U.S. size 6 (4 mm): set of doublepointed (dnp). Adjust needle size if necessary to obtain the correct gauge.

**Gauge** 22 sts and 33 rnds = 4" in St st.

**Notions** Markers (m); tapestry needle.

**Finished size** 22½" circumference and 7½" tall.

See [knittingdaily.com/glossary](http://knittingdaily.com/glossary) for terms you don't know.

### NOTES

- This hat is very similar to the Pi Hat (*Spin Off* Spring 2013) with two changes: The last two increase rounds are worked every third round rather than every other round (i.e., one increase round, two even rounds). Also, I-cord is worked between each quadrant and along the bottom of the hat. Work additional stripes of different colors if yarn is available. The I-cord could also be worked in different colors.
- Before beginning the hat, work several inches of I-cord to determine how many yards are used per inch.

For this hat, 5" of I-cord used about 80" of yarn, so each I-cord column required about 5 yards of yarn. Five yards was more than enough to work the I-cord columns but about a yard and a half short of being enough to work across the edging between each I-cord. The edging can be worked with yarn remaining from each of the four columns, or one I-cord column can be continued across the other three columns, joining in additional yarn if needed.

- I-cord is worked each round with a separate yarn from the hat body. One strand of yarn is used for two I-cords: half of the yarn used for one, and the other half for the other. Begin in the middle of the strand. On each round, pick up the I-cord yarn, knit the three I-cord stitches, drop the I-cord yarn, and proceed around with the main color. When the knitting returns to the I-cord location, pick up the dropped I-cord yarn, knit the three I-cord stitches, drop the I-cord yarn, and carry on. Be sure to twist the main color and I-cord color every second or third round to attach the I-cord to the fabric and avoid holes.

## HAT

With MC, CO 2 sts. Work 1 rnd of I-cord. **Next rnd** k1, M1, k1—3 sts. Work 3-st I-cord until piece measures about 3" from CO, or until there is enough length for a knot (topknot). **Inc rnd** [k1f&b] 3 times—6 sts. Distribute sts onto 3 or 4 dpn. Place marker (pm) for beg of rnd. Work 1 rnd even. **Inc rnd** [k1f&b] 6 times—12 sts. Cut two 10-yd (or longer; see Notes) lengths of CC2 for I-cord columns. **Next rnd** incorporate CC2 as foll: [k2 with MC, k1 using center of first CC2 length] 2 times, [k2 with MC, k1 using center of 2nd CC2 length] 2 times—half of each CC2 length is used for each I-cord column. (Wind each end of each CC2 into butterflies or onto bobbins to avoid a hopeless tangle.) **Next rnd** \*with MC, M1R, k2, M1L, with

CC2, k1f&b; rep from \* 3 more times—24 sts. Work 1 rnd even, twisting MC and CC2 to secure I-cord to fabric (see Notes). **Next rnd** \*with MC, M1R, k4, M1L, pm, with CC2, k1f&b, k1; rep from \* 3 more times—36 sts. **Next rnd** Work even, twisting MC and CC2 to avoid holes and to attach CC2 I-cord to fabric. **Inc rnd** \*with MC, M1R, knit to m, M1L, sl m, with CC2, k3; rep from \* 3 more times—8 sts inc'd. Rep inc rnd every other rnd 8 more times, then every 3rd rnd 2 times—124 sts; 28 sts for each MC section, 3 sts for each I-cord. Change color(s) if desired. Work even until piece measures 7" from beg of CC2 I-cord, or desired length. **Dec rnd** keeping colors as established, \*k6, k2tog, [k5, k2tog] 2 times, k9; rep from \* 3 more times—112 sts rem. Choose either I-cord edging or ribbed edging. *I-cord edging:* With CC2 from last I-cord of rnd, work 2 rnds of unattached I-cord to allow enough slack to turn I-cord so that it can be joined to edge. Work I-cord BO as foll: \*\*with I-cord yarn, \*k2, k2tog tbl (last I-cord st and next hat st), transfer 3 sts from right needle to left needle; rep from \* to next I-cord, sl 3 I-cord edging sts to spare dpn and hold behind next I-cord sts, with yarn from next I-cord, [k2tog (1 st from next I-cord and 1 st from edging I-cord)] 3 times, transfer 3 sts from right needle to left needle, work 1 rnd of unattached I-cord; rep from \*\* 2 more times, \*k2, k2tog tbl (last I-cord st and next hat st), transfer 3 sts from right needle to left needle; rep from \* to end of rnd—3 sts rem. Sew 3 sts to WS of beg I-cord. *Ribbed edging:* With CC2, work in k1, p1 rib, working each I-cord as k3tog and incorporating this st as a knit st in the ribbed border (this may require a dec [k2tog] in section preceding the I-cord). Work in rib to desired length. BO all sts in patt.

## FINISHING

Weave in ends. Wash and lay flat to

dry, smoothing hat to shape. Pin in place if necessary to make edging lie flat while drying. Tie top I-cord into a knot.



## SWATCH MITTS

Kate Larson

*Kate Larson loves to sample. She says, "I carry swatches with me so I can see how the colors interact in different types of lighting. I keep swatches in my bag for a week to see what the durability and wear pattern will be . . . Some ideas work out immediately, and some take longer to emerge. Swatching allows for an evolution of ideas as I build a knitted fabric."*

## MATERIALS

**Fiber** 1 oz Shetland wool, divided among 5 natural colors.  
**Yarn** 2-ply; 120 yd total; 1,800 ypp; 16 wpi; fingering weight.  
**Needles** Edging—U.S. size 1 (2.25 mm). Body—U.S. size 2 (2.75 mm). Adjust needle size if necessary to obtain the correct gauge.  
**Gauge** 36 sts and 36 rnds = 4" in charted patt on larger needles.  
**Notions** Markers (m); tapestry needle.  
**Finished size** 6¾" circumference and 5½" tall.

See [knittingdaily.com/glossary](http://knittingdaily.com/glossary) for terms you don't know.



**NOTE**

• This pattern is intended to accommodate a range of gauges.

**RIGHT MITT**

With Color 1 and smaller needles, CO 60 sts. Distribute sts evenly onto needles. Join to work in the rnd.

**Rnd 1** Purl.

**Rnd 2** Purl.

**Rnd 3** Knit.

Change to larger needles. Work Rows 1–24 of Swatch chart once.

*Thumb opening:* Cont in patt as foll:

**Rnd 1** (Row 1 of chart) Work 1 st, BO 3 sts with Color 1, work to end in patt.

**Rnd 2** Work 1 st, place marker (pm); using the long-tail method and both working yarns, CO 11 sts for steek foll Row 1 of Steek chart, pm, work to end of rnd, omitting 3 BO sts from Swatch chart.

**Rnds 3–10** Work 1 st, sl m, work Steek chart to m, sl m, work to end of rnd in patt.

**Rnd 11** Work 1 st, remove m, BO 10 steek sts in 2-color steek patt, work to end in patt, removing 2nd m—1 steek st rem.

**Next rnd** Work 1 st, CO 3 sts using working yarns, k2tog with Color 3, work to end of rnd in patt—60 sts.

Cont in patt through Row 24 of chart, then work Row 1 of chart once more.

*Top edge:*

**Rnd 1** Change to smaller needles and knit with Color 1.

**Rnd 2** Purl.

**Rnd 3** Purl.

BO all sts pwise.

**LEFT MITT**

Work as for right mitt to thumb opening.

*Thumb opening:* Cont in patt as foll:

**Rnd 1** Work 27 sts in patt, BO 3 sts with Color 1, work to end of rnd in patt.

**Rnd 2** Work in patt to BO sts, pm; using the long-tail method and both working yarns, CO 11 sts for steek foll Row 1 of Steek chart, pm, work to end of rnd, omitting 3 BO sts from Swatch chart.

**Rnds 3–10** Work in patt to m, sl m, work Steek chart to m, sl m, work to end of rnd in patt.

**Rnd 11** Work in patt to m, remove m, BO 10 steek sts in 2-color steek patt, work to end of rnd in patt, removing 2nd m—1 steek st rem.

**Next rnd** Work in patt to BO sts, CO 3 sts using working yarns, k2tog with Color 3, work to end of rnd in patt—60 sts. Finish left mitt as for right.

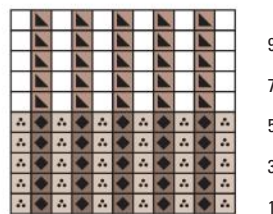
**FINISHING**

Cut steeks. Weave in loose ends, block, and sew steek edges in place.

*On finishing, Kate says, "I like to pin my wet swatches to a piece of foam and then set the foam upright against something while the knitting dries. This will make any color bleeding or drifting more obvious—which is good to know before you spin and knit an entire sweater."*

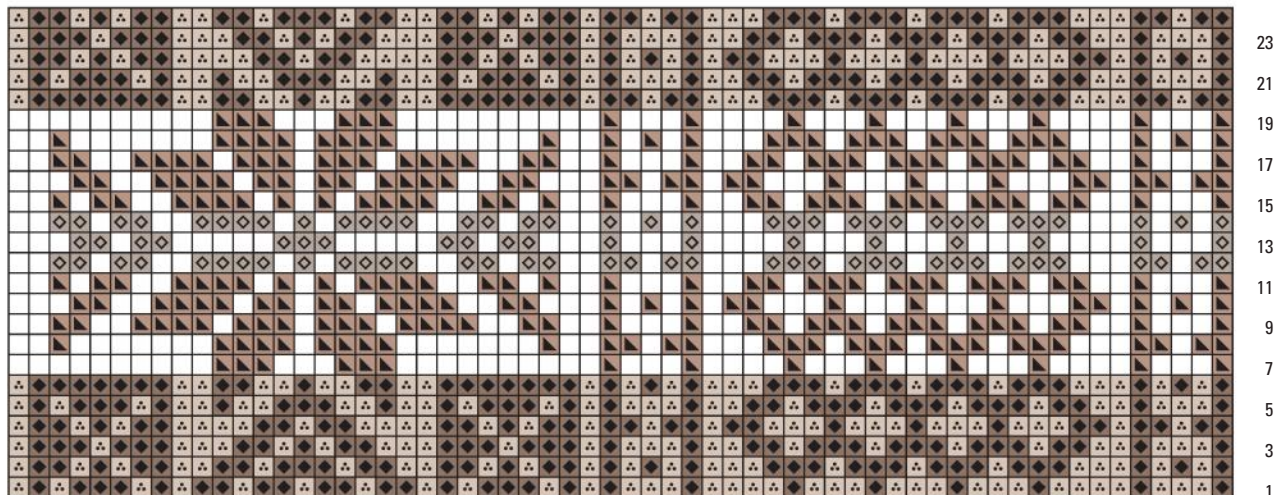


**STEEK**



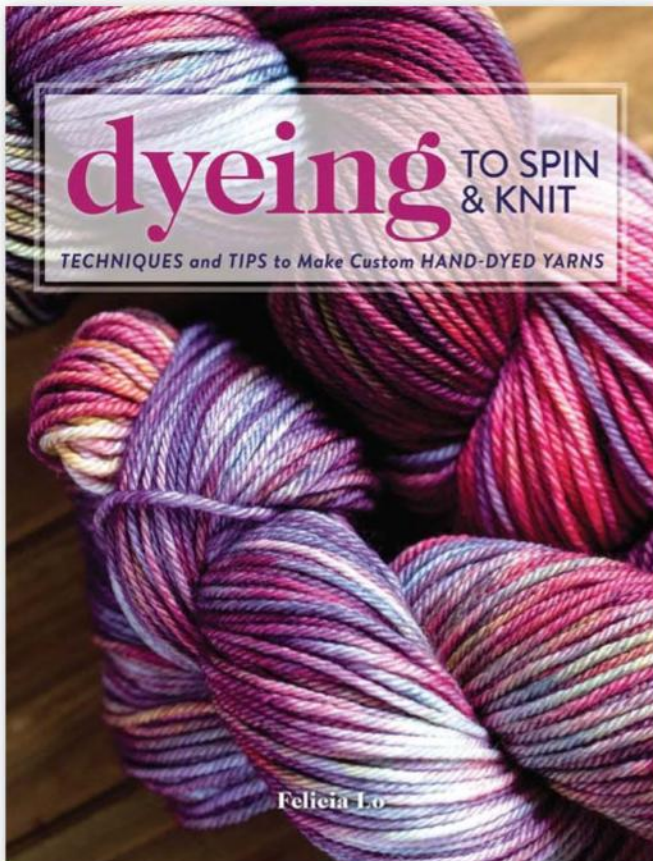
11 sts

**SWATCH**



60 sts





## Unleash your passion for hand-crafted color!

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# HANDPAINTS



Wild and colorful or gently transitioning, handpainted fibers are irresistible. Spin a favorite braid or two for one of these accessories, then watch the color variations as you knit them up.

## **Soldier Canyon Scarf**

*Design by Dani Berg; spun & knitted by Catrina Reading*  
Originally published in  
*Knitscene* Fall 2014

---

Lisa Souza 100% superfine  
Merino wool

---

A chevron pattern punctuated  
by purl ridges transforms  
colorful yarn into eye-catching  
arrows.

**See Page 58**





## Leaf Cap

Melissa LaBarre

Pigeonroof Studios Bluefaced Leicester

A few little details—a jaunty pompom, a sweet embossed leaf—transform this simple garter-stitch hat from dull to darling.

**See Page 58**







### **Lacy Leaves Capelet**

*Heather Zoppetti*

---

CJ Kopec Creations 66% Merino/  
34% Tencel

---

Worked in one piece from the bottom  
up, this capelet features leaves that  
grow smaller as they climb up and  
encircle the wearer's shoulders.

**See Page 59**





### **Secret Garden Mitts**

*Heather Zoppetti*

---

Dragon Fibers 60% Merino/  
40% bamboo viscose

---

These fingerless mitts are perfect to show off small amounts of your handspun yarn. The cuffs are fancy with ribbing and lace, while the hands let the characteristics of the yarn shine.

**See Page 61**





**Eye of Partridge Cowl**

*Design by Jennifer Raymond;  
spun by Anne Merrow*

Sweet Georgia Yarns 85%  
Polwarth/15% silk

A simple slipped-stitch pattern creates  
a watercolor look and waffle-like  
texture in this sweet, soft cowl.

**See Page 62**







## Golden Hour Bag

Kate Larson

Originally published in *Spin Off*  
Spring 2012

---

Polwarth dyed locks and Abstract  
Fibers 50% silk/50% Merino

---

Inspired by the rich colors of  
handdyed locks, this beautiful bag  
is infused with memories of Venice  
and of John Singer Sargent's  
Venetian watercolors.

**See Page 62**







## SOLDIER CANYON SCARF

Design by Dani Berg  
Spun & knitted by Catrina Reading



Lisa Souza 100% superfine Merino wool

Simple chevrons make the most of a variegated yarn. Choose a semisolid color for a tonal effect, or break out that wildly colored yarn you've been saving.

**Fiber** 8 oz Lisa Souza

100% superfine Merino wool in mardi gras.

**Yarn** 2-ply; 481 yd; 963 ypp; 11 wpi; worsted weight.

**Needles** U.S. size 8 (5 mm). Adjust needle size if necessary to obtain the correct gauge. While needle size is not critical for this project, it may affect the amount of yarn used.

**Gauge** 19½ sts and 24 rows = 4" over Chevron Pattern B.

**Notions** Tapestry needle.

**Finished Size** 8" wide and 85" long, blocked.

See [knittingdaily.com/glossary](http://knittingdaily.com/glossary) for terms you don't know.

### NOTES:

- The chevron patterns for the sample scarf are worked using only one sixteen-stitch pattern repeat. If you want a wider scarf, cast on sixteen

stitches for each additional 3½" in width desired. Make sure to purchase additional fiber as needed.

### STITCH GUIDE

*S2kp2*: Sl2sts as if to k2tog, k1, pass 2slsts over—2sts dec'd.

*Chevron Pattern A*: (multiple of 16 sts + 7)

**Row 1** (RS) K3, ssk, \*k6, yo, k1, yo, k6, s2kp2 (see Stitches); rep from \* to last 18 sts, k6, yo, k1, yo, k6, k2tog, k3.

**Row 2** (WS) Knit.

Rep Rows 1 and 2 for patt.

*Chevron Pattern B*: (multiple of 16 sts + 7)

**Row 1** (RS) K3, ssk, \*k6, yo, k1, yo, k6, s2kp2; rep from \* to last 18 sts, k6, yo, k1, yo, k6, k2tog, k3.

**Row 2** (WS) K3, purl to last 3 sts, k3. Rep Rows 1 and 2 for patt.

### SCARF

CO 39 sts. Work Chevron Patt A (see Stitch Guide) for 10 rows. Work Chevron Patt B (see Stitch Guide) for 10 rows. \*Work Chevron Patt A for 2 rows. Work Chevron Patt B for 10 rows. Work Chevron Patt A for 2 rows. Work Chevron Patt B for 2 rows. Work Chevron Patt A for 2 rows. Work Chevron Patt B for 10 rows. [Work Chevron Patt A for 2 rows, work Chevron Patt B for 2 rows] 2 times. Work Chevron Patt A for 2 rows. Work Chevron Patt B for 10 rows. Work Chevron Patt A for 2 rows. Work Chevron Patt B for 2 rows. Work Chevron Patt A for 2 rows. Work Chevron Patt B for 10 rows. Rep from \* 5 more times. Work Chevron Patt A for 2 rows. Work Chevron Patt B for 10 rows. Work Chevron Patt A for 10 rows. BO all sts.

### FINISHING

Weave in ends. Block.



## LEAF CAP

Melissa LaBarre



Pigeonroof Studios Bluefaced Leicester

Easy to resize for larger or smaller heads, this cap can also be transformed into a slouchy hat with a little extra yarn.

### MATERIALS

**Fiber** 5 oz Pigeonroof Studios Bluefaced Leicester combed top in bosco.

**Yarn** 2-ply; 135 yd; 525 ypp; 9 wpi; worsted weight.

**Needles** U.S. size 7 (4.5 mm): 16" circular (cir) and U.S. size 8 (5 mm): double-pointed (dnp). Adjust needle size if necessary to obtain correct gauge.

**Gauge** 16 sts and 28 rows = 4" in garter st on larger needles.

**Notions** Markers (m); tapestry needle.

**Finished Size** 22" circumference and 8½" tall.

See [knittingdaily.com/glossary](http://knittingdaily.com/glossary) for terms you don't know.

### STITCH GUIDE

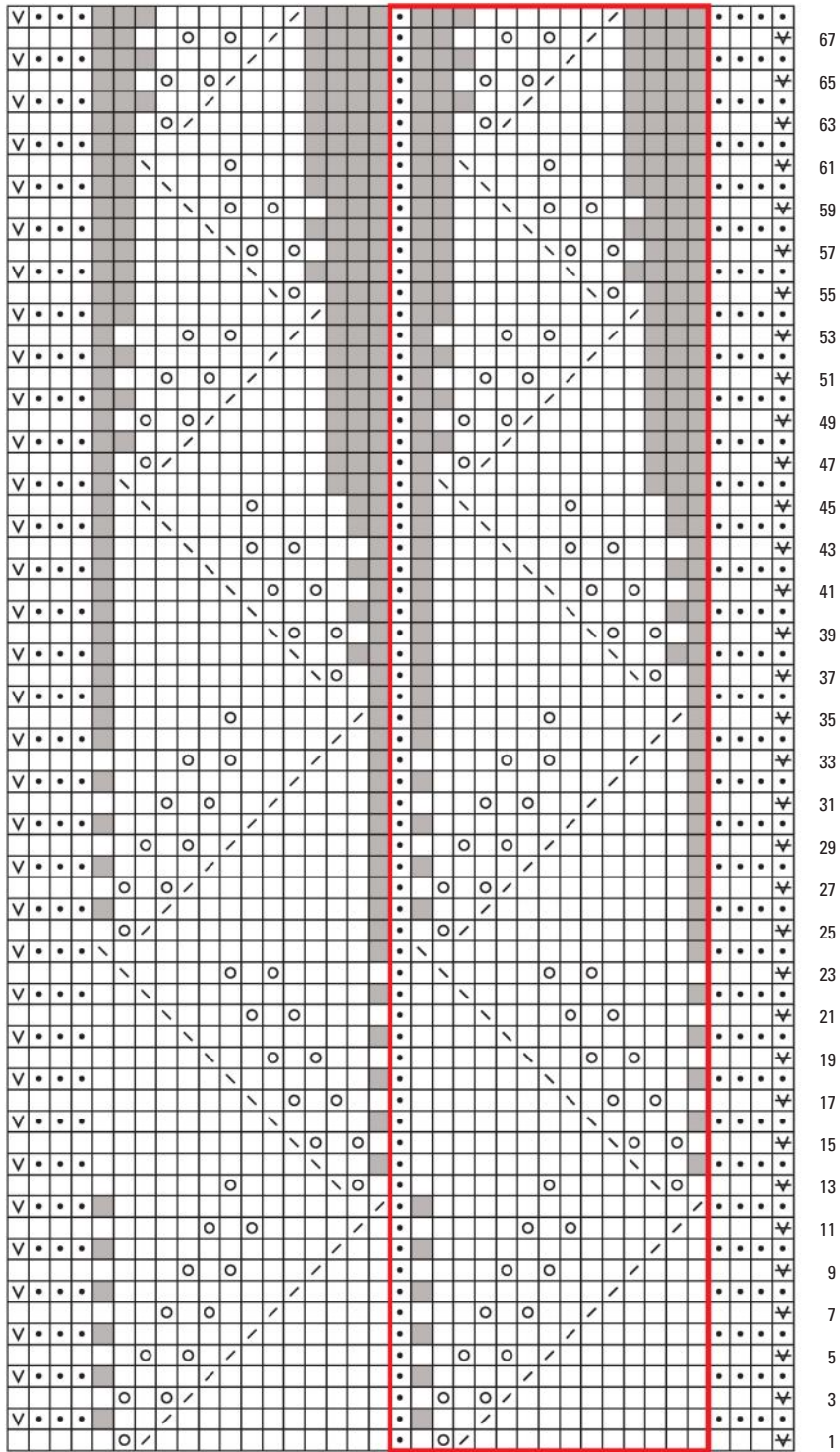
*S2kp2*: Sl 2 sts as if to k2tog, k1, pass 2 sl sts over—2 sts dec'd.







LACE



15-st to 8-st rep

- |                          |                          |                          |                      |                          |                      |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | k on RS; p on WS         | <input type="checkbox"/> | ssk on RS; ssp on WS | <input type="checkbox"/> | sl 1 pwise wyf on WS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | p on RS; k on WS         | <input type="checkbox"/> | yo                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | no stitch            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | k2tog on RS; p2tog on WS | <input type="checkbox"/> | sl 1 pwise wyf on RS | <input type="checkbox"/> | pattern repeat       |



### CAPELET

CO 277 sts. Do not join. **Next row** (WS) Sl 1 pwise wyf, knit to end. Rep last row 2 more times. Work Rows 1–68 of Lace chart, decreasing as indicated—151 sts rem when chart is complete. After last row, do not turn. With WS facing and using the backward-loop method, CO 68 sts—219 sts. **Next row** (RS) Sl 1 pwise wyf, knit to end, do not turn. With RS facing and using the backward-loop method, CO 68 sts—287 sts. **Next row** (WS) Sl 1 pwise wyf, knit to end. Rep last row 2 more times. BO all sts.

### FINISHING

Block to measurements. Weave in ends.



## SECRET GARDEN MITTS

Heather Zoppetti

Dragon Fibers 60% Merino/40% bamboo viscose

*With a scant 2 ounces of handpainted top, you can spin and knit these dainty yet practical mitts.*

### MATERIALS

**Fiber** 4 oz Dragon Fibers 60% Merino/40% bamboo viscose combed top in secret garden.  
**Yarn** 2-ply; 125 yd; 1,363 ypp; 17 wpi; sportweight.  
**Needles** U.S. size 5 (3.75 mm): set of double-pointed (dpn). Adjust needle

size if necessary to obtain the correct gauge.

**Gauge** 28 sts and 38 rnds = 4" in St st.

**Notions** Markers (m); cable needle (cn); waste yarn; tapestry needle.

**Finished Size** 6½" long and 6¾" hand circumference, unstretched.

See [knittingdaily.com/glossary](http://knittingdaily.com/glossary) for terms you don't know.

### NOTES

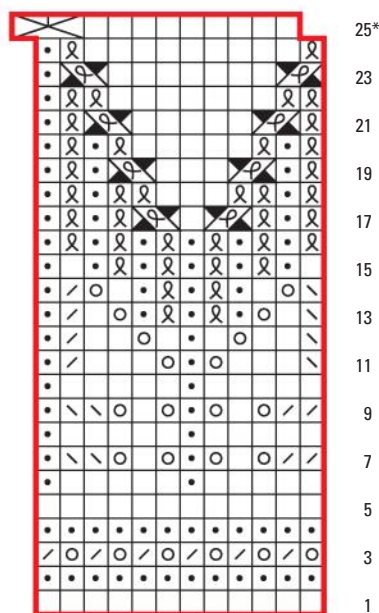
- These fingerless mitts are worked in

the round from the cuff up, with thumb gussets. Both mitts are worked alike.

### FINGERLESS MITTS

**Cuff:** CO 48 sts. Place marker (pm) and join in the rnd. Work Rnds 1–25 of Cuff chart, working Rnd 25 as foll: Remove m, sl 1 pwise wyb, replace m, work as charted to end. Remove m, sl 1 st back to left needle, replace m, sl st back to right needle (beg-of-rnd m is back in original position). Knit 2 rnds. **Gusset:** Inc rnd M1L, pm for

CUFF



12-st rep

- knit
  - purl
  - k2tog
  - ssk
  - yo
  - k1tbl
  - pattern repeat
  - sl 1, [k2tog, yo, k2tog] into same 2 sts, dropping both sts from left needle after 2nd k2tog, pass sl st over all 3 sts—no change in st count
  - sl 1 st onto cn, hold in back, k1tbl, p1 from cn
  - sl 1 st onto cn, hold in front, p1, k1tbl from cn
- \* see instructions for details on Rnd 25



thumb, knit to last st, pm for thumb, M1R, k1—50 sts. **Next rnd** Knit. **Inc rnd** Knit to m, M1L, sl m, knit to m, sl m, M1R, knit to end—2 sts inc'd. **Next rnd** Knit. Rep last 2 rnds 9 more times—70 sts. **Next rnd** Knit to thumb m, then place last 23 sts between thumb m onto waste yarn, removing all m, knit to end, using the backward-loop method, CO 1 st—48 sts. **Next rnd** Replace m for beg of rnd, knit to end. *Hand:* Knit 8 rnds. Purl 1 rnd. Knit 1 rnd. Purl 1 rnd. **Next rnd** \*Yo, k2tog; rep from \* to end. Purl 1 rnd. Knit 1 rnd. Purl 1 rnd. BO all sts. *Thumb:* Return 23 thumb sts to needles and rejoin yarn. Pick up and knit 1 st in st CO over thumb gap—24 sts. Pm and join in the rnd. **Next rnd** K2tog, knit to last 2 sts, ssk—22 sts rem. Knit 3 rnds. Purl 1 rnd. Knit 1 rnd. Purl 1 rnd. BO all sts.

## FINISHING

Weave in ends. Block.



## EYE OF PARTRIDGE COWL

Design by Jennifer Raymond  
Spun by Anne Merrow

SweetGeorgia Yarns 85% Polwarth/15% silk

*Worked over an even number of stitches, the eye of partridge stitch pattern makes the size of this cowl easy*

*to adjust. Slipped stitches make for a denser, warmer fabric that is still fluid and elastic.*

## MATERIALS

**Fiber** 4 oz SweetGeorgia Yarns 85% Polwarth/15% silk combed top in tapestry.

**Yarn** 2-ply; 180 yd; 750 ypp; 12 wpi; DK weight.

**Needles** U.S. size 6 (4 mm): 16"–20" circular (cir) or set of double-pointed (dnp). Adjust needle size if necessary to obtain the correct gauge. While needle size is not critical for this project, it may affect the amount of yarn used.

**Gauge** 21 sts and 36 rnds = 4" in Eye of Partridge patt (see Notes).

**Notions** Marker (m); tapestry needle.

**Finished Size** 22¾" circumference and 7½" tall.

See [knittingdaily.com/glossary](http://knittingdaily.com/glossary) for terms you don't know.

## NOTES

- Swatch will change when wet. Make sure to block.

## STITCH GUIDE

*Eye of Partridge:* (even number of sts)

**Rnd 1** \*Sl 1 pwise with yarn in back (wyb), k1; rep from \* to end.

**Rnds 2 and 4** Knit.

**Rnd 3** \*K1, sl 1 pwise wyb; rep from \* to end.

Rep Rnds 1–4 for patt.

## COWL

*Border:* CO 121 sts. Knit first and last st tog, being careful not to twist CO edge—120 sts rem. Place marker (pm) and join in the rnd. [Knit 1 rnd, purl 1 rnd] 4 times, knit 1 rnd. *Body:* Work Eye of Partridge patt (see Stitch Guide) until piece measures 6½" from CO, ending with Rnd 1 or 3 of patt. *Border:* [Knit 1 rnd, purl 1 rnd] 4 times. Loosely BO all sts.

## FINISHING

Weave in ends. Block lightly, allowing sl st patt to show.



## GOLDEN HOUR BAG

Kate Larson

*Inspired by a beautiful bag of dyed fleece, Kate Larson was suddenly immersed in a vivid memory of Venice: warm olive bread in hand, watching the golden hour (the first or last hour of sunlight) slip by, the Grand Canal filling with light. She charted the stitch pattern from the brickwork facade of Venice's Palazzo Ducale.*

## MATERIALS

**Fiber** 6 oz Rovings dyed Polwarth locks in mojave, sorted into 3 colors and flick-carded, and 4 oz Abstract Fiber 50% silk/50% Merino painted combed top in gold.

**Yarn** 3-ply; 360 yds (Polwarth: about 160 yd in each of 3 colors; silk/Merino: 300 yd); 1,300 ypp Polwarth, 1,200 ypp silk/Merino; 12–14 wpi; sportweight.

**Needles** U.S. size 4 (3.75 mm): 16" and 24" circular (cir). Adjust needle size if necessary to obtain the correct gauge. While needle size is not critical for this project, it may affect the amount of yarn used.

**Gauge** 26½ sts and 32 rows = 4" in stranded pattern after blocking.

**Notions** Markers (m); tapestry needle; lining material 14" x 30" or to fit bag, plus seam allowances; Grayson E handles (available through Muench Yarns, [www.muenchyarns.com](http://www.muenchyarns.com)).



**Finished Size** 12" x 12"; base is 3" wide.

See [knittingdaily.com/glossary](http://knittingdaily.com/glossary) for terms you don't know.

**NOTES:**

- Kate began by sorting the hand-painted Polwarth fleece into three colorways: Color A (red and gold), Color B (lavender and gray), and Color C (plum and navy).
- This bag is knitted in St st from the top down, beginning with a lining flap that is folded inside the bag and hemmed in place for a more finished look. The bag bottom is worked in the round and seamed at the center with Kitchener stitch.

**BAG**

*Lining Flap and Turning Ridge:*

CO 160 sts with 24" cir and Color A. Pm at beg of rnd and join for working in the round, being careful not to twist cast-on row. Work Rnds 1–10 of Golden Hour chart, changing colors as indicated. The large pattern is a multiple of 16 sts. **Next rnd** Purl 1 rnd in Color A to create turning ridge.

*Body:* Work Rnds 1–31 of Golden Hour chart 3 times (93 rnds worked after turning ridge). Work Rnds 1–10 once more. Purl 1 rnd in Color A (104 rnds worked after turning ridge).

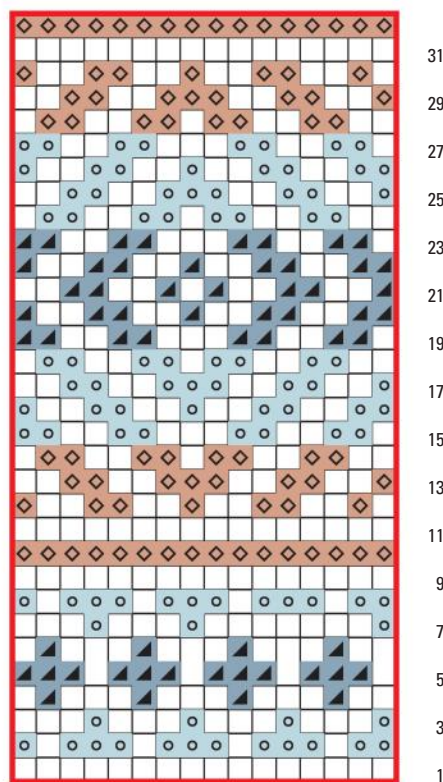
*Bag Bottom:* Join Color C and knit one rnd, placing markers (use different color/style markers than for beg of rnd) as foll: K11, pm, k59, pm, k21, pm, k59, pm, knit rem 10 sts to end of rnd. **Note:** Decreases are worked at 4 new markers, not at beg of round marker. **Dec rnd** \*K to 3 sts before next marker, ssk, k1, sl m, k2tog. Rep from \* 3 more times. Knit to end (152 sts). Rep dec rnd 8 more times, switching to 16" cir when necessary (88 sts rem). Divide sts onto 2 needles (44 sts each) and graft center seam using Kitchener stitch, removing markers.

**FINISHING**

Block bag, stretching it slightly to create a more even fabric. Line bag if desired and attach handles. Lining flap is folded inside the bag and hemmed in place.

-  MC—Gold silk/Merino
-  Color A—Polwarth red and gold
-  Color B—Polwarth lavender and gray
-  Color C—Polwarth plum and navy
-  pattern repeat

**GOLDEN HOUR**



16 st repeat



# GRADIENTS

With long, gentle runs of color, gradient colorways are a handspinner's dream. Whether you match plies, use singles off the bobbin, or chain-ply, enjoy the progression of each color through your fingers!

## Cenote Shawl

*Anne Podlesak*

WoolyWonka Fibers 80% Merino/20% silk

Transitions in color and pattern make this shawl a joy to spin and knit. Beginning at the narrow point, it grows from plain moss stitch to an elegant lace pattern.

**See Page 66**







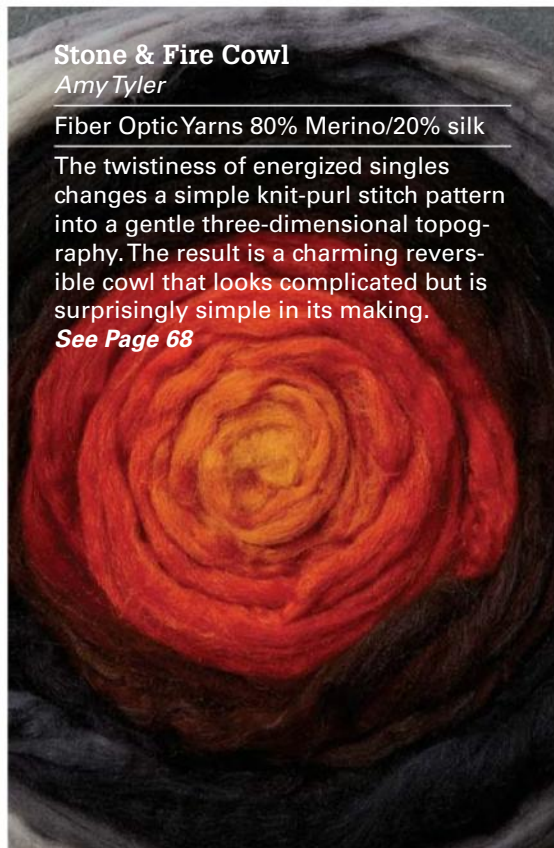
## Stone & Fire Cowl

Amy Tyler

Fiber Optic Yarns 80% Merino/20% silk

The twistiness of energized singles changes a simple knit-purl stitch pattern into a gentle three-dimensional topography. The result is a charming reversible cowl that looks complicated but is surprisingly simple in its making.

**See Page 68**







## CENOTE SHAWL

Anne Podlesak

Woolly Wonka Fibers 80% Merino/20% silk

*This asymmetrical triangular shawl is knitted from one short end to the longer end for a beautiful drape and swing. It features three patterns: moss stitch, a small lace motif, and a large leaf motif.*

### MATERIALS

**Fiber** 8 oz Woolly Wonka Fibers 80% Merino/20% silk combed top in ruby mountains gradient.

**Yarn** 2-ply; 740 yd; 1841 ypp; 24 wpi; fingering weight.

**Needles** U.S. size 6 (4 mm): 36" or longer circular (cir). Adjust needle size if necessary to obtain the correct gauge. While needle size is not critical for this project, it may affect the amount of yarn used.

**Gauge** 22 sts and 34 rows = 4" in moss st.

**Notions** Markers (m); tapestry needle.

**Finished Size** 66" wide x 23" tall.

See [knittingdaily.com/glossary](http://knittingdaily.com/glossary) for terms you don't know.

### SPINNING NOTES

- This shawl is knitted in gradient handspun yarn, using two 4 oz braids of 80/20 merino/silk. Each 4 oz braid was spun individually, end









to end, maintaining long runs of color. The two sets of singles were plied together for a fingering-weight 2-ply yarn. The singles have a wpi of about 41, and the plied yarn measured about 24 wpi, with a total of 817 yards in 7.1 oz (or about 1841 ypp). The singles were spun worsted with a Z-twist, and then slightly underplied with an S-twist to allow a nice bloom and drape in the finished yarn. The yarn was skeined, soaked, snapped between my hands to even out the twist, and allowed to hang unweighted to dry.

### KNITTING NOTES

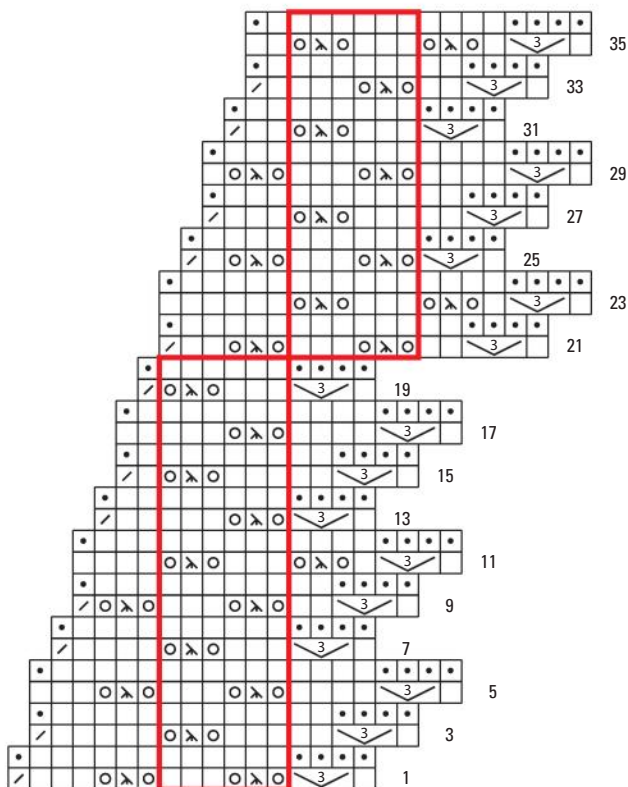
- This triangular shawl begins at the upper right corner. The top edge is shaped with double increases and the right edge (of the finished triangle) is shaped with decreases. The bind-off edge is the left edge of the shawl.
- A circular needle is used to accommodate the large number of stitches.

### STITCH GUIDE

*Kfbf*: Knit into front, back, and front of same st—2 sts inc'd.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  k on RS; p on WS |  ssk                     |
|  p on RS; k on WS |  sl 1 kwise, k2tog, pss0 |
|  yo               |  kfbf (see Stitch Guide)  |
|  k2tog            |  pattern repeat          |

### LACE



6-st rep



*Pf/bf*: Purl into front, back, and front of same st—2 sts inc'd.

**SHAWL**

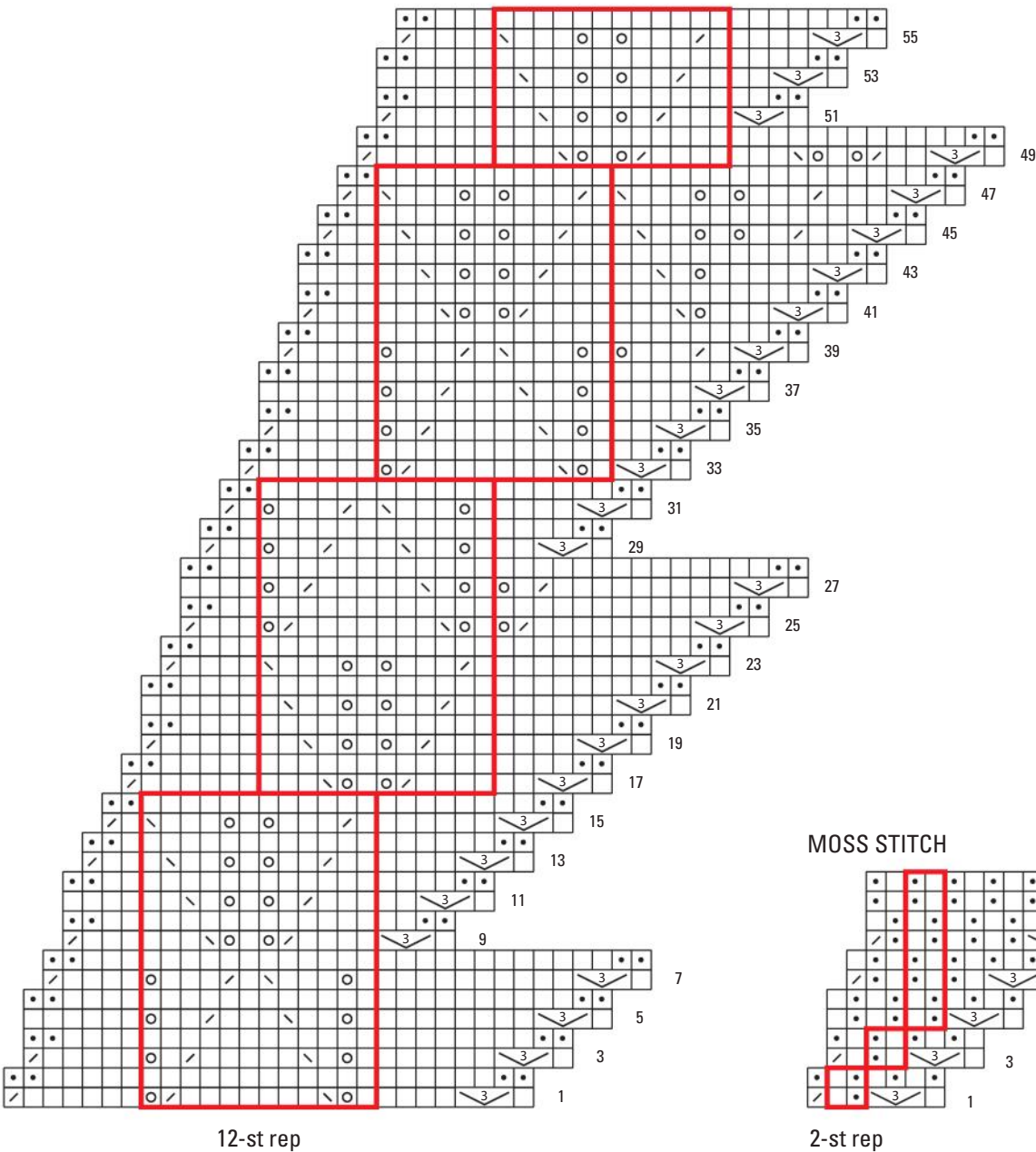
Using the long-tail method, CO 6 sts. **Next row (WS)** Knit. Work Rows 1–12 of Moss Stitch chart 13 times, then work Rows 1–10 once more—116 sts. **Next row (RS)** P1, *pf/bf* (see Stitch Guide), purl to end—118 sts. **Next row** Knit. Work Rows 1–36 of Lace chart 2 times, then work Rows 1–3 once more—168

sts. **Next row (WS)** Knit. **Next row (RS)** K1, *kfbf* (see Stitch Guide), purl to end—170 sts. **Next row** K2, purl to last 2 sts, k2. Work Rows 1–56 of Leaf chart once—205 sts. **Next row (RS)** K1, *kfbf*, knit to last 2 sts, k2tog—1 st inc'd. **Next row (WS)** Knit. Rep last 2 rows once more—207 sts. BO all sts as foll: \*K2, pass 2nd st over first to BO 1 st, transfer 1 st from right needle to left needle; rep from \* to end. Fasten off last st.

**FINISHING**

Weave in ends but do not trim tails. Soak shawl until completely saturated then spin or press excess water out of shawl. Lay flat to block, allowing upper edge to form a gentle curve, pinning long side edge into a straight line, and pinning BO edge into points at bottom of complete leaf motifs to form a softly waving border. Allow to dry completely, then trim ends on WS of shawl.

**LEAF**





## STONE & FIRE COWL

Amy Tyler

Fiber Optic Yarns 80% Merino/20% silk

*This cowl takes advantage of the dynamic surface of energized singles yarn. A simple knitted rectangle comes together with two pairs of buttons to form a stylish and reversible cowl.*

### MATERIALS

**Fiber** 2 oz Fiber Optic Yarns 80% Merino/20% silk combed top in steampunk gradient.

**Yarn** Singles; 275 yd; 2,194 ypp; 24 wpi; fingering weight.

**Needles** U.S. size 1½ (2.5 mm). Adjust needle size if necessary to obtain the correct gauge.

**Gauge** 42 sts and 54 rows = 4" in box in box patt.

**Notions** 4 buttons; sewing needle; sewing thread; tapestry needle.

**Finished Size** 6½" wide and 22" inches long.

See [knittingdaily.com/glossary](http://knittingdaily.com/glossary) for terms you don't know.

### SPINNING NOTES

- The fiber for this project is available in 4 oz braids. To take advantage of the color progression, split the top in half lengthwise, preserving the second half for another project.
- Before spinning, the designer pre-drafted the 2 oz portion of top,

preserving the original gradient progression.

### COWL

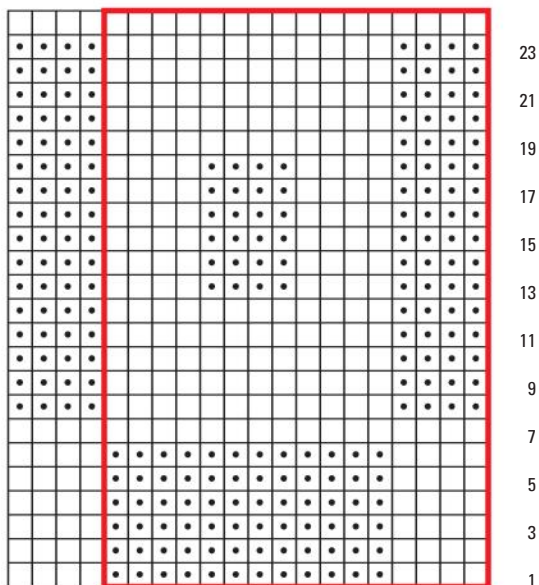
Using the knitted method, CO 68 sts. **Note:** CO tail has tendency to untwist; weave it in after working a couple rows. Work Box in Box chart until piece measures 22", ending with Row 6. BO all sts.

### FINISHING

Wash and lay flat to dry. Do not stretch to block. With RS facing, overlap 3½" x 3½" bottom right corner over 3½" x 3½" upper right corner as shown in photo. Place buttons as shown and sew one button on RS and one button opposite on WS, securing overlapped pieces of cowl tog between them. Placing a small scrap of jersey fabric between the cowl layers behind the buttons will help stabilize the fabric.

- knit on RS; purl on WS
- purl on RS; knit on WS
- pattern repeat

### BOX IN BOX



16 st repeat

### Knitting Off the Bobbin

One of the delights of knitting energized singles is that you don't need to skein or wash the yarn before knitting—you can knit the singles right off the bobbin. Typically the bobbin weight itself provides enough tension on the yarn to prevent tangling, but you may prefer to use a tensioned lazy kate.

### Knitting with Energized Singles

Knitting with energized singles requires a bit of patience. The extra twist in the yarn makes it rather willful. It's easy to accidentally knit into the row below, and it's easy to drop a stitch. Dropped stitches tend to twist in on themselves and can disappear into the stitch below in a snap. You may need to knit more slowly than usual and watch your knitting more than usual. When you make mistakes, "tink" (un-knit) one stitch at a time instead of ripping out the stitches.





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# UNDER *the* BIG TOP

## Spinning Striped Batts for Knitting

by Jillian Moreno

---

*I love batts. I love to buy them and pet them, spin them and knit them. I especially love striped batts. Do I want long runs of color or supershort ones? Do I want the colors clear or blended? Each decision leads to a very particular yarn.*

*Do you spin and knit your batts the same way every time? Are you ready to try something new?*



Photos by Joe Coca

### SPINNING COLOR FUN

Batts—especially batts with colorplay—can be hard to sample; unlike a variegated top, you can't just peel a strip and sample. When I can, I often buy an extra batt (or two) just to experiment with.

My favorite part of spinning batts is playing with color. Sometimes I break them apart and reorder them for a specific effect; sometimes I spin them just as they come. The directions below are for a batt with three stripes; if your batt includes more stripes, you may need to tear more strips.

All of these color-wrangling methods can be spun in the grain direction of the batt (from the end of each strip) if you want a less airy yarn.

#### *Gradient*

A gradient colorway is one in which one color presents at a time in a single occurrence; the colors never repeat. With a striped batt such as the one pictured here, it's easy to make a gradient by spinning it exactly as it's made. There are a few options for spinning the batt, and each one changes how much the colors blend where they overlap.

① For the most blended overlap of colors between individual, clear colors, roll the batt a little tighter with the grain, and then attenuate it from the end into roving. The combination of one continuous roving and a woolen draft encourages the fibers to catch randomly, often pulling colors together and increasing the blending of colors.

② For a medium amount of overlap of blended colors between the solid colors, I strip the batt vertically into thirds by color, roll each color into a small batt, and spin from the rolled end. This helps to control the blending by separating the stripes so the colors don't pull through.

③ To achieve the clearest, most solid color, I strip the batt vertically into five strips so that the solid colors stay clear and the spots where the colors overlap are their own strips. I roll each into a rolag and spin from the end. This gives me the least amount of blended color. If I want pure color with no blending, I put the strips with overlapping colors aside for another project.



For some overlap in a gradient, pull each batt sideways into an elongated preparation similar to a roving.



For a moderate amount of color blending, divide the batt at the points where the colors change.



Roll each strip into its own distinct batt.



A striped batt divided into three rolled strips.

## Woolen or Extra Woolen?

Batts are a woolen preparation; the fibers are not in alignment as in top, allowing air to get trapped between fibers when you spin. Although they may not be in alignment, they do have a direction, a grain determined by the direction that they were worked on the drum-carder or blending board.

When spinning any batt, you need to choose between fluffy and fluffier. Batts always make a lofty yarn, but if you spin across the grain, it really adds extra loft.

The most common way to spin batts is to unroll them, strip them lengthwise, and spin from the end of each strip in turn. This gives you airy yarn, especially if you add a woolen draft to that spinning.

If you roll the batt in the direction of the grain and attenuate it from the rolled end, you are trapping even more air in your yarn. Think of it as a fiber tornado making an even loftier yarn. You can choose to divide batts across the grain into smaller fiber rolls that resemble rolags, then spin from the ends for lofty yarns, too.

I almost always spin my batts with a woolen draft, except when I want a very smooth yarn or when I want to accentuate the shine in a fiber blend. The batt has to be exceptionally well blended with no add-ins in order for worsted drafting to work for me. If it isn't, I spend a lot of time picking stray bits and bumps out of my yarn.

Batts look like clouds to me, and I want my yarn to mimic that look. I do everything I can to get air into my yarn and keep it there. For me, that means I prepare my batts for extra loft by working against the grain and I spin with a woolen draft. There is something about batts that makes me prefer to keep my yarn as singles, so I use a low twist angle. For singles, I barely full the yarn, moving it back and forth two to three times between hot water and ice water with no agitation or squeezing. For a plied yarn, I finish with a hot soak, snap the yarn, and hang it.

## Variegated

A variegated yarn repeats colors in a specific order, such as pink, teal, brown, pink, teal, brown, pink teal, brown. To spin a yarn with this color pattern, I make a little “rolag train.”

① I strip the batt so I have two or three strips of each color. Sometimes I count the overlapping color parts as their own color; sometimes I remove the overlapping bits and save them for something else; usually I group the blends with the color that is most prominent. The choice is yours. (I don't mind if the colors aren't as clear in a variegated yarn as in a gradient yarn.)

② I roll each strip into a rolag, lining up the rolags in the order I want to spin them so that I can just grab and go.

## Tweedy or blended

If I want all of the colors to blend in a tweed type of yarn, I strip and stack.

① I strip the batt as if making a variegated yarn and make small stacks of strips, each containing one strip of each color.

② I roll each stack and attenuate it slightly. Then I spin it, letting the colors marl together however they like. The chunkier the yarn you spin, the bigger the dots of color in your yarn.

## KNITTING COLORPLAY

Have you ever combined a stitch pattern with a yarn and had the stitch pattern completely disappear when you knit it? I don't want to tell you how many times this has happened to me.

After several spectacular failures, I know what to keep in mind when choosing a stitch pattern for my knitting in a gradient, variegated, or tweedy yarn—what works and doesn't with long or short color repeats or allover speckles. I finally took the time to sample different yarns with different stitch patterns, and now I am a much more satisfied knitting spinner.

See what happened with the three yarns I made from the pictured batt, knitted in three different stitch patterns: stockinette, lace, and cable. I spun a worsted-weight singles yarn for these samples so that the results would be easier to see. In finer yarns, the effect is much subtler.





For a variegated yarn, divide each color section into two or three strips.



Roll each strip into a small rolag and make a "rolag train," placing them in spinning order.



For a marled yarn, divide the batt into strips of color, then stack them together.



### Gradient

Gradient yarn has the longest color runs. In stockinette, it makes wide swaths of single colors that can be used for stripes, color blocks, or as a slowly changing background color for stranded colorwork.

In lace knitting, gradient yarns really shine. They can be used with a small-row or large-row repeat of lace; pictured here is a small-row repeat. Both are beautiful, since the gradual change of color doesn't muddy the lace patterns.

Gradient yarns can be used for cables as long as you like them stripy. This is entirely personal taste; the stripes don't hide the cables, but some knitters don't like the look.

Swatch photos by George Boe



In stockinette stitch, a gradient yarn creates wide swaths of color.



In lace, the transition between colors shines. In cables, a gradient yarn makes a dramatic shift that can be a personal choice.





### *Variegated*

Variegated yarns have short color repeats, sometimes very short, which can obscure some stitch patterns. In stockinette, stripes are narrow. Because the color changes are quick, variegated yarns work better in colorwork knitting as the patterning strand rather than the background color. Variegated yarns are great used in faux Fair Isle.

Variegated yarns work in lace knitting with small-row repeats. Using large lace repeats with short color changes is visually jarring, and the pattern gets lost.

Knitting cables with a variegated yarn is like driving on a road with lots of speed bumps: you know where the road goes but don't much like how the road is broken up. It's better to use a knit-purl pattern stitch with a variegated yarn.



Cables can produce a choppy effect in variegated yarns. Whether a lace pattern will be successful depends on the length of the stripes and the scale of the lace pattern.

Variegated yarns can produce narrow stripes, making them perfect for faux Fair Isle.



### *Tweedy or blended*

If a tweedy yarn is very finely spun or the color is well blended with tiny color speckles, the knitted fabric looks homogenous from a distance, so all stitch patterns work.

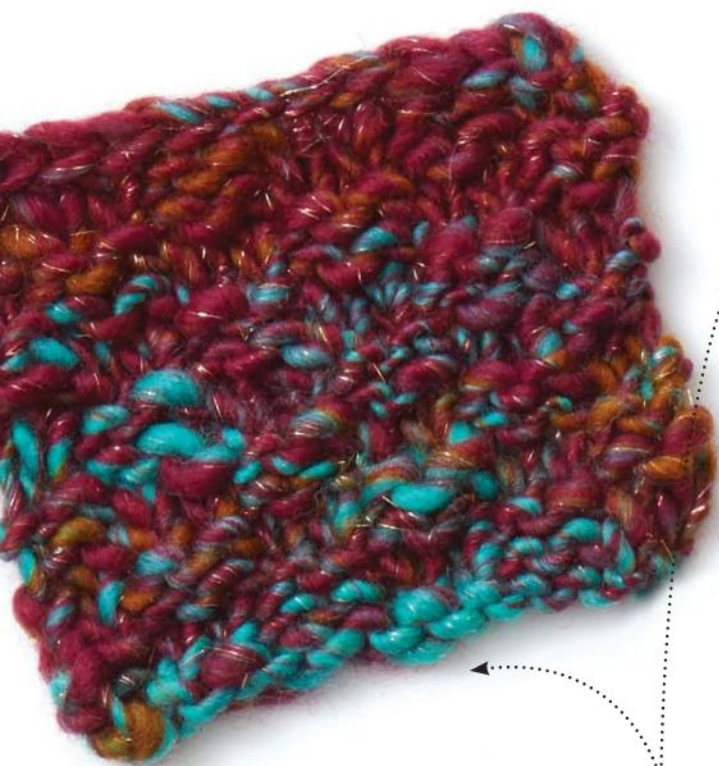
If the spots of color are bigger or the yarn chunkier, the yarn will fight with lace patterning. The yarn looks great in stockinette or an all-over pattern stitch, where it becomes undulating color.

I personally like how cables look in an aggressively tweedy yarn, but not everyone does. The cables lose the crisp look that many knitters like and become more of a suggestion of a cable.

Clearly, you don't have to spin your striped batt just one way for knitting! You just need to keep in mind how your yarn will look knitted in order to select the best color flow/stitch pattern combination. A few minutes of creative thinking will result in a project that is unique, spectacular, and exactly what you want.



The tweedy yarn may look its best in stockinette stitch.



A knit-purl pattern is successful in tweedy-looking yarn, but lace patterns tend to get lost in the yarn's colorplay. Cables are a matter of personal preference.





# Take Your Spinning on the **Go!**

There's nothing quite like brilliant on-screen color to bring fiber and yarns to life. Did you know that you can get Spin-Off magazine on your tablet and take it with you? You'll have the whole issue plus live links to even more spinning resources, including the amazing world of spinning products in the Spinning Daily Shop.

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# *the* BEAUTY *of* BATTS

Carding is a great opportunity to mix it up—blend fiber, play with colors, or create chunky art batts. Try different techniques to celebrate the possibilities of batts!

## **Kelp Shawl**

*Benjamin Krudwig*

Custom blend

Uniting a mix of fibers with a single color palette, the subtle variegation of this yarn creates a stunning ebb and flow of color with natural shadows and highlights. A simple-to-knit shawl lets the beautiful yarn take center stage.

**See Page 82**







### Eyelet Socks

*Carol Huebscher Rhoades*

Originally published in *Spin Off*

Fall 2012

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Whitefish Bay Farm and Treetops  
Colour Harmonies

---

Just in time for cool weather,  
these socks feature eyelet pattern-  
ing to add a touch of complexi-  
ty to their simple styling.

**See Page 83**







### **Chutes and Ladders Hat**

*Kristi R. Schueler*

Originally published *All*

*New Homespun Handknit* (Interweave, 2009).

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TerraBellaSpun Batts

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Cables and dropped stitches come together for a fun and quick project suitable for spinners of any skill.

The extra loft of the bulky two-ply fills the spaces of the dropped stitches and traps more air in the yarn, resulting in a warmer hat with less weight.

**See Page 84**





### **A New Slant Scarf**

*Jillian Moreno*

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Lunabudknits Merino/Angelina Smoothie Batts

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This fun infinity scarf uses two different stitch patterns to complement the styles of yarn: The gradient yarn showcases a lace pattern that would get lost in the flecked yarn. The flecked yarn works well with a textured pattern, helping to emphasize the knits and purls.

**See Page 85**







## KELP SHAWL

Benjamin Krudwig



custom blended batt

*At the conclusion of the first Interweave Yarn Fest in 2015, Benjamin looked at his fresh haul and noticed a color theme: sunny yellow Tencel, a lovely braid of a forest green Merino/silk blend, and a springy green silk sliver. Pulling some “green flash” (holographic synthetic fiber) from his stash, he was ready to blend.*

### MATERIALS

**Fiber** 5¼ oz 48% Merino/silk blend/36% Tencel/12% silk/3% flash in yellow-green.

**Yarn** 2-ply; 560 yd; 1817 ypp; 20 wpi; fingering weight.

**Needles** U.S. size 3 (3.25 mm). Adjust needle size if necessary to obtain the correct gauge. While needle size is not critical for this project, it may affect the amount of yarn used.

**Gauge** 21 sts and 36 rows = 4" in St st.

**Notions** Markers (m); tapestry needle.

**Finished Size** 44" wide and 22" tall.

See [knittingdaily.com/glossary](http://knittingdaily.com/glossary) for terms you don't know.

### SPINNING NOTES

• I spun the singles using a short forward draw technique and, after 2-plying it, got a nice fingering weight yarn. Some areas have nubs of Tencel or silk where they didn't quite blend in with the wool/silk. This yarn has less twist in it than I normally put into yarn, but I wanted a bit more drapery yarn with less structure. This lent itself well to the finished garment.

### SHAWL

**Garter tab:** CO 5 sts. Knit 4 rows.

**Next row (RS)** K5, working along selvedge edge, pick up and knit 4 sts (1 st for each row), then pick up and knit 1 st in each CO st—14 sts total.

**Next row** K3, place marker (pm), p4, pm, p4, pm, k3.

### Section 1

**Row 1 (RS)** K3, sl m, using the backward-loop method, CO 2 sts, k2tog, k2tog, CO 2 sts, sl m, CO 2 sts, k2tog, k2tog, CO 2 sts, sl m, k3—18 sts.

**Row 2 and all WS rows** K3, purl to last 3 sts, k3.

**Row 3** K3, sl m, CO 1 st, knit to m, CO 1 st, sl m, CO 1 st, knit to m, CO 1 st, sl m, k3—22 sts.

**Row 5** K3, sl m, CO 2 sts, k2tog, knit to 2 sts before m, k2tog, CO 2 sts, sl m, CO 2 sts, k2tog, knit to 2 sts before m, k2tog, CO 2 sts, k3—4 sts inc'd.

**Row 7** K3, sl m, CO 1 st, knit to m, CO 1 st, sl m, CO 1 st, knit to m, CO 1 st, sl m, k3—4 sts inc'd.

**Row 8 (WS)** Rep Row 2. Rep Rows 5–8 eight more times—94 sts.

### Section 2

**Row 1 (RS)** K3, sl m, CO 2 sts, k2tog, \*CO 2 sts, k3tog; rep from \* to m, CO 2 sts, sl m, \*\*CO 2 sts, k3tog; rep from \*\* to 2 sts before m, CO 2 sts, k2tog, CO 2 sts, sl m, k3—100 sts.

**Row 2 and all WS rows** K3, purl to last 3 sts, k3.

**Row 3** K3, sl m, CO 1 st, knit to m, CO 1 st, sl m, CO 1 st, knit to m, CO 1 st, sl m, k3—104 sts.

**Row 5** K3, sl m, CO 2 sts, k2tog, knit to 2 sts before m, k2tog, CO 2 sts, sl m, CO 2 sts, k2tog, knit to 2 sts before m, k2tog, CO 2 sts, sl m, k3—108 sts.

**Row 7** K3, sl m, CO 1 st, knit to m, CO 1 st, sl m, CO 1 st, knit to m, CO 1 st, sl m, k3—112 sts.

**Row 8 (WS)** Rep Row 2.

### Section 3

Work Rows 5–8 of section 1 eight times—176 sts.

### Section 4

**Row 1 (RS)** K3, sl m, CO 2 sts, k4tog, \*CO 2 sts, k3tog; rep from \* to m, CO 2 sts, sl m, \*\*CO 2 sts, k3tog; rep from \*\* to 4 sts before m, CO 2

### Batt Recipe

*The final ratio for these batts:*

- 1 part silk/Merino
- ¾ part Tencel
- ¼ part silk
- ⅓ part flash (optional, but gives another dimension to the yarn)

Each batt was blended only twice to keep the mixture from being too homogenous and to give each type

of fiber a moment to shine.

Using this technique, Benjamin used small amounts of each fiber to create enough material for the shawl.

Each batt weighed about 2 ounces. Benjamin spun 2 batts onto each bobbin, then spun them together into a 2-ply.



sts, k4tog, CO 2 sts, sl m, k3—178 sts.

**Row 2 and all WS rows** K3, purl to last 3 sts, k3.

**Row 3** K3, sl m, CO 1 st, knit to m, CO 1 st, sl m, CO 1 st, knit to m, CO 1 st, sl m, k3—182 sts.

**Row 5** K3, sl m, CO 2 sts, k2tog, knit to 2 sts before m, k2tog, CO 2 sts, sl m, CO 2 sts, k2tog, knit to 2 sts before m, k2tog, CO 2 sts, sl m, k3—186 sts.

**Row 7** K3, sl m, CO 1 st, knit to m, CO 1 st, sl m, CO 1 st, knit to m, CO 1 st, sl m, k3—190 sts.

**Row 8** (WS) Rep Row 2.

#### Section 5

Work Rows 5–8 of section 1 eight times—254 sts.

#### Section 6

**Row 1** (RS) K3, sl m, CO 2 sts, k2tog, \*k2tog, [yo] 2 times, k2tog; rep from \* to 2 sts before m, k2tog, CO 2 sts, sl m, CO 2 sts, k2tog, \*\*k2tog, [yo] 2 times, k2tog; rep from \*\* to 2 sts before m, k2tog, CO 2 sts, sl m, k3—4 sts inc'd.

**Row 2** K3, purl to last 3 sts, working (p1, p1tbl) in each double yo, k3.

**Row 3** K3, sl m, CO 1 st, knit to m, CO 1 st, sl m, CO 1 st, knit to m, CO 1 st, sl m, k3—4 sts inc'd.

**Row 4** K3, purl to last 3 sts, k3. Rep Rows 1–4 two more times—278 sts.

#### Edging

**Note:** Remove markers on first row.

**Row 1** (RS) K3, \*k4, CO 2 sts; rep from \* to last 7 sts, k7—412 sts.

**Row 2** K3, purl to last 3 sts, k3.

**Row 3** K3, \*k4, CO 4 sts; rep from \* to last 5 sts, k5—816 sts.

**Row 4** Rep Row 2.

With RS facing, BO all sts.

#### FINISHING

Weave in ends. Block to measurements.



## EYELET SOCKS

Carol Heuschler Rhoades

*Carol's favorite Whitefish Bay Farm sheep is Opal, so she chose pink and green shades of silk to add an opalescent glow to the wool; the silk also adds strength.*

#### MATERIALS

**Fiber** 4 oz Corriedale wool from Whitefish Bay Farm, blended with 1 oz Treetops Colour Harmonies dyed tussah silk (¾ oz peruvian patina and ¼ oz pink champagne).

**Yarn** 3-ply, 516 yards, 1,668 ypp, 16 wpi; fingering weight.

**Needles** U.S. size 1 (2.75 mm): double-pointed (dpn). Adjust needle size if necessary to obtain correct gauge.

**Gauge** 8 sts and 10 rows = 1" in St st.

**Notions** Tapestry needle

**Finished Size** Women's medium; sock foot circumference 7½".

#### SPINNING NOTES

• After washing the wool with wool-safe detergent in hot water and rinsing twice in hot water, I spread it on a drying rack outside. I opened the locks by hand and fed them onto my drumcarder, tips first. I blended 4 ounces (six batts) with silk, with each colorway divided into six more or less even sections. I halved each batt lengthwise, spread out each half width-

wise, placed the silk on one half, and then added the other wool layer. For the final pass, I stripped each batt into eight lengths and used a piece from each of the old batts for every new batt for thorough blending. I spun thin strips of the batts into fine singles and then spun a three-ply yarn.

#### SOCK

With 2 dpn held together, CO 61 sts. Remove extra needle carefully and divide sts evenly over 3 dpn. Being careful not to twist cast-on row, join by slipping last cast-on st over first st—60 sts. Purl 1 rnd, knit 1 rnd.

**Eyelet rnd** [yo, k2tog] around. Knit 1 rnd, purl 1 rnd. Work Rows 1–20 of charted pattern 4 times and then work Row 1 once more. Leg measures 6¾" from cast-on row. *Divide sts for heel flap:* K16; turn and sl 1 pwise wyf, p29. Leave rem 30 sts on holder for instep.

#### HEEL FLAP

**Row 1** (RS) [Sl 1 pwise wyb, k1] across.

**Row 2** Sl 1 pwise wyf, purl to end of row.

Repeat Rows 1–2 until there are a total of 32 rows or flap is 2" long.

#### HEEL GUSSET

**Row 1** Sl 1 pwise wyb, k16, ssk, k1; turn.

**Row 2** Sl 1 pwise wyf, p5, p2tog, p1; turn.

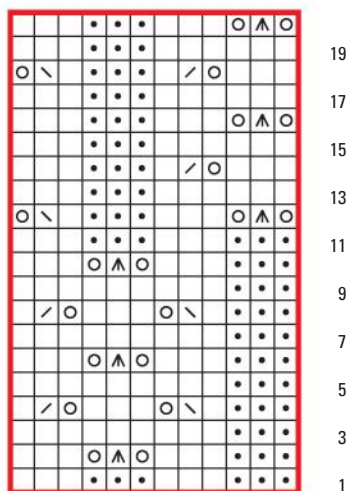
**Row 3** Sl 1 pwise wyf, k6, ssk, k1; turn.

**Row 4** Sl 1 pwise wyf, p7, p2tog, p1; turn.

Rep Rows 3–4, working 1 more st before dec each row (decreases join the sts before and after the gap) until all sts have been worked—18 sts. With extra needle, k9 on heel; with another needle (Needle 1), k9 from heel and then pick up and k18 along side of heel flap (insert needle under 2 strands of edge sts when picking up and knitting for a firm join); with Needle 2, knit across instep (30 sts);



### EYELET-WAVED RIB



12-st rep

- knit
- purl
- yo
- / k2tog
- \ ssk
- ^ sl 2 sts as if to k2tog, k1, pass 2 sl sts over
- pattern repeat

with Needle 3, pick up and k18 along other side of heel flap and then k9 to center of heel (beg of rnd). Knit 1 rnd.

#### FOOT

**Rnd 1** Knit to last 3 sts of Needle 1 and end k2tog, k1. Knit sts on Needle 2. On Needle 3, k1, ssk, knit to end of rnd.

**Rnd 2** Knit.

Repeat Rnds 1–2 until 60 sts rem.

Knit until foot is 2" less than total foot length.

#### TOE SHAPING

Knit to end of Needle 1. Rnd begins with Needle 2 (instep).

**Rnd 1** Needle 2: K1, ssk, knit to last 3 sts, k2tog, k1. Needle 3: K1, ssk, knit to end of needle. Needle 1: Knit to last 3 sts and end k2tog, k1.

**Rnd 2** Knit.

Rep Rnds 1–2 until 24 sts rem. Place sts of Needles 3 and 1 onto 1 dpn and then join the 2 sets of sts with Kitchener st. Weave in all ends neatly on WS.

#### FINISHING

Handwash gently in lukewarm water with no-rinse wool-safe soap. Roll in towel to absorb excess water and dry flat or on sock blockers.



## CHUTES AND LADDERS HAT

Kristi R. Schueler

*By tearing a batt into a continuous roving, Kristi preserved color layers to create a yarn with slow color changes. Dropped stitches paired with cables create a surprisingly quick hat.*

#### MATERIALS

**Fiber** 6 oz (4 batts) TerraBellaSpun Batts (70% Merino/20% superwash wool/10% Black Welsh Mountain) in rainforest.

**Yarn** 2-ply; 35 (45, 60) yd; 400 ypp; 3.5 wpi; extra bulky.

**Needles** U.S. size 11 (8 mm): set of 4 double-pointed (dpn). Adjust needle size if necessary to obtain the correct gauge.

**Gauge** 12 sts and 13 rnds = 4" (10 cm) in Chutes and Ladders pattern.

**Notions** Cable needle (cn), marker (m); tapestry needle.

**Finished Size:** 14 (16, 18)" head circumference; 6 (7¼, 8½)" tall.

#### SPINNING NOTES

- Spinning the drumcarded fiber with a supported long backward draw makes soft, airy singles.

#### STITCH GUIDE

*Chutes and Ladders* (multiple of 6 sts)

**Set-up rnd** \*K4, [yo] twice, BO 2 sts; rep from \* to end of rnd.

**Rnds 1–2** \*K4, drop the double yo from needle, [yo] twice; rep from \* to end of rnd.

**Rnd 3** \*Sl 2 sts to cn and hold to front,



k2, k2 from cn, drop double yo from needle, [yo] twice; rep from \* to end of rnd.

**Rnd 4** \*K4, drop the double yo from needle, [yo] twice; rep from \* to end of rnd.

Rep Rnds 1–4 for patt. *Brim:* Using long-tail method, CO 42 (48, 54) sts. Distribute sts evenly on 3 or 4 needles, place marker (pm), and join for working in the rnd, being careful not to twist sts. Work [k2, p1] rib for 4 rnds. *Body:* Beginning with Set-up rnd (see Stitch Guide), work Chutes and Ladders pattern. Work Rnds 1–4 three (four, five) times. Work Rnds 1–3 once more; hat measures about 5 (6¼, 7½)" (12.5 [16, 19] cm) from CO edge.

## CROWN

**Next rnd** \*Drop double yo, yo, k2tog, k2; rep from \* to end of rnd—28 (32, 36) sts rem.

**Next rnd** \*Drop single yo, yo, k1, ssk; rep from \* to end of rnd—21 (24, 27) sts rem.

**Next rnd** \*Drop single yo, k2tog; rep from \* to end of rnd—7 (8, 9) sts rem.

**Last rnd** [K2tog] to end of rnd, ending k1 (0, 1)—4 (4, 5) sts rem.

## FINISHING

Cut yarn, thread tail on tapestry needle and draw through rem sts, pulling tight to close hole. Weave in ends and block as desired.



## A NEW SLANT SCARF

Jillian Moreno



Lunabudknits Merino/Angelina Smoothie Batts

*Because she can't stop fiddling with color when she spins, Jillian Moreno finds that using dyed fiber is "as exciting as getting a new big box of 64 Crayola crayons when I was a kid." Lately she has enjoyed making projects from the same colorway, but presenting the colors in different ways. This infinity scarf is a step in that direction.*

## MATERIALS

**Fiber** 6 oz (2 batts) Lunabudknits Merino/Angelina Smoothie Batts in cuba libre.

**Yarn** Singles; 220 yd; 600 ypp; 5–8 wpi; bulky. Block colors (A): 110 yd; flecked colors (B): 110 yd.

**Needles** U.S. size 9 (5.5 mm). Adjust needle size if necessary to obtain the correct gauge.

**Gauge** 12 sts and 16 rows = 4" in Textured patt 12 sts and 14 rows = 4" in Lace patt.

**Notions** Tapestry needle, spare U.S. size 9 (5.5 mm) or smaller needle for three-needle BO.

**Finished Size** 48" circumference and 10" wide.

See [knittingdaily.com/glossary](http://knittingdaily.com/glossary) for terms you don't know.

## Tearing Batts into Roving

Before spinning, Kristi turned each batt into a continuous piece of roving. She started by tearing a lengthwise strip 2 to 3 inches wide from top to bottom in the same direction as the grain of the batt. She stopped when the tear was about the same distance from the bottom of the

batt as the strip was thick. She then moved over 2 to 3 inches and started a new tear in the batt, this time working from bottom to top, once again stopping before the top of the batt. She continued making these zigzag tears until one long strip of fiber was formed.





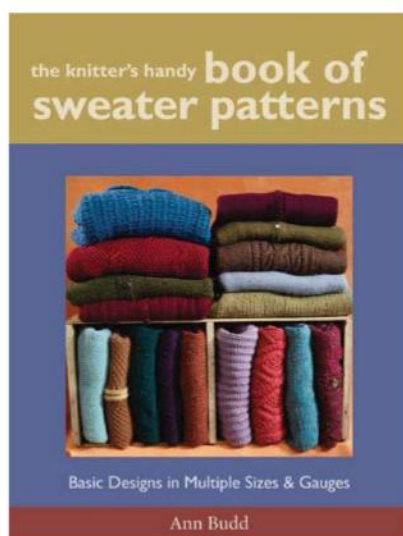




# Rediscover

## *The Knitter's Handy Guide*

# Book Series



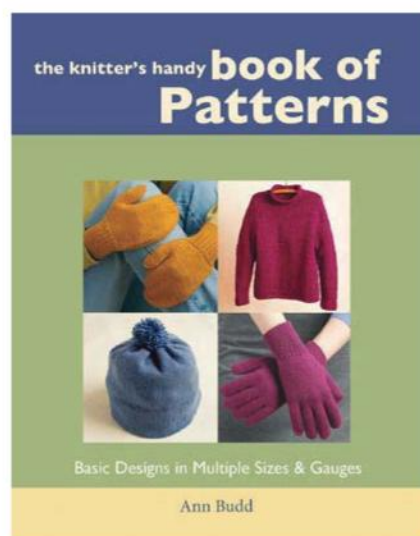
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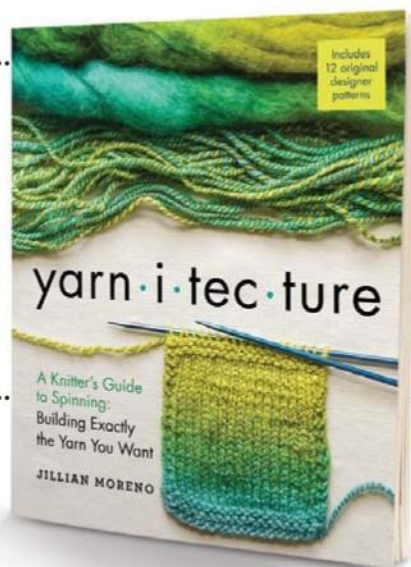
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# book excerpt

# YARNITECTURE

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by Jillian Moreno



## DON'T FIGHT IT! YOUR WHEEL IS YOUR FRIEND:

### *Work Together*

I've seen lots of spinners in my classes fighting their wheel. In extreme cases, it looks like the spinner is deep-sea fishing and has hooked a particularly feisty marlin. Usually they have their takeup (how quickly the yarn winds onto the bobbin) turned as high as it will go. They are treading out of control to keep up with the takeup, trying to draft yarn before the wheel rips it from their hands. When I ask why they set their takeup so high, I get one of two answers, and sometimes both: "I like a lot of takeup" and "It makes me spin faster." They may like a lot of takeup, but it probably doesn't make them spin faster, and it can hurt their body. You only want as much takeup as your yarn needs. Don't set yourself up to have your yarn ripped from your hands—just like in kindergarten, that's not friendly!

Bad things can happen when you wrestle with your wheel. When you have your wheel pulling hard and you're treading like crazy, and drafting your yarn is more about pushing and pulling in a less-than-smooth motion, there's a lot of extra tension and stress on your fiber, yarn, and wheel, as well as on your body. You can develop pain from your fingers and hands to your neck, spine, and elbows. Your yarn isn't too happy with all of that extra tension either. Fighting with your wheel and fiber leads to an uneven yarn, lots of breaks, and a less controlled yarn overall. You aren't really spinning faster, because you are expending lots of energy fighting your wheel and yarn and, in the end, probably not getting the yarn you want.

## PREDRAFTING

I've noticed that a big area of contention among spinners and spinning teachers centers around predrafting. Predrafting includes stripping, fluffing, or attenuating commercially prepared fiber to spin just a regular yarn, not a textured, fancy, or art yarn. When it comes to predrafting, most of the time the sides line up as either "always" or "never." My thoughts lie somewhere in between with "it depends."



The photo above shows braided top as it comes packaged; the same fiber has been unbraided at the right.



## Treadling Is Not like Driving a Car

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When I was a new spinner, I made a mistake regarding twist and takeup—one that I still make many years later when I'm in a hurry or not relaxed when I spin. The mistake is to think that treadling faster makes you spin faster. I learned to spin after

I learned to drive a car. Deep in my brain I think that if I push those treadles, which look like huge accelerators to me, the yarn will get on the wheel faster. Treadling faster does not make you spin faster, however; treadling affects twist more than it affects pull.







A fluffed section of the top on page 89



The same top stripped in half lengthwise

I spin mostly commercially prepared fibers that are dyed by fiber artists in small batches. There's nothing I love more than spinning a fluffy, "just-shake-and-spin" roving or top. Shake-and-spin fibers are ones where I can do just that: pull them out of their braid or bag, give them a shake, and spin away without a hitch or a clump. I would say 30 to 40 percent of the fibers I spin are shake-and-spin worthy. Many factors go into the fluffiness of a roving or top, including the quality of the roving or top before it's dyed, how the fiber is handled when it's dyed and dried, how the dyer stores it, and how long it sits around as stash. Other features come into play as well: sometimes fiber gets compacted, sometimes the fiber seems just too big, sometimes I want to alter the color, sometimes I just want to touch it before I spin it. Depending on the fiber, the yarn I want, and my mood, I almost always fluff, usually strip, and occasionally attenuate. I want my spinning to be easy, if not effortless, and, if my fiber isn't loose enough to draft, it can make spinning miserable, so I predraft in one of several ways.

## FLUFFING

I love to fluff my fiber. Fluffing is pulling the top or roving horizontally, just a little, enough to tease it open. I fluff fiber when it seems closed, perhaps because it sat squashed in my stash. I also fluff to get to know my fiber. As I fluff along the top or roving, I notice any lumps, bumps, or vegetable matter (VM) in the fiber and remove them as I go. I also study the color changes and decide if I want to strip the fiber.

## STRIPPING

Stripping is the process of dividing the top or roving fiber lengthwise. First, let me say that I never strip my fiber to the size I want my yarn. Yes, I said "never." If I were to strip to size, there would be no time or space to draft my fiber. If you strip to size, the only thing you can do with the fiber is to add twist. Drafting is what makes my yarn what I want it to be. I have to draft it forward to get the smoothness of worsted and draft it back to trap the air for woolen. I couldn't do either if I stripped fiber to the size I wanted my yarn.



Three pieces of top stripped to the width required when spinning the three together

On the other hand, I do usually strip my fiber to control bulk or color. I may reduce the bulk simply because I don't want to hold the whole roving or top in my hand. Sometimes it just feels unwieldy; sometimes it makes my hands sweat. So I divide the fiber in half lengthwise and carry on.

Another reason I might strip a top or roving is if it's variegated. I can control color by stripping (or not stripping) in a couple of ways. If I want long color runs, I don't strip, and I do my best to draft the fiber back and forth across the tip of the fiber, like typing along the carriage of an old-fashioned typewriter. If I want shorter runs of color, I divide the fiber at least in half lengthwise, and sometimes into more lengths.

I also like to combine colored tops and rovings by drafting two or three (or more) together at one time. To do this without losing my grip (or mind), I strip each top or roving thin enough so the whole fiber bundle is one or two fingers wide.



The top at the right has been attenuated. Compare the length of the green section to the same section of unattenuated top at the left.

## ATTENUATING

I don't attenuate often. I do this only when a fiber is compacted and fluffing alone won't turn it into a lovely, lofty fiber. For me, attenuating top or roving is a lot like stripping to finished yarn size; it removes the space for drafting. But when a fiber is compacted, it can make the difference between fighting the fiber and happily spinning.

The photo above shows a before and after. On the left is the "before" fiber. If I had tried to spin this fiber as is, I would have said a lot of words, none of them nice. The fiber isn't felted, but it's compacted, and there would have been pushing and pulling and overtwisting while I tried to spin it. The fiber on the right has been fluffed and attenuated slightly. It looks like it's taken a big breath of air. The predrafted top is fluffy and smooth, a dream to spin, and rescued from the wrath of a frustrated spinner.

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# *Anything but* RUN OF THE MILL

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by Anne Podlesak

*Some spinners love to wash and card or comb fleece; others just want to skip all the fuss of cleaning and get straight to the spinning. Does that mean they're doomed to spin big-batch fibers forever, or that they're shut out of the fleece show? Hardly.*

There are a myriad of options for commercially prepared combed top, from natural-colored wools to handpainted indie-dyed blends. But what if you want

something extra special? Something custom-made just for you to spin? Enter custom-milled fiber from a small mill.

Small mills provide the handspinner with anything the imagination can dream up. If you've got a very special fleece, a mill can likely turn it into easy-to-spin roving for you. Maybe you scored the Grand Champion fleece at your local sheep and wool festival or have a beloved sheep who has been part of your flock for years. Perhaps you'd



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### Is there a minimum amount of wool you can process in an order? Can you do individual fleeces?

Diminishing returns is always a consideration when processing: We wouldn't advise our customers to send less than 5 pounds of fiber. We have an additional charge added to orders of less than 5 pounds but haven't seen fit to apply it as yet. We try and help out where we can. In that vein, we have given free access to a small motorized carder in our showroom for people with small amounts of work and no way to get it carded.

### What services do you offer spinners?

We offer scouring, roving, pin drafting, and blending. We also have Columbia sheep fleece, silk, bamboo, and Merino on hand, and can order a

variety of colors in those fibers. (For those who would just like to buy fiber to spin, we always have various types of roving in our salesroom.)

### What's the best thing someone sending you wool can do?

Prior to sending the fiber to us, keep the fleece as open to the air as possible in a dry environment. Skirting is a huge help and cuts down on postage and cost to our customers, as we charge for incoming weight. It is important to make sure our online order form is completed and included with each order.

### How long does it usually take to get a fleece back?

Currently 4 to 6 weeks.

### What are your limits?

We can process fiber with staple length between 3½ and 8 inches. Obviously, we can scour and pick almost anything, but carding to roving depends on the individual fleece. We skirt the fleece before scouring, then pick it; if it looks like we can card at that point, we do. In cases where the

fiber needs to be picked and rewashed to remove more contaminants, we notify the customer.

### What do you most like to process, and what are you best at?

A delightfully difficult question! Fibers that have consistent staple length and crimp are always a pleasure to work with. Mixing fiber colors, adding texture, and working with our customers to create something special adds flavor to our work.

### What do you wish that people sending you fleeces knew about what you do?

We imagine the possibilities and options. Every fleece we process is unique. Processing fiber requires special attention to this fact; however, we work with our customers, when requested, to do more than just "vanilla" processing. We like providing options for our clients that are exciting and tailored to their sense of color and texture. Rewarding to know that someone is excited about your work? You bet!

like to get on with the process of spinning and not the process of cleaning, picking, and carding the fibers in order to savor working with a fleece. Maybe you have a vision of an amazing blend of colors or fiber types and you want to spin enough for a big project such as a sweater or a blanket. All of these options are available through today's smaller mills.

There are small mills located in all areas of the United States (as well as Canada and other countries). They are usually run by one or two fiber lovers who can give your special project the attention it deserves. Most mills of this size can and will run a small batch of fiber (a few pounds or so) for you, unlike larger firms that require hundreds of pounds of fiber to be processed at once. Mill owners tend to spend a lot of time with fiber during the day and are a great resource for lots of information about how to get the best final product out of the processing.

Mills can provide services from washing and picking to blending and carding, all the way up to making felt batts and spinning yarn in some cases. However, some mills only provide a selection of those services. For the average handspinner, a small mill can take a well-skirted fleece (in the grease), wash and card it, process it, and send it back to you, all fluffy and ready to spin. Some mills can even blend or dye the fiber before returning it.

Most small mills can process your fiber into easy-to-spin roving, and some provide pin-drafting or even top-making services. Some mills can create batts or felt from your fibers if you'd rather not spin at all. If you have a large amount of fiber, many mills can split your order so that some of it becomes roving to spin and some of it becomes felt, batts, or even yarn. Smaller mills provide endless possibilities for producing unique, custom-created fiber that is a joy to use.



## GET THE MOST FROM A MILL

So how do you get the best product and experience with a custom-created mill product?

Take some extra time to be sure you are sending clean, usable fiber to the mill so your finished fiber will be the best it can be. Always remember that unsuitable fiber can't be "fixed" by the mill. If you provide the mill with unskirted fiber or fiber with many short cuts, lots of seeds, hay, or other vegetable matter in it, you may wind up with fiber in which all of that extra unwanted flotsam has been blended, or the mill may even refuse to process it for you or charge extra to clean it.

Make sure you've chosen a mill that can handle the type of final product you'd like to have. If you want a specific style of preparation, such as pin-drafted roving, ask whether the mill has the equipment for the final product you are seeking. Some mills are set up to process short-stapled fiber, while some work best with longer-stapled fiber. Some have difficulty with slippery fibers such as suri alpaca. Some mills specialize in fine, soft fibers, and others tend to focus on more midrange breeds. Be sure that the mill is knowledgeable about and can technically handle the type of fiber or blend that you'd like it to produce for you before you send your fiber for processing.

If you are unsure if a mill is suitable for what you are hoping to send, email or call. Most mill owners would *much* rather spend 15 to 20 minutes on the phone with you than receive a large box of fiber they can't process adequately. Be very clear about what processes you'd like the mill to provide for you. If the mill owner makes suggestions, it's probably a good idea to listen! Ultimately, the mill wants you to be happy and have a great experience.

If the mill doesn't provide a washing service, find out if there are any recommended methods of cleaning your fiber so there are no surprises when your fiber arrives.

## SEND YOUR FIBER PACKING

When you're packaging up your fiber, be sure to provide as many detailed written instructions as you can. Give the mill some options about what to do in the event that it is unable to process the fibers you've sent. Any information you can provide about what you'd like the final product to look like will be of great help to ensure that you get back a product you love.

Ask if there are any specifics about the fibers you plan to send to the mill. If you plan to send multiple types of fibers or several different colors, ask if there is a certain way your fiber should be labeled or if there are special instructions you need to send. If you plan to send something other than

*(continued on page 97)*

Photos courtesy of Sally Brandon



## The Shepherd's Mill

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www.kansasfiber.com

### Is there a minimum amount of wool you can process in an order? Can you do individual fleeces?

We do process individual fleeces and have even been known to process an individual cashmere fleece because it was special to the owner. It isn't cheap to do that, because it takes just as long to clean down and reset the machines for a 12-ounce order as it does for a 20-pound order, so we have to charge accordingly.

### What services do you offer spinners?

We scour, card to roving, and blend extensively. We also offer commer-

cially dyed bamboo and Merino that we can blend for color. We work with everything from alpaca to yak and will happily guide customers through any blends they desire.

### What's the best thing someone sending you wool can do?

If you are talking about sheep's wool, washing definitely saves money both in shipping and in processing. There really isn't any benefit in prewashing nongrease fibers. Skirting also saves money both in shipping and in processing, since we charge on the incoming weight. We do work closely to assure that loss percentages don't get excessive. Labeling doesn't seem like it would be that overlooked, but having your name on the outside of the box certainly helps our receiving department. Because of our scheduling plan, we like to be able to know whose fiber has come in the door

without having to open the box and dig around to find information.

### How long does it usually take to get a fleece back?

We maintain a 5- to 6-week turn-around from a scheduled date. We don't charge extra to schedule; we've always done it to maintain our sanity and yours. All we need is an estimated weight of the total amount you want processed and we'll get you scheduled into our production line.

### What are your limits?

As long as we are not spinning the fiber, length limits are less stringent. Realistically, 8 to 9 inches is not out of the question, and we are able to put short, fine down fibers through consistently, though losses increase as the short fibers increase in micron count. We do dehair and also use the dehairer to help clean up fleeces with more debris in them. When it comes to dirty fleeces, there is only so much we can do. We do not accept fleeces with burrs or anything hard (like toenails) in them.

### What do you best like to process, and what are you best at?

We love using our creative skills for unusual blends or blending color. We love the variety of fibers that we get to work with. I think our knowledge of fiber and blending is what my crew is best at.

### What do you wish that people sending you fleeces knew about what you do?

The safest blends are those in which the fibers are approximately the same micron count and the same length. That doesn't mean stretching those parameters can't yield nice results, but there is more potential for quality issues like shedding and pilling.





## The Natural Twist, LLC

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### Is there a minimum amount of wool you can process in an order? Can you do individual fleeces?

I actually prefer to process individual fleeces. I enjoy highlighting the uniqueness of each fleece. The smallest fleece I have been given to process was 18 ounces incoming weight. You have to know that during the course of getting the fiber to the finished product, a certain amount of fiber is lost to the machines. The carder will drop shorter fiber and vegetable matter below the carder rolls, which helps clean up the fiber, but this is a loss in overall weight. And this is in addition to the weight lost to lanolin, dirt, etc.

### What sorts of services do you offer spinners?

Skirting, scouring, picking, roving, 2-by-4-foot batts, felting, and pin drafting.

### What's the best thing someone sending you wool can do?

First, folks need to call or email me about their project to see if I am the best one to handle their fiber. Then we can go from there.

### How long does it usually take to get a fleece back?

Way too long, I'm sure, from the customer standpoint. Depending on the season, several months.

### What are your limits?

The shortest is approximately 2½ inches. But it also depends on the type of fiber—slick fiber needs to be longer. Multiple coats are processed very nicely with the equipment I have. I cannot dehair, but some short hair will fall out during the carding. The longest fiber length I have run was a Navajo Churro with an 8-inch staple.

### What do you best like to process, and what are you best at?

If I had to pick one fiber it would be wool. With that in mind, I have chosen to only process wool and wool blends. I routinely refer customers to other

mills that specialize in 100% exotic fiber.

### What do you wish that people sending you fleeces knew about what you do?

Processing fiber is work, no matter how it is done. Yes, mills can speed up the process, but all the same steps need to be done as when doing it by hand. The better, cleaner, and healthier the fiber, the better the outcome. GIGO—garbage in, garbage out. I am a fiber artist first and a mill owner/operator second, which means I use my many years of handling fiber to judge the most appropriate methods of processing to reach the best outcome for each processing job.

Photos courtesy of Ruth Baldwin



## Mill Know-How

- Make sure you are sending the mill only good, usable fiber. Skirt any raw fleece and remove short cuts, excessive seeds, hay, etc.
- Do your homework: Make sure the mill you want to use processes the type of fiber you want to send and that it can create the kind of fiber preparation you want.
- Be very clear on what you'd like the final fiber to be and what services you need.
- Ask whether you will receive your own fleece (and nothing but your fleece) back. Some mills group like colors together and return a share to each sender, while others run each fleece separately.
- Ask other spinners and shepherds for their recommendations on mills, especially if there's an unusual fiber you want to send.
- If you're buying fleece at a large fiber festival, find out whether a small mill will be on hand to accept orders and take your fleece on the spot.
- Keep good records of what you've sent to the mill. Some will keep the labels and tags to return with the finished product, but not all can do that. You might also want to keep track of when you send a fleece out so that you'll know about when to expect it back.
- When in doubt, call or email to ask specific questions.



plain wool or animal fibers, such as silk or glitter, confirm that the mill can handle these types of add-ins. Because of the extensive time it takes to clean the carding machines, some mills will only process wool or animal fibers. (Glitter takes a lot of time to clean out of the carder!)

Some mills also offer dyeing or add-in services. These can be a great way to increase your fiber yield on returned product if you'd like to stretch a precious fleece or two. (Remember that a fleece may lose 20 to 25 percent or even more in weight when the grease is washed out. Some fiber is also lost to the carding machines.) Many mills can add other interesting fibers to create a completely customized blend. Have a lovely soft Merino fleece? How about adding in some silk or alpaca for an ultraluxury blend? A mill may be able to add in silk noil, glitter, or other dyed wool colors to create a fun tweed or textured yarn. Be sure to ask about added costs for these services, and of course, if you prefer to keep your own fiber completely free of anything extra, that's your choice.

The best part about using a small mill is that you can customize your final product to get *exactly* the fiber you want to spin. There are many great options for getting the most out of a fiber you don't want to process yourself, freeing up more time for spinning and getting a wonderful finished yarn.



## Mill at the Meadowlands

Ruth Lamb

Mill at the Meadowlands

4224 Powells Run Road

Randallstown, MD 21133

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info@themillmeadowlands.com

www.themillmeadowlands.com

### Is there a minimum amount of wool you can process in an order? Can you do individual fleeces?

We do process small individual orders from 1 to 5 pounds. However, you can lose up to 8 ounces of fiber to the drums on the carder, so when a 1-pound fleece is delivered, I usually ask to either wait for the next fleece to be sheared or blend it with another fiber for a 50/50 blend.

### What sorts of services do you offer spinners?

Our mill offers washing, picking, carded roving, pin-drafted roving, and yarn.

### What's the best thing someone sending you wool can do?

Skirting is the most important task that you can provide for your fleece. Keep the staple consistent, pick out the vegetable matter (VM), and do not send poo that is stuck to your fleece. (You would not wash a poopy diaper with your delicates in the washing machine.) Take the neck area out and bag it separately from your fleece, because grain and hay are usually the heaviest through the neck area.

### How long does it usually take to get a fleece back?

The turnaround time varies with the time of year, shearing season, and fiber festivals.

### What are your limits?

Our mill can process fleeces with staple lengths from 1½ to 11 inches. We do not accept fleeces with heavy VM, felted fleeces (from either home washing or felted on the animal), or

fiber rinsed in fabric softener or hair conditioner.

### What do you best like to process, and what are you best at?

I love roving; pin drafted or carded does not matter.

### What do you wish that people sending you fleeces knew about what you do?

We love what we do, seven days a week. Time and care are spent on each and every order that passes through this mill. Our customers can reach me on my cell phone from 7 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., seven days a week. We love posting photos on our Facebook page of orders in process as well as the finished product.

Photos courtesy of Ruth Lamb





Photos courtesy of Mountain Meadow Wool Mill



## Mountain Meadow Wool Mill

*Karen Hostetler  
22 Plains Drive  
Buffalo, Wyoming 82834  
(307) 684-5775  
info@mountainmeadowwool.com  
www.mountainmeadowwool.com*

### **Is there a minimum amount of wool you can process in an order? Can you do individual fleeces?**

We prefer to process 25 pounds at a minimum. If the incoming weight is less than 50 pounds, we have a set-up fee.

### **What services do you offer spinners?**

We do scouring, roving, pin drafting, combing (top), and blending.

### **What's the best thing someone sending you wool can do?**

We prefer the customer does not wash the fiber, as we rewash it. Skirt as best as you can; the cleaner the fiber, the better the product. Label bags well with name and contact information.

### **How long does it usually take to get a fleece back?**

Two to three months.

### **What are your limits?**

Over 6-inch staple length will break in the carder.

### **What do you best like to process, and what are you best at?**

We are best at timely delivery and making top. We really like unusual and conservation breeds of sheep.

### **What do you wish that people sending you fleeces knew about what you do?**

We can work with customers to get exactly what they want, whether it is blending or in weights of roving or top.





## Hidden Valley Farm & Woolen Mill

Paul & Carol Wagner

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hvfarmwoolenmill@lakefield.net

www.hiddenvalleyfarmwoolenmill.com

### Is there a minimum amount of wool you can process in an order? Can you do individual fleeces?

We have a minimum of 3 pounds per run for roving, but we can do 1 pound for batting.

### What services do you offer spinners?

We scour fleeces and process roving and batting for quilts and felting. We blend fibers and card dyed fibers.

### What's the best thing someone sending you wool can do?

Fleece should be in a clear plastic bag with a label that includes name, address, phone, and email. There should also be a description of what type of processing is desired: roving or batting, blending or side-by-side (distinct colors next to one another). The fleece should be skirted, with vegetable material, tags, second cuts, and anything you wouldn't want in the end product removed.

### What are your limits?

We can process fiber up to 7 to 8 inches if it is a longwool. Medium fibers process best at no more than 5 inches. We do not process Merino or Rambouillet. We process camelids but need to add 20% wool; we use a lovely Falkland Island top for this.

### What do you best like to process, and what are you best at?

We enjoy working with longwools and medium-grade wools.

### What do you wish that people sending you fleeces knew about what you do?

We always return the fleece to its owner.

## Ohio Valley Natural Fibers

Ron and Dianne Ganslein

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Sardinia, OH 45171

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info@ovnf.com

www.ovnf.com

### Is there a minimum amount of wool you can process in an order? Can you do individual fleeces?

If the finished weight is less than 2 pounds, there is a \$10 surcharge. For batts, it is best to have at least 1 pound. We raise sheep and appreciate the need to process and track individual fleeces, so much of what we do is recorded by name and/or number of the animal.

### What sorts of services do you offer spinners?

We offer skirting, scouring, blending, roving, and pin drafting. We also sell a wide variety of fibers for blending and creating custom roving and yarn.

### What's the best thing someone sending you wool can do?

The number one thing you can do to ensure top quality roving is to skirt properly and remove vegetation. We offer these services if you do not have time or desire to do it. We have an online form that customers can print, or just include contact info and what you want done; separate what will be run individually and label it.

### How long does it usually take to get a fleece back?

Generally turnaround is 4 months, but if it is critical to meet a shorter deadline, we try to accommodate.

### What are your limits?

We don't technically have limits, but certain criteria improve the quality of the end product. A staple length of 3 to 6 inches is ideal; shorter fibers fall out, while long fibers can begin to wrap. We reserve the right to reject fleece with excess vegetation or that is insufficiently skirted if the customer

is not open to having us do it. Our equipment does a great job on dual-coated breeds.

### What do you best like to process, and what are you best at?

Custom blending is probably our favorite aspect of what we offer our customers. We have the good fortune of having access to so many different types of fiber to create whatever our customers can design, so it really makes us feel special to be a part of that creative process.

### What do you wish that people sending you fleeces knew about what you do?

Our processing is a labor of love. Our big carders are celebrating one hundred years of operation! They do a wonderful job, but milling done well is a labor-intensive process. We work very hard to protect the fiber we receive and insure it is not overprocessed, so the beauty of the fiber will be evident in the yarn that is spun from it.



We are:

- A New Mexico Wool Mill and Fiber Arts Company
- Happy to process one fleece at a time with work completed by mill owner/fiber artist
- Experienced with raising fiber animals

Contact: Ruth Baldwin

505-453-2277

[www.TheNaturalTwist.com](http://www.TheNaturalTwist.com)

## Hidden Valley

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# Ohio Valley Natural Fibers

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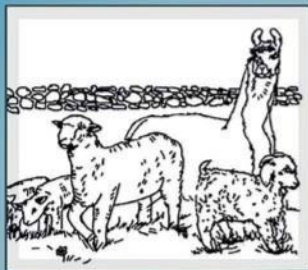
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1-866-536-2779

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[www.stonehedgefibermill.com](http://www.stonehedgefibermill.com)

For specials on processing and great deals on our fabulous yarns.



## The Shepherd's Mill, Inc

**The Shepherd's Mill** creates exquisite roving, batts, felt and yarn from the Nation's finest natural fibers. We are Kansas' first fiber mill and the country's most versatile fiber processing facility.

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# GOT GAUGE? *(me either)*

by Leslie Ordal

*Spinning without a standard doesn't mean yarn without a purpose. Find out how to use yarn you spin for the fun of it.*

Knitting with commercially produced yarn has its advantages: it's available in copious quantities, easy to obtain, and extremely consistent in qualities such as density and diameter. This consistency means that your gauge swatches can properly do their job, and your finished items are more likely to be consistent throughout.

Of course, nothing can replace the satisfaction of using your own handspun to make an item you can wear or display with pride. Many spinners strive for consistency by “spinning to spec”—that is, planning ahead for certain characteristics and therefore function of the finished yarn, usually through careful preparation, samples, and even knitting gauge swatches before getting down to spinning all of their fiber. I've seen some impressive examples of this, usually involving thorough sampling and note taking.

But let's be honest—I mean, really honest: how many of us spin to spec? My guess is that a good number of us (perhaps even the majority) at least occasionally spin a beautiful braid of fiber with no other considerations than “the way it wants to be spun,” ending up with a skein that may well be a complete surprise in terms of weight, loft, drape, and other characteristics.

*Basketweave Pattern* (multiple of 6 sts)

**Rows 1–4** (RS and WS) \*P3, k3; rep from \*.

**Rows 5–8** \*K3, p3; rep from \*.

**Rep Rows** 1–8 for patt.

*Swatch (opposite)*

CO 21 sts.

Work Rows 1–8 of Basketweave patt twice. Work Rows 1–4 of patt once more.

**Rows 21–22** Knit.

**Row 23** (RS) \*P3, k3; rep from \* two more times, p3.

**Row 24** (WS) \*K3, p3; rep from \* two more times, k3.

Rep Rows 23 and 24 four more times.

BO all sts. Wet block.

To anyone who may be feeling slightly anxious at the thought that this applies to you, don't panic. While spinning to spec has its place, there is no shame in spinning for the sake of spinning, then deciding the purpose of your yarn after the fact. After all, part of the joy of spinning is the tactile feel of fiber sliding through your fingers and watching that magical transformation from fluff to yarn—sometimes it's too hard to wait! So for intrepid spinners who dive right in without preparation, have no fear: your yarn can still be usable, functional, and the raw material for a treasured garment or accessory.

Extra time spent at the beginning sampling, measuring, and swatching often does pay off in time saved later, and it can help avoid the frustration of ripping back and starting over again at the knitting stage. That said, there are no knitting or spinning police, and you can spin however you want!

## SKIPPING THE SWATCH

Ready to knit with yarn that hasn't been spun to spec? Here are a few guidelines and ideas to get the most out of your yarn and all the hard work you put into making it.

### *Get the Gear*

Many tools exist for measuring and describing yarn: twist angle gauges, spinner's control cards, and yarn balances. While generally designed to be used in the beginning and sampling stages of a project, they can be used with already spun yarn as well. Spinner's control cards, which have lines of varying thickness that can be used to estimate the weight of your yarn, can be especially useful in getting a sense of how your yarn has turned out.

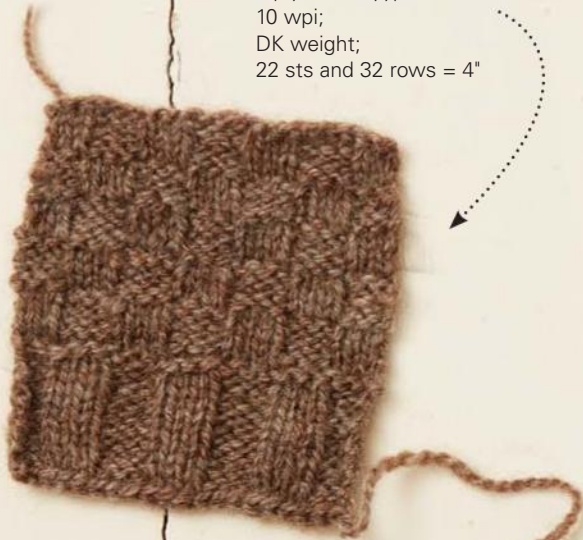
But even without a yarn-measuring tool, you can often eyeball your yarn to see if you've spun a nice Aran-weight skein or are leaning more toward the sportweight side of things. One great trick that uses a different kind of measuring tool is to fold a piece of yarn in half and insert it through the holes in a needle gauge. When you find the smallest hole through which the yarn passes easily, try using the corresponding needle size to knit the yarn.

### *Two Plies Are Evener Than One*

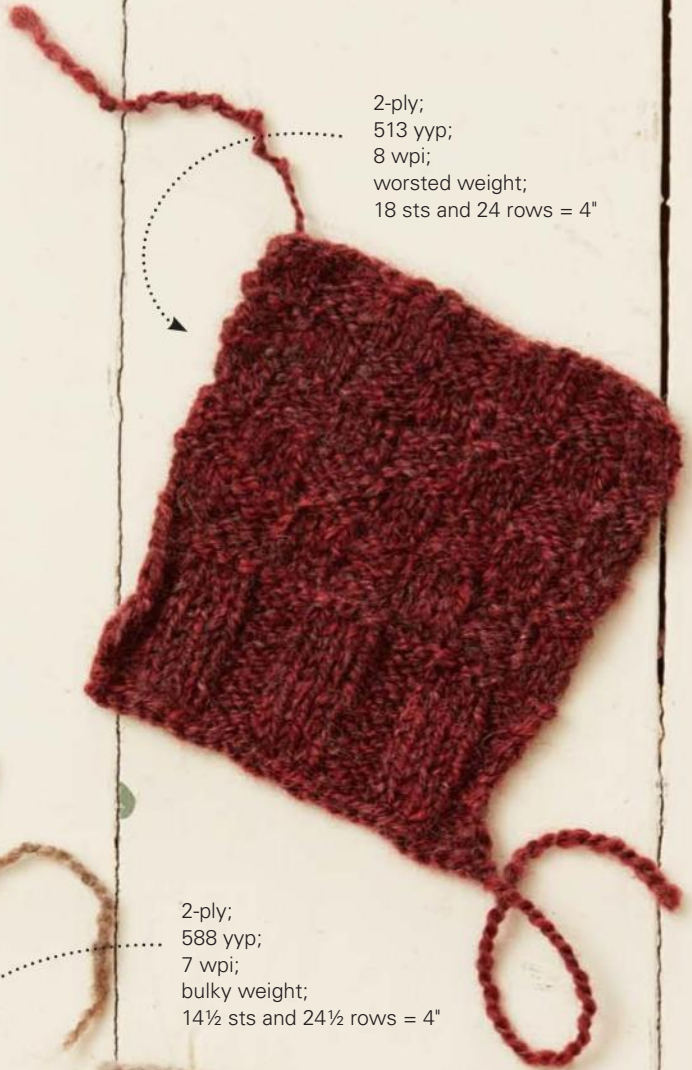
Plied yarn is almost always more consistent than singles. The more plies you have, the more likely thick-and-thin spots will line up and even each other out. One caveat is that chain plying may actually accentuate the inconsisten-

None of the yarns in the swatches below were spun with a basketweave-patterned sweater (such as the one featured on page 106) in mind, but each would make a lovely garment in its own gauge.

2-ply; 1,063 ypp;  
10 wpi;  
DK weight;  
22 sts and 32 rows = 4"



2-ply;  
513 ypp;  
8 wpi;  
worsted weight;  
18 sts and 24 rows = 4"



2-ply;  
588 ypp;  
7 wpi;  
bulky weight;  
14½ sts and 24½ rows = 4"



2-ply;  
944 ypp;  
11 wpi;  
DK weight;  
21 sts and 32 rows = 4"





cies if you have long sections of both thick and thin yarn in your singles. If they end up plied back on themselves, the obvious difference in diameter will still be there.

## ANN BUDD: THE HANDY GUIDE FOR SPINNERS, TOO

If you are open to starting your handspun knitting project with a gauge swatch, there's hardly a better resource than Ann Budd's *Knitter's Handy Book* series. Ann's well-designed patterns are enhanced by copious tables and schematics for just about every gauge and size. You can use a huge variety of yarns to make all kinds of garments and accessories.

A spinner herself, Ann gives some great advice for knitting with handspun. One technique is to weigh or measure out and cut your handspun yarn into approximately 50-gram balls, then randomly switch which ball you're using as you knit. This will, of course, result in many more ends to weave in, but it will help make inconsistencies in your yarn less noticeable in the finished piece. (See Ann's first handspun socks in *Spin Off* Summer 2011 and 2012.)

Ann also suggests choosing patterns that are worked in the round rather than seamed. Why? Imagine knitting two front panels and discovering when it's time to seam them that because of slight inconsistencies in your handspun, they don't quite match up in length. Knitting in the round will save you the frustration of trying to force the two pieces to line up. Working in the round also spreads out excessively thick or thin sections over a large section of the garment rather than concentrating them in one small, potentially obvious area.

Unlike plain stockinette stitch, moss stitch and other textured stitches draw attention away from the yarn itself. "The eye sees the texture pattern more than the inconsistencies," says Ann.

## MAKE IT WORK MOMENTS

A few years back, I spun a decent quantity of yarn from a nice braid, flagrantly violating the rule I give my spinning students: "Always keep a sample of the yarn you're aiming for within sight of you as you're spinning." It's advice that has served me well because that visual reminder can be remarkably effective for keeping things consistent as you draft all your fiber from start to finish. When all was said and done and chain-plied, I had a skein that was worsted-weight at one end and gradually narrowed to sportweight at the other end.

Rather than relegate it to the "pretty but useless" area of my yarn storage, I decided to use a pattern that would make use of its uneven gauge. I chose a triangular shawl that started with a very narrow point (for the sportweight end) and gradually broadened to a wide base (for the worsted-weight end). Because the general shape of the

pattern broadened from wide to narrow to wide, the change in the diameter of the yarn wasn't so obvious.

Another technique I could have used for better uniformity in the is to switch needle size as the yarn changed. The shawl would have maintained its narrow-to-wide shape, but with a more consistent feel to the fabric.

## PICK A PATTERN

Thinking about those skeins you spun and haven't made into anything yet? Here are a few more ideas to get you thinking about how to use your handspun, no matter how it turned out.

- Unless you're planning on a knit-to-the-very-last-yard project (such as the triangular shawl I mentioned), aim for a pattern that uses only about 80 percent of your yardage. This will give you enough leeway to cut out sections that may be unacceptably inconsistent while still leaving you with enough yarn to complete your project.
- Certain items rely more on gauge for success than others. A close-fitting sweater will be more difficult to create without a gauge swatch than, say, a ribbed hat or a shawl. Speaking of gauge, a denser fabric will hide inconsistencies in your yarn better than a looser, drapier one.
- If you have a large quantity of fairly consistent handspun yarn and the burning desire to get knitting already (skipping the gauge swatch and getting right down to the instant gratification of casting on and completing those first few rows), consider a small gaugeless project such as a quilt square, small toy, or beret first. If you like the finished item, then you can use that as a gauge swatch of sorts before jumping into a bigger and more committed project. Try to match techniques between the two projects, though. For example, if your bigger project is in stockinette, make sure the small one is in stockinette as well. The same applies to working in the round versus knitting back and forth.
- If your desire to get knitting already is even more intense and you want to skip the small trial project, by all means, go ahead—we've already established there are no knitting police. This approach does call for paying close attention to the type of fabric you're getting and openness to ripping back if you don't like it and starting over with a different needle size.

In the end, the one who decides project success is you. If you knit a project with your handspun and couldn't be happier with it, it doesn't matter how you made it. You might want to experiment with spinning to spec someday, or you may decide it's just not for you, but there's more than one way to arrive at a finished item—made with your own handspun—that you love.



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# GAUGE *the* SITUATION

Even with commercial yarns, almost every knitter is stymied at some point by an unexpected gauge. With handspun yarn, the task of matching yarn, pattern, and gauge can seem insurmountable. Enter two solutions: Find a project where gauge truly doesn't matter, or make a gauge swatch and take it from there.

## **Basket Case Cardigan**

*Kristen TenDyke*

Excerpt from *The Knitter's Handy Book of Top Down Sweaters*

O-Wool Balance (commercial yarn)

Top-down sweaters let you try as you go, making them perfect for finessing fit. A relaxed silhouette accommodates small gauge discrepancies, and a calculator and schematic can be your guide to customizing a garment for handspun yarn.

**See Page 108**











## BASKET CASE CARDIGAN

Kristen TenDyke

*The blocky nature of the drop-shoulder silhouette makes a good backdrop for the graphic ribs and basketweave squares in this sporty cardigan.*

*Kristen followed the basic instructions for 5 stitches/inch in the eBook edition of The Knitter's Handy Book of Top-Down Sweaters for the sweater shown here but added a basketweave pattern on the yoke, sleeves, and lower body edging.*

### MATERIALS

**Yarn** O-Wool Balance (50% organic cotton, 50% organic wool; 130 yd [120 m]/50 g): #2015 lapis, 9 (10, 12, 13, 15) skeins; worsted weight.

**Needles** U.S. size 5 (3.75 mm): 16" and 32" (40 and 80 cm) circular (cir) and set of 4 or 5 double-pointed (dpn).

**Gauge** 20 sts = 4". Adjust needle size if necessary to obtain the correct gauge.

**Notions** Removable markers; stitch holders or waste yarn; markers (m); seven ½" (1.3 cm) buttons.

**Finished Size** About 34½ (37½, 42½, 46½, 50½)" (87.5 [95, 108, 118, 128.5] cm) bust circumference, buttoned. Sweater shown measures 37½" (95 cm).

See [knittingdaily.com/glossary](http://knittingdaily.com/glossary) for terms you don't know.

### STITCH GUIDE

*Basketweave Pattern:* (mult of 6 sts)

**Rows 1–4** (RS and WS) \*P3, k3; rep from \*.

**Rows 5–8** \*K3, p3; rep from \*.

Rep Rows 1–8 for patt. 5 sts and 7 rows = 1" (2.5 cm) in basketweave pattern.

### BACK

With longer cir needle, CO 74 (78, 86, 96, 104) sts. Place a removable marker on each side of the center 32 (32, 34, 38, 42) sts to mark back neck—21 (23, 26, 29, 31) sts for each shoulder.

Work basketweave patt as foll:

**Rows 1 and 3** (RS) K3, [p3, k3] 11 (12, 13, 15, 16) times, p3, k2 (0, 2, 0, 2).

**Rows 2 and 4** (WS) P2 (0, 2, 0, 2), k3, [p3, k3] 11 (12, 13, 15, 16) times, p3.

**Rows 5 and 7** P3, [k3, p3] 11 (12, 13, 15, 16) times, k3, p2 (0, 2, 0, 2).

**Rows 6 and 8** K2 (0, 2, 0, 2), p3, [k3, p3] 11 (12, 13, 15, 16) times, k3.

Rep Rows 1–8 until piece measures about 8 (8¼, 9, 9¾, 10¾)" (20.5 [21, 23, 25, 27.5] cm) from CO, ending with WS Row 4 or Row 8 of patt.

Place sts on holder or waste yarn.

### FRONTS

**Row 1** (RS) With RS facing and beg at armhole edge, pick up and knit 1 st in each of the first 21 (23, 26, 29, 31) CO sts for right front, ending at beg of marked center sts; then with RS still facing, another ball of yarn, and beg at end of marked center sts, pick up and knit 1 st in each of the rem 21 (23, 26, 29, 31) sts for the left front, ending at armhole edge.

Establish patt on fronts separately as foll:

*Left Front*

**Rows 2 and 4** (WS) P2 (0, 2, 0, 2), k3, [p3, k3] 2 (3, 3, 4, 4) times, p3 (2, 3, 2, 2), k1 (0, 0, 0, 0).

**Row 3** (RS) P1 (0, 0, 0, 0), k3 (2, 3, 2, 2), [p3, k3] 2 (3, 3, 4, 4) times, p3, k2 (0, 2, 0, 2).

**Rows 5 and 7** K1 (0, 0, 0, 0), p3 (2, 3,

2, 2), [k3, p3] 2 (3, 3, 4, 4) times, k3, p2 (0, 2, 0, 2).

**Rows 6 and 8** K2 (0, 2, 0, 2), p3, [k3, p3] 2 (3, 3, 4, 4) times, k3 (2, 3, 2, 2), p1 (0, 0, 0, 0).

**Row 9** Rep Row 3.

**Row 10** Rep Row 4—piece measures 1½" (3.8 cm) from pick-up row.

*Right Front*

**Rows 2 and 4** (WS) P0 (0, 2, 0, 1), k0 (2, 3, 2, 3), [p3, k3] 3 (3, 3, 4, 4) times, p3.

**Row 3** (RS) K3, [p3, k3] 3 (3, 3, 4, 4) times, p0 (2, 3, 2, 3), k0 (0, 2, 0, 1).

**Rows 5 and 7** P3, [k3, p3] 3 (3, 3, 4, 4) times, k0 (2, 3, 2, 3), p0 (0, 2, 0, 1).

**Rows 6 and 8** K0 (0, 2, 0, 1), p0 (2, 3, 2, 3), [k3, p3] 3 (3, 3, 4, 4) times, k3.

**Row 9** Rep Row 3.

**Row 10** Rep Row 4—piece measures 1½" (3.8 cm) from pick-up row.

*Shape neck: Inc row* (RS) Working each side separately in established patt, on right front work to 1 st before neck edge, M1 or M1P as necessary to maintain established patt, work last st; on left front, work 1 st in patt, M1 or M1P as necessary, work to end—1 st inc'd each neck edge. Work 1 WS row even in patt. Rep the last 2 rows 2 (2, 1, 1, 2) more time(s), working new sts into patt, and ending with a WS row—24 (26, 28, 31, 34) sts. Keeping in patt, at each neck edge, use the knitted method to CO 2 sts 1 (1, 2, 2, 1) time(s), then CO 3 sts 1 (1, 1, 1, 2) time(s), then CO 8 (8, 8, 10, 10) sts once—37 (39, 43, 48, 52) sts each side; fronts measure about 3 (3, 3, 3, 3¼)" (7.5 [7.5, 7.5, 7.5, 8.5] cm) from pick-up row. Cont even in patt until each piece measures same length as back from CO, ending with the same row of patt. Cut yarn. Place right front sts onto holder or waste yarn.

### LOWER BODY

**Joining row** With RS facing and maintaining patt as established, work 37 (39, 43, 48, 52) left front sts, use the knitted method to CO 6 (8, 10, 10, 11) sts, place marker (pm) to

denote left side “seam,” CO 6 (8, 10, 10, 11) more sts, work 74 (78, 86, 96, 104) held back sts, CO 6 (8, 10, 10, 11) sts, pm to denote right side “seam,” CO 6 (8, 10, 10, 11) more sts, work 37 (39, 43, 48, 52) right front sts—172 (188, 212, 232, 252) sts total; 43 (47, 53, 58, 63) sts each front; 86 (94, 106, 116, 126) back sts. Work new underarm sts into patt to match established patt on fronts and back; patt will not be continuous across the seam markers. Work even until lower body measures about 2" (5 cm), ending with WS Row 4 or Row 8 of patt. Knit 2 rows, ending with a RS row—1 garter ridge on RS. **Set-up row** (RS) [K3, p3] 7 (7, 8, 9, 10) times, k1 (3, 3, 3, 3), p0 (2, 2, 1, 0), slip marker (sl m), p0 (2, 0, 0, 0), k3 (3, 1, 1, 2), [p3, k3] 13 (14, 17, 19, 20) times, p3 (3, 3, 1, 3), k2 (2, 0, 0, 1), sl m, k0 (2, 2, 1, 0), p1 (3, 3, 3, 3), [k3, p3] 7 (7, 8, 9, 10) times. Cont in rib as established (knit the knits and purl the purls) until piece measures 11½ (11½, 12½, 13, 13)" (29 [29, 31.5, 33, 33] cm) from joining

row, or 2" (5 cm) less than desired length, ending with a WS row.

### EDGING

**Inc row** (RS) Knit and at the same time inc 2 (4, 4, 2, 0) sts evenly spaced—174 (192, 216, 234, 252) sts. Knit 1 WS row—1 garter ridge on RS. Work in basketweave patt (see Stitch Guide) for 12 rows, ending with Row 4 of patt—lower body measures 13½ (13½, 14½, 15, 15)" (34.5 [34.5, 37, 38, 38] cm) from dividing row. Loosely BO all sts in patt.

### SLEEVES

With shorter cir needle, RS facing, and beg at center of underarm CO, pick up and knit 1 st in each of the next 6 (8, 10, 10, 11) CO sts at base of armhole, 31 (33, 35, 39, 43) sts to shoulder “seam,” 31 (33, 35, 39, 43) sts to base of armhole, then 1 st in each of the rem 6 (8, 10, 10, 11) sts at base of armhole—74 (82, 90, 98, 108) sts total. With RS still facing and holding yarn in back, sl 1 pwise (this

is the first picked-up st), bring yarn to front, return slipped st to left needle tip, then turn work so WS is facing and pm to denote center of underarm. Working back and forth in rows, work short-rows to dec underarm sts as foll:

**Short-row 1** (WS) P2 (2, 2, 0, 2), k3, [p3, k3] 10 (11, 12, 14, 15) times, p2 (2, 2, 0, 1), p2tog, turn work.

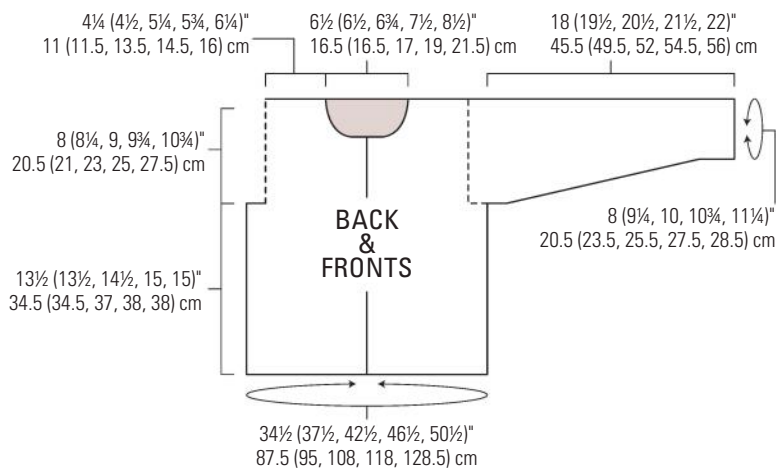
**Short-row 2** (RS) Sl 1 pwise with yarn in back (wyb), work in established basketweave patt to last 7 (9, 11, 11, 12) sts, p2tog, turn work.

**Short-row 3** Sl 1 pwise, work in patt to 1 st before gap, p2tog (1 st each side of gap), turn work.

**Short-row 4** Sl 1 pwise, work in patt to 1 st before gap, k2tog (1 st each side of gap), turn work.

Keeping in patt, rep Rows 3 and 4 until all underarm sts have been eliminated, ending with a RS row—62 (66, 70, 78, 86) sts rem.

**Joining rnd** With RS still facing, join for working in rnds. Cont established basketweave patt in the rnd until sleeve measures 1 (1½, 1½, 1½, 1½)"





(2.5 [3.8, 3.8, 3.8, 3.8] cm) from edge of body at end of cap shaping. **Note:** Patt will not be continuous around the sleeve for all sizes. **Dec rnd** K2tog or p2tog as necessary to maintain patt, work in patt to last 2 sts, ssp or ssk as necessary to maintain patt—2 sts dec'd. Dec 1 st each side of m in this manner every 12th rnd 0 (8, 9, 5, 0) times, then every 10th rnd 10 (1, 0, 6, 7) time(s), then every 8th rnd 0 (0, 0, 0, 7) times, changing to dpn when there are too few sts to fit on cir needle—40 (46, 50, 54, 56) sts rem. Cont even as established until piece measures about 18 (19½, 20½, 21½, 22)" (45.5 [49.5, 52, 54.5, 56] cm) from joining rnd or desired length, ending with Rnd 3 or 7 of patt. Loosely BO all sts in patt.

## FINISHING

Block to measurements.

### Neckband

With shorter cir needle, RS facing, and beg at right shoulder seam, pick up and knit 29 (29, 30, 32, 35) sts evenly spaced along right front neck, k32 (32, 34, 38, 42) held back neck sts, pick up and knit 29 (29, 30, 32, 35) sts along left front neck—90 (90, 94, 102, 112) sts total. With WS facing, BO all sts kwise.

### Buttonband

With RS facing, pick up and knit 96 (98, 108, 114, 118) sts evenly spaced (about 3 sts for every 4 rows) along left front edge. Knit 4 rows, ending with a RS row. With WS facing, BO all sts kwise. Mark placement of 7 of buttons, one 1" (2.5 cm) up from lower edge of body, one 1" (2.5 cm) below neck shaping, and the others evenly spaced in between.

### Buttonhole Band

With RS facing, pick up and knit 96 (98, 108, 114, 118) sts evenly spaced along right front edge. Knit 1 (WS) row. **Buttonhole row** (RS) \*Knit to marked button position, k2tog, [yo] 2 times; rep from \* 6 more times, knit to end—7 buttonholes total. Knit 1 WS row,

working each double yo as k1 while dropping its second loop. Knit 1 RS row, and as you come to each buttonhole insert right needle into double yo buttonhole 2 rows below, wrap yarn around needle kwise, draw up 1 st on right needle, then drop st

at top of buttonhole off left needle, allowing it to ladder down to the buttonhole. With WS facing, BO all sts kwise. Weave in loose ends. Sew buttons to buttonband opposite buttonholes. Block again, if desired.







# HOW TO KNIT

## *with* ART YARN

by Esther Rodgers

*Have you seen (or spun) those amazing textured skeins of creative art yarn, the ones that you just love to fondle? Most spinners' first question is usually, "How can I make that?" The second is always, "What would I do with it?" They're often put up in skeins of small yardage, and they can be very bulky in nature. It's tempting to just put them in a bowl and pet them when you are having a bad day, but they can be useful as yarn. So how can you actually incorporate them in your knitting projects?*

### LOOSEN UP AND KEEP IT SIMPLE

The easiest way to use textured yarn in knitting is by using large needles and simple stitches.

When you use needles that are the "correct" size (the one most commonly associated with the diameter of the yarn), you often lose the amazing texture that piqued your interest in the first place. By using larger needles, you allow the yarn room to show off everything it has going on while also creating a lacy look without fancy lace stitches. You'll also use less yarn when knitting with large needles, so this will help your smaller skeins go farther.

Simple stitches are extra important when working with textured yarns. When you use intricate stitch patterns with textured yarn, it becomes too much to look at, and you lose both the pattern and the character of the yarn. It's best to let the yarn do the talking and keep the stitches simple.

### DROP IT!

One of my most favorite ways of using textured yarn, especially yarn that has special textures or add-ins, is to include long stitches such as dropped stitches and twisted dropped stitches. These long stitches give space for the yarn's texture to shine, obscuring nothing. I like to create even more interest by alternating the length of the dropped stitches, making some rows higher than others. Long stitches also address the problem of small skeins because they are great for adding length without using up yardage.

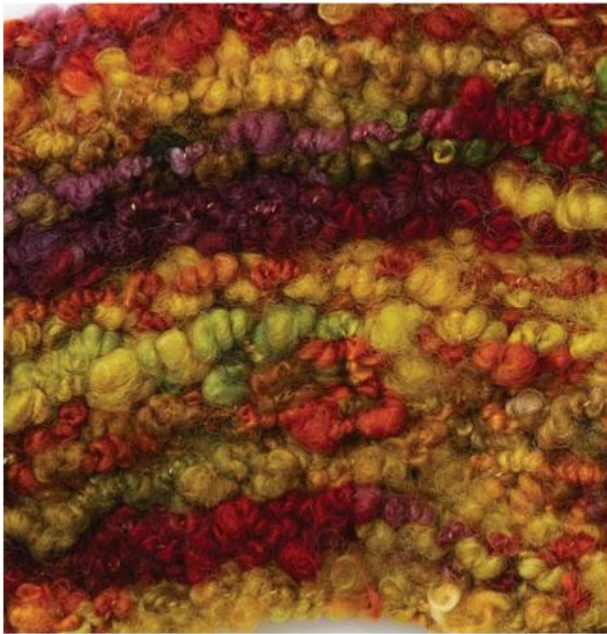
### MIX IT UP, STRETCH IT OUT

Another way to use textured yarn in your knitting is to mix it with commercial yarns. This is a great way to incorporate smaller skeins of yarn and make them go farther. You can match the weight of the commercial yarn to your handspun, or you can mix the yarn weights for a different look. If you pair a commercial yarn with a similar weight handspun, increase your needle size just a bit to let the yarn breathe.

I love to mix weights, usually a very thin commercial yarn with a bulky textured art yarn. The combination creates the illusion that the bulky yarn is floating and allows the texture to fully shine. You can alternate rows—work a few rows of commercial and then one row of handspun—or mix it up altogether and proceed without







The diameter of the yarn would suggest knitting garter stitch with a size 17 (12.75 mm) needle, but the beauty of the yarn is partly hidden in the dense fabric. Using a size 50 (25 mm) needle lets the yarn show its character, conserves yardage, and improves drape. In both swatches, the stitch pattern is completely overshadowed by the yarn. Photos by George Boe



Dropped stitches allow the long, luxurious locks and fun, glitzy wraps in this yarn to stand out.



A very thin commercial bouclé yarn contrasts but doesn't compete with the curly lockspun art yarn.

a pattern. The key is to carry your handspun up the side, rather than cutting it as you go.

When working with textured handspun, I make sure to use it for the cast-on and bind-off to keep the final piece stable and strong, with a little extra weight on each end. Use large needles here, too, so that the knitting is lacy and the art yarn is the main feature. I usually keep my stitches simple here, though I have seen amazing use of a feather-and-fan stitch pattern that alternated thin commercial yarn with rows of textured handspun.

## FIT AND TRIM

A great way to add pop to the edges of knitting projects is to use textured yarn as trim for otherwise plain knitting. These techniques are especially great for curly tailspun yarns. The easiest way is just to bind off using textured yarn rather than the main yarn. If the textured yarn is bulkier than the main yarn, you can bind off with two main stitches to every textured stitch while also increasing the bind-off needle size. This will keep your bind-off loose enough to block.



Another way to trim your knitting with textured yarn is to carry it up the side of the knitting as you knit your stitches. This technique is great if you only have a little bit of yarn. It also allows you to add art yarn to any part of your project, not just the end or beginning. Simply hold the textured yarn and catch it with the main yarn, locking it in.

Finally, you can break out a hook and crochet the textured yarn onto the edge of your knitting. To keep the stitches open and keep from distorting the fabric, increase the hook size and crochet into every two or three stitches, depending on the bulk of the textured yarn.

There are other creative ways to add textured yarn into knitting, such as weaving it through yarnovers or through a dropped stitch that you allow to run to the bottom. It just takes some creative thinking and experimentation. Don't be afraid to mix and match these techniques along with your skeins. Throw in some commercial yarn and break out the big needles. You'll be diving into those textured yarns, creating a one-of-a-kind piece in no time.



Curly tailspun yarn makes a great trim as a bind-off (top) or crocheted edging (bottom).

## The Spinning Wheel Slueth

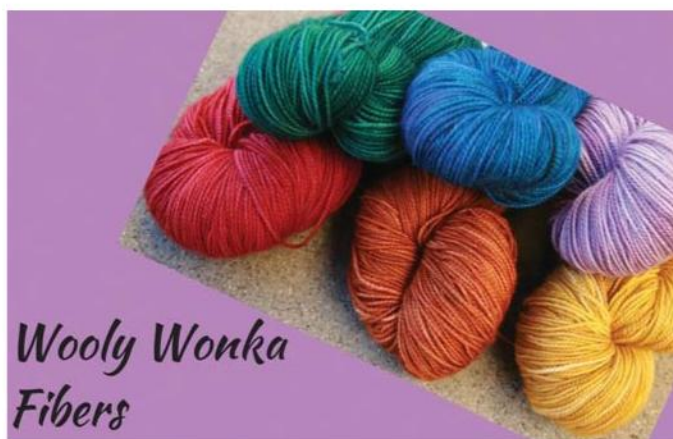
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# ART YARNS

A simple stitch pattern can make a bold yarn sing. Just a little bit of art yarn can make a caressable accessory.





## LOCKED UP BAG

Kathy Augustine



Border Leicester, Shetland/Merino, and Karakul

*Whether you are going out on the town for an evening or to your favorite craft festival, sometimes you only want to carry a small purse. Show off your handspun art yarn while safely carrying your wallet and cell phone.*

### MATERIALS

**Fiber** One ply: blend of dyed Border Leicester lamb and natural-colored Shetland/Merino cross; second ply: natural-colored Karakul.

**Yarn** 2-ply (one singles lockspun, one smooth); 50 yd; 5 wpi; 269 ypp; bulky.

**Needles** U.S. size 10½ (6.5 mm).

Adjust needle size if necessary to obtain the correct gauge.

**Gauge** 9 sts and 14 rows = 4" in St st.

**Notions** Tapestry needle; ⅓ yd of silk fabric for lining; ½ yd fusible interfacing; sewing needle; sewing thread to match lining fabric; magnetic snap; 2 drapery weights; one 1¼" button; two 2½" x ⅜" leather strips, two 1" diameter leather circles; rivet setter; two ¼" rivets; 44" long purse strap.

**Finished Size** 6" wide x 7" tall.

See [knittingdaily.com/glossary](http://knittingdaily.com/glossary) for terms you don't know.

### SHELL

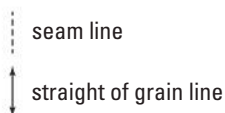
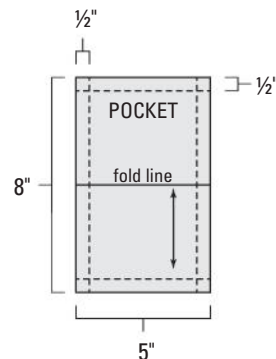
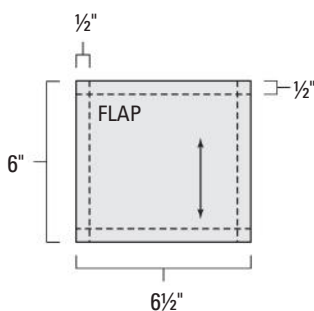
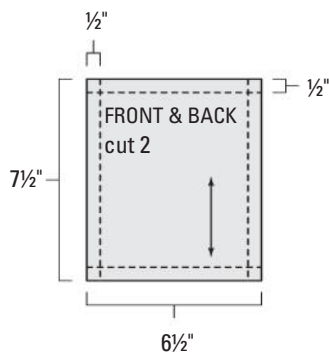
Using the long-tail method, CO 14 sts. Knit 3 rows in garter st (knit every row). Work in St st until piece measures 18" from CO. Knit 3 rows in garter st. BO all sts.

### FINISHING

Weave in ends. Block. Fold lower 6½" of bag up, WS tog, to form main pouch. 5½" rem for flap. Sew side seams with project yarn. **Lining:** Cut silk lining for front, back, flap,

and pocket to dimensions given in diagrams below. Cut interfacing to same dimensions for front, back, and flap. Following manufacturer's instructions, fuse interfacing to lining.

**Pocket:** Fold RS tog and sew closed along seam line, leaving a small opening for turning. Trim corners, turn right side out, and press. Sew pocket centered on RS of back lining. RS tog, sew top edge of back lining to bottom edge of flap along seam line, press seam open. RS tog, sew bottom and side edges of front and back lining tog. Press seams open. Press ½" seam allowance to WS along sides and top of purse flap and top of front. **Assembly:** Placing leather circles behind snap for stability, attach female snap centered on RS front of shell 3" from top edge and male snap centered on flap lining, ½" from folded top seam. Sew drapery weights to WS of shell flap, ¼" from top and ½" from side. Insert lining into shell, pin, and with sewing thread and needle, handstitch lining to shell along all 4 sides of flap and along top edge of front. Sew button on outside of flap over snap. Use rivets to attach folded leather loops to either side of purse at side seams. Attach purse handle to leather loops.





# About the AUTHORS and DESIGNERS

---

**Kathy Augustine** is learning the art of shepherding so she'll always have a steady resource of the wool that she loves so much. She resides in Palmerton, Pennsylvania, with her very supportive family.

**Dani Berg** lives in the Chicago suburbs with her husband, kids, and dogs. She does most of her knitting watching her children's assorted practices and games.

**Maggie Casey**, author of *Start Spinning* and several videos, spends her day working and teaching at Shuttles, Spindles, and Skeins in Boulder, Colorado. She loves teaching spinning because she learns so much from her students.

**Leslie Ann Hauer** is a spinner, knitter, and weaver who cares for two dogs and a husband in West Richland, Washington.

**Laurel Johnson** is a high school student who enjoys drawing, painting, playing guitar, and dancing.

**Benjamin Krudwig** is a designer in Lafayette, Colorado, where he can always be found at a loom, at a spinning wheel, or with a pair of knitting needles in his hands.

**Melissa LaBarre** is a freelance knitwear designer and work-at-home mother. She is coauthor of the books *Weekend Hats*, *New England Knits*, and *Weekend Wraps*. She lives in Massachusetts with her husband and young daughters. Find her at [www.knittingschooldropout.com](http://www.knittingschooldropout.com).

**Kate Larson**, author of *The Practical Spinner's Guide: Wool*, loves to explore the many ways in which textiles connect people and environments near and far. When she isn't traveling or teaching, she can be found in the barn with her flock of Border Leicesters. Follow her woolly adventures at [www.katelarsontextiles.com](http://www.katelarsontextiles.com).

**Eileen Lee** worked with Levi Strauss & Co. before managing and teaching at a yarn shop. Her designs have appeared in *Knitting Traditions*, *The Unofficial Downton Abbey Knits*, and *PieceWork*. She lives in Grass Valley, California, with her husband Bill, son Eric, and dachshund, Lizy Marie. Find her work at her website, [www.mzfiber.com](http://www.mzfiber.com).

**Jillian Moreno** is passionate about spinning and making things with handspun yarn. She loves to experiment with creative processes and inspires her students to try new things while making them laugh. She touches fiber every day and is prone to breaking into song. Keep up with her exploits at [www.jillianmoreno.com](http://www.jillianmoreno.com).

**Leslie Ordal** lives in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, where she works in health care research and teaches spinning. (She rarely spins to spec.) Her occasionally updated blog can be found at [www.leslieordal.com](http://www.leslieordal.com).

**Anne Podlesak's** knitwear designs have been featured in *Jane Austen Knits*, *Twist Collective*, and *The Unofficial Harry Potter Knits*, and in her book *Free Spirit Knits*. She loves finding the magic blend between interesting details to knit and

wearability. She is the indie dyer behind Woolly Wonka Fibers. Find her at [www.woollywonkafiber.com](http://www.woollywonkafiber.com).

**Jennifer Raymond** is a knit and crochet designer who creates quirky yet classic garments. In addition to designing, she teaches up and down the East Coast. Recent publications include articles and designs in *PieceWork*, *Creative Knitting*, *Crochet World*, *Interweave Crochet*, and *Knitty*. Visit her at [www.tinkingturtle.com](http://www.tinkingturtle.com).

**Catrina Reading** is an avid knitter and spinner living in Raleigh, North Carolina. When she is not behind her spinning wheel or a knitting project, you can find her working part-time as a pathologist. After years of test knitting and modifying designs, she plans to try her own hand at designing in 2017. Find her on Ravelry as CatReading.

**Carol Huebscher Rhoades** lives in Madison, Wisconsin, where she spins, knits, and translates Scandinavian textile books and cookbooks into English. She has been a frequent contributor to *Spin Off* and *PieceWork*.

**Deborah Robson**, a former editor of *Spin Off* magazine, is the author of *The Fleece and Fiber Sourcebook* and *The Field Guide to Fleece* and the instructor for *Handspinning Rare Wools* and *Know Your Wool*. She's proof that you can spin one fleece at a time and still get around to hundreds of them.

**Esther Rodgers** is a full-time fiber artist and wool sniffer. She lives in Mebane, North Carolina, with her

husband, three spinning wheels, multiplying looms, and two chatty cats. To follow her ridiculous schedule, find a workshop, or look into her studio, visit [www.jazzturtle.com](http://www.jazzturtle.com).

**Kristi R. Schueler** spins, knits, designs, and teaches in the Washington, D.C. metro area, where she resides with her husband and dog.

**Chris Switzer** and her husband, Phil, were the first to raise alpacas in Colorado, and they added paco-vicuñas in 1999. Chris's book, *Spinning Alpaca, Llama, Camel, and Paco-Vicuña*, is now in its fourth edition. Chris and Phil live with their herd of alpacas and paco-vicuñas in Estes Park, Colorado. Find them online at [www.alpacaland.com](http://www.alpacaland.com).

**Kristen TenDyke** designs classic sweaters with unique construction. She specializes in seamless knitting and always keeps Mother Nature in mind when making yarn choices. Her books include *Finish-Free Knits* and *No-Sew Knits*. Find her at [www.kristentendyke.com](http://www.kristentendyke.com).

**Amy Tyler** lives in beautiful Benzie County, Michigan, and travels the country to teach spinning and knitting workshops. She loves to explore knitting that only a handspinner can do, including three-dimensional effects created when knitting with energized singles. Read more of her thoughts on fiber on her blog, [www.stonesockblog.blogspot.com](http://www.stonesockblog.blogspot.com).

**Heather Zoppetti** is a knitwear designer, teacher, and author of *Everyday Lace* and *Unexpected Cables*. She lives in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, with her husband and yarn collection. Heather is the owner and founder of Stitch Sprouts, a company dedicated to helping your stitches grow. She can be found online at [www.hzoppettidesigns.com](http://www.hzoppettidesigns.com).







# FIBER SOURCES

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## BETTER KNOW A BREED

**Timberlane Cowl:** A Star Alpacas  
100% alpaca roving,  
[www.astaralpacas.com](http://www.astaralpacas.com)

**Montadale Beanie:** 100% Montadale  
fleece, source unknown

**North Road Hat:** Jamieson & Smith  
Natural Shetland Combed Tops,  
[www.shetlandwoolbrokers.co.uk](http://www.shetlandwoolbrokers.co.uk)

**Pair of Jacob Hats:** 100% Jacob  
wool, [www.bideaweefarm.com](http://www.bideaweefarm.com)

**Swatch Mitts:** 100% Shetland wool,  
source unknown

## HANDPAINTS

**Soldier Canyon Scarf:** Lisa Souza  
100% superfine Merino wool,  
[www.lisaknit.com](http://www.lisaknit.com)

**Leaf Cap:** Pigeonroof Studios  
Bluefaced Leicester,  
[www.pigeonroof.etsy.com](http://www.pigeonroof.etsy.com)

**Lacy Leaves Capelet:** CJ Kopec  
Creations 66% Merino/34% Tencel,  
[www.etsy.com/shop/  
cjkopeccreations](http://www.etsy.com/shop/cjkopeccreations)

**Secret Garden Mitts:** Dragon Fibers  
60% Merino/40% bamboo viscose,  
[www.etsy.com/shop/DragonFibers](http://www.etsy.com/shop/DragonFibers)

**Eye of Partridge Cowl:** SweetGeor-  
gia 85% Polwarth/15% silk,  
[www.sweetgeorgiayarns.com](http://www.sweetgeorgiayarns.com)

**Golden Hour Bag:** Rovings dyed  
Polwarth locks, out of production;  
Abstract Fibers 50% silk/50%  
Merino painted combed top,

[www.abstractfiber.com](http://www.abstractfiber.com); purchased  
from The Trading Post in Pendleton,  
Indiana, [www.tradingpostfiber.com](http://www.tradingpostfiber.com)

## GRADIENTS

**Cenote Shawl:** Woolly Wonka Fibers  
80% Merino/20% silk,  
[www.woolywonkafiber.com](http://www.woolywonkafiber.com)

**Stone & Fire Cowl:** Fiber Optic Yarns  
80% Merino/20% silk combed top,  
[www.kimberbaldwindesigns.com](http://www.kimberbaldwindesigns.com)

## BATTS

**Kelp Shawl:** Custom blend

**Eyelet Socks:** Corriedale wool,  
[www.whitefishbayfarm.com](http://www.whitefishbayfarm.com);  
Treetops Colour Harmonies dyed  
tussah silk, [www.outbackfibers.com](http://www.outbackfibers.com)

**Chutes and Ladders Hat:** TerraBella  
Spun Batts (70% Merino/20%  
superwash wool/10% Black Welsh  
Mountain),  
[www.terrabellaspun.etsy.com](http://www.terrabellaspun.etsy.com)

**A New Slant Scarf:** Lunabudknits  
Merino/Angelina Smoothie Batts,  
[www.lunabudknits.com](http://www.lunabudknits.com)

## GAUGE THE SITUATION

**Basket Case Sweater:** O-Wool  
Balance (50% certified organic  
Merino, 50% certified organic  
cotton), [www.o-wool.com](http://www.o-wool.com)

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**Locked Up Bag:** Fiber from Curly  
Goose Cottage, [www  
.curlygoosecottage.weebly.com](http://www.curlygoosecottage.weebly.com)

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# MARY *and her* LITTLE LAMB

---

Mary Morkunas of Fair Adventure Ranch in Fort Lupton, Colorado, leads a Jacob lamb into the sheep barn at the Estes Park Wool Market. The lamb had more spunk (and spots!) than its fairy-tale counterpart, but Mary handled him gracefully.



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