

Color Flirtations Dress

By Elena Nodel



I am often inspired by the colors of the ever changing seasons to create one piece or another.

Last spring the magnolia tree in our backyard had the most amazing blooms. I kept looking at it, and got inspired to create a magnolia bloom dress. The idea for all the other colorful variations came much later.

Sizes: When choosing a size, please do not rely solely on age categories. Measure your child and choose the appropriate size based on actual chest measurements.

Age	Chest Size		Yarn Required (short sleeved/long sleeved)							
			Spring		Orchid		Forget-Me-Not		Bee-Mine	
	cm	inch	meters	yards	meters	yards	meters	yards	meters	yards
1-2 years	48.5-51	19-20	503/604	550/660	457/567	500/620	540/640	590/700	457/571	500/625
3-4 years	53.5-56	21-22	604/695	660/760	530/640	580/700	631/759	690/830	471/594	515/650
4-5 years	58.5-61	23-24	686/777	750/850	640/777	700/850	777/905	850/990	485/631	530/690
5-6 years	61-63.5	24-25	750/841	820/920	759/892	830/975	960/1098	1050/1200	549/686	600/750
6-8 years	66-68.5	26-27	823/914	900/1000	823/1006	900/1100	1098/1280	1200/1400	731/892	800/975

Suggested Yarns:

Dia Merino DK by Colour Adventures (100% merino; 211 m/231 yds in 100 g/3.53 oz)

Sweet Merino DK by Colour Adventures (100% merino; 229 m/250 yds in 115 g/4.06 oz)

Cloud DK by Colour Adventures (80% merino, 10% cashmere, 10% nylon; 211 m/231yds in 100 g/3.53 oz)

Any DK weight cotton or wool yarn.

Notions:

3.5 mm/US #4 circular needles (30, 60, 80 cm/12", 24", 32" in length);

3 mm/US #2.5 double pointed needles;

2 different color markers (8 in one color for raglan markers and increases and 1 in different color for beginning of the round marker);

34 beads with wide hole (optional).

Gauge: 23 sts and 31-32 rows per 10 cm/4 inches in stockinette stitch on 3.5 mm/US #4 needles or size to obtain gauge

Abbreviations:

kfb = knit into the front and back of stitch

k2tog = knit 2 stitches together

p2tog = purl 2 stitches together

skp = slip one stitch, knit next st, pass the slipped stitch over the knitted one

sts = stitches

k = knit

p = purl

rnd = round

sm = slip marker

BOR = Beginning of round



Pattern Instructions:

Note: All styles of the dress start the same by working flat in rows, the work is then joined in the round. Later you will have options to choose your preferred skirt and sleeve styles.

Using preferred provisional cast on method and 3.5 mm/US #4 needles, cast on 52 (60, 64, 68, 72) sts. See reference chapter on provisional cast on.

Purl and place raglan markers as follows:

p2 (3, 3, 3, 3), **pm**, p10 (12, 13, 14, 15), **pm**, p28 (30, 32, 34, 36) **pm**, p10 (12, 13, 14, 15), **pm**, p2 (3, 3, 3, 3).

Row 1: Knit and start increases (front and raglan increases).

Increase row: kfb, knit to 1 sts before each marker (kfb into it), pm, kfb into a stitch after each marker, knit to last stitch (kfb into it). 10 sts increased.

In other words you will be increasing into the stitches before and after each marker **and** into the first and last st of the row.

Row 2: purl

Repeat increases (row 1&2) till there are the following numbers of stitches between markers:

1-2: 26/34/52/34/26 sts; **3-4:** 27/36/54/36/27 sts; **4-5:** 29/39/58/39/29 sts;

5-6: 31/42/62/42/31 sts; **6-8:** 33/45/66/45/33 sts

After the last increase row do not turn over to purl a row, but instead, join in the round and knit one round.

The beginning of the round is going to be at the center front for the time being. Place a marker there to mark the beginning of the round.

The following round will have raglan increases as well as starting central front decorative ribbing. You will no longer increase into the first and last stitch of the work.

Note: The ribbing can be worked intarsia style, please see Reference chapter for Seamless Intarsia in the Round link.

Rnd 1: **k1, p2**, (knit to 1 st before marker, kfb, sm, kfb) repeat 4 times, knit to 3 sts before BOR marker, **p2, k1**. (8 sts increased).

Rnd 2: **k1, p2**, knit to 3 sts before BOR marker, **p2, k1**.

Repeat Rnds 1&2 till you have the following number of stitches between markers, ending with Rnd 1:

1-2: 38/56/38/56; **3-4:** 42/60/42/60; **4-5:** 45/64/45/64;

5-6: 48/68/48/68; **6-8:** 51/72/51/72

Knit to the first section of 38 (42, 45, 48, 51) sts after the beginning of the round marker and separate sleeves by putting those 38 (42, 45, 48, 51) sts on hold or waste yarn, cast on 0 (4, 4, 4, 4) sts, knit across 56 (60, 64, 68, 72) sts, put next 38 (42, 45, 48, 51) sts section on hold or waste yarn, cast on 0 (4, 4, 4, 4) sts, knit across 56 (60, 64, 68, 72) sts. **Join in the round, the left underarm is now the beginning of round (BOR).**

Total number of stitches should be 112 (128, 136, 144, 152).



Continue working in the round till piece measures: 5 (6.5, 7.5, 9, 10) cm/2 (2.5, 3, 3.5, 4) inches from the underarm or till the desired length to start of contrast color waist band is reached, **at the same time** bring more sts into the front ribbing as follows:

Note: The **p2, k2, p2** highlighted in red consists of the 6 sts at the center front of the ribbing section.

Central Front Decorative Ribbing:

The center 2 sts at the front are the focal point (two central knit stitches = **k2**). You will be bringing stitches into the ribbing as follows:

[**p2, k2, p2**] for a total of 8 rnds (as counted from the first rnd of the ribbing)

[p2, k2, **p2, k2, p2**, k2, p2] for 8 rnds

[p2, k2, p2, k2, **p2, k2, p2**, k2, p2, k2, p2] for 8 rnds

Bring 4 more sts into the ribbing on each side after each set of 8 rounds until the desired length is reached before the start of the waistband.

Waistband:

Switch to the contrasting color and knit one round, but purl purls and knit knits of the central decorative ribbing.

Next round: start 2x2 ribbing. To make it flow with the central ribbing, figure out the order of the stitches as if a continuation from the central ribbing. Work in 2x2 ribbing for the desired length.

My suggestion is to knit for 5 (6.5, 6.5, 7.5, 9) cm/2 (2.5, 2.5, 3, 3.5) inches.

Beads: this is optional. I placed mine in the middle of the decorative ribbing (k2 sts), and in the middle of the waist band. See reference chapter on how to work with beads.



Skirt Set up Rounds:

Regardless of the type of skirt, it is divided into 8 sections.

Switch to the main color and knit one round, placing markers in the following manner:

Starting from the one that marks the beginning of the round, place marker after 7 (8, 8, 9, 10) sts, then every 14 (16, 17, 18, 19) sts, then there will be 7 (8, 9, 9, 9) sts left before marker.

Next round knit and kfb into 2 sts before each marker and into 2 sts after each marker, exception being the one that marks the beginning of the round (DO NOT increase around it). Thus you increase by 4 sts around each marker.

Total number of stitches should be 144 (160, 168, 176, 184).

Spring Skirt:



After the set up rnds, you will be setting up the skirt segments in the following manner:

Rnd 1: purl 1 sts before and after each marker, except the one that marks the beginning of the round.

Rnd 2: knit

Thus one round the stitches around the markers are purled and next round knitted, and so on.

After a while, if you become comfortable, you can remove the markers and keep going in this pattern without them.

Skirt increases are done every 16th round. It also alternates which side of the marker the increase is done on. If the first increase was done before the marker, then the next set will be done after the marker. You can use any method you prefer to introduce the increase here, but do not work the increase on the stitches before and after each marker as they form the pattern that segments the skirt into 8 pieces. I use my favourite method by knitting into the stitch below of the working stitch on the left needle (directional lifted increase – see reference chapter for tutorial). Each increase set will increase the stitch count by 8. Knit in this manner till the desired length.

My suggested length is 33 (38, 43, 45.5, 48.5) cm/13 (15, 17, 18, 19) inches from the underarm. But each child is individual and all vary in height.

Next rnd: kfb into every stitch.

Switch to contrast yarn, knit for 2 rnds.

Bind off. Go to Neckband chapter.

Orchid Skirt:

After the set up rnds, you can remove all the markers you have just placed.

Next round set up a marker in different color in the middle of the right underarm (mirrors the position of the marker that marks the beginning of the round).

The skirt increases are done every 11th round in the following manner: knit into the stitch below of the 3rd stitch before each marker, and do the same with the 3rd stitch after each marker (lifted increase). Thus the stitch count is increased by 4.

Knit in this manner till the desired length minus 4 (5, 6.5, 7.5, 7.5) cm/1.5 (2, 2.5, 3, 3) inches.

My suggested length is 29 (33, 37, 38, 40.5) cm/11.5 (13, 14.5, 15, 16) inches from the underarm. But each child is individual and all vary in height.

Switch to the contrast color and knit one round.

Rnds 1-2: work in 2x2 rib (*k2, p2*)

Rnd 3: *k2, pbaf (purl into the back and front of the stitch), p1*, repeat * to the end of the round

Rnds 4-6: *k2, p3*, repeat * to the end of the round

Rnd 7: *k2, p1, pbaf, p1*, repeat * to the end of the round

Rnds 8-12: *k2, p4*, repeat * to the end of the round

If you want the contrasting hem to be longer, add a few more rounds as in rnds 8-12.

Bind off in pattern.

Go to Neckband chapter.

Bee Mine Skirt:

Worked the same as Orchid Skirt till the length is 29 (33, 37, 38, 40.5) cm/11.5 (13, 14.5, 15, 16) inches from the underarm. But as each child is individual and all vary in height, so you might want to adjust the length.

Note: size 4-5 is shown on the picture here; stripes are 5 cm/2 inches wide each.

Then knit one rnd and reduce sts evenly to 144 (160, 168, 176, 184) sts.

If you like the dress to taper down even more, then you can reduce more stitches, just as long as the final number is a multiple of 4.

Switch to the contrast color and smaller needles, and knit one round.

Then work in 2x2 rib (*k2, p2*) for ~ 5-6.5 cm/2-2.5 inches.

Bind off in pattern.

Go to Neckband chapter.



Forget-Me-Not Skirt:

This skirt option looks great if worked in stripes. After the set up rnds, you can remove all the markers you have just placed.

Knit for 2.5 (4, 5, 5, 5) cm/1 (1.5, 2, 2, 2) inches.

Next round: *knit 4 sts, make 1 by knitting into the stitch below*, continue * to the end of the round. Knit in stockinette stitch for 14 rnds (~ 5 cm/2 inches).

Next round: *knit 5 sts, make 1 by knitting into the stitch below*, continue * to the end of the round. Knit in stockinette stitch for 14 rnds (~ 5 cm/2 inches).

Next round: *knit 6 sts, make 1 by knitting into the stitch below*, continue * to the end of the round.

Continue knitting and increasing in this manner until the skirt is desired length.

Make sure you have an even number of sts on the needles, if not, then adjust accordingly.

Next rnd: *p2tog, yo*, repeat * to the end of the round.

Knit for the next 7 rnds.

Bind off.

Fold at the yo round and sew or whipstitch to the inside.

Go to Neckband chapter.



Neckband:

Unravel the crochet chain and pick up 52 (60, 64, 68, 72) sts.

With the right side facing you, attach yarn (contrast color or main color) to the left side shoulder. Pick up 12 (14, 16, 18, 20) sts along the left front side, then 12 (14, 16, 18, 20) sts along the right front side. Place the marker to mark the beginning of the round. Knit one round. The total number of stitches should be 76 (88, 96, 104, 112). The two front central stitches should be k2 as in the decorative front ribbing; and based on that, figure out how to start your 2x2 ribbing.

Rnd 1: work in 2x2 ribbing.

Rnd 2: knit to 2 stitches before central **k2**, p2tog, then p2tog after the central k2 sts, rib to the end

Rnd 3: knit in pattern [p1, **k2**, p1]

Rnd 4: knit to 2 stitches before central **k2**, skp, then k2tog after the central k2 sts, rib to the end

Rnd 5: knit in pattern [k2, **k2**, k2]

Rnd 6: work to 2 stitches before center **k2**; skp, then k2tog after the central k2 sts, rib to the end

Rnd 7: knit in pattern [p2, k1, **k2**, k1, p2]

Bind off relatively loosely in pattern for sizes 1-2 and 3-4 only.

All other sizes: repeat rnd 2&3. Bind off in pattern. See reference chapter for stretchy bind off.

Note: on the green dress the last rnd of 2x2 rib was done in contrast color, then bound off in contrast color.

Sleeves (Option 1):

Using larger needles, pick up 38 (42, 45, 48, 51) sts from holder, then pick up from the cast on underarm edge 2 (6, 7, 6, 7) sts.

Total number of stitches should be 40 (48, 52, 54, 58). You can either use 30 cm/12" circular needles or DPN's (3.5 mm/US #4).

Knit for 2 (3, 3, 4, 5) rnds.

Next rnd: k1, k2tog, knit to last 3 sts, skp, k1.

Total number of stitches is 38 (46, 50, 52, 56).

Knit for 3 rnds, then repeat the decrease rnd (36, 44, 48, 50, 54 sts).

Switch to 3 mm/US #2.5 needles and contrast yarn, and knit 1 rnd.

For sizes 5-6 and 6-8 only: k1, k2 tog, p2, then do [k2, p2] to last 3 sts, p2tog, p1. (Decreased to 48, 52 sts)

All other sizes start 2x2 rib (k2, p2).

Work in 2x2 rib for 7-8 rnds.

Bind off in pattern. Weave in ends. Block.



Sleeves (Option 2):

Using larger needles, pick up 38 (42, 45, 48, 51) sts from holder, then pick up from the cast on underarm edge 2 (6, 7, 6, 7) sts.

Total number of stitches should be 40 (48, 52, 54, 58). You can either use 30 cm/12" circular needles or DPN's (3.5 mm/US #4).

Knit for 5 (8, 8, 9, 9) rnds.

Next rnd: k1, k2tog, knit to last 3 sts, skp, k1. Total number of stitches is 38(46, 50, 52, 56).

Knit for 5 rnds, then repeat the decrease rnd (36, 44, 48, 50, 54 sts)

For sizes 5-6 and 6-8 only: knit for 5 rnds, then do another decrease (48, 52 sts)

All sizes: switch to 3 mm/US #2.5 needles and contrast yarn, and knit for 1 rnd.

Start 2x2 rib (k2, p2). Knit in rib for 10 (12, 15, 15, 17) rnds.

Next round: kfb into every stitch.

Knit for 2 rnds.

Bind off. Weave in ends. Block.



Sleeves (Option 3 – long sleeves):

Average measurements for full length sleeve: 21.5 (25.5, 28, 29, 30.5) cm/ 8.5 (10, 11, 11.5, 12) inches from the underarm.

Using larger needles, pick up 38 (42, 45, 48, 51) sts from holder, then pick up from the cast on underarm edge 2 (6, 7, 6, 7) sts. Total number of stitches should be 40 (48, 52, 54, 58). You can either use 30 cm/12" circular needles or DPN's (3.5 mm/US #4).

Knit for 5 rnds.

Next rnd (decrease round): k1, k2tog, knit to last 3 sts, skp, k1.

Total number of stitches is 38 (46, 50, 52, 56).

Knit for 5 rnds, then repeat the decrease rnd (36, 44, 48, 50, 54 sts).

For sizes 3-4 and up: Repeat one more time (36, 42, 46, 48, 52 sts).

For sizes 5-6 and 6-8 only: knit for 5 rnds, then do another decrease (46, 50 sts)

Stitch count for all sizes should be 36 (42, 46, 46, 50) sts. Knit for about 2.5 cm/1 inch, then start sleeve increases as follows:

1. **Increase round:** evenly increase by 6 sts;

2. Knit for 6 rnds.

1-2 and 3-4: Repeat 1&2 two more times.

4-5 and up: Repeat 1&2 three more times.

Stitch count should be 54 (60, 70, 70, 74) sts.

Knit till the sleeve measures about 16.5 (20.5, 23, 24, 25.5) cm or 6.5 (8, 9, 9.5, 10) inches from the underarm.

Next round: knit and evenly decrease by 20 (20, 30, 30, 30) sts. Do so by evenly spacing k2tog.

Stitch count should be 34 (36, 40, 40, 44) sts.

Knit for 5 rnds.

Then either in main or contrast color knit for 1 rnd.

Next round: switch to smaller sized needles and start 1x1 ribbing or 2x2 ribbing, and work in ribbing for 2.5-4 cm or 1-1.5 inches.

Bind off in pattern. Weave in ends. Block.



Pockets: (optional)

(Feel free to experiment with colors)

Cast on 18 (18, 20, 22, 24) sts.

Work till the pocket measures 6.5 (7.5, 7.5, 9, 10) cm/2.5 (3, 3, 3.5, 4) inches.

Then switch to smaller sized needles and work in 1x1 rib for 8 rows. Bind off in pattern.

Repeat for the second pocket.

Sew on the pockets: Lie dress flat and pin pockets in place where required (about 5-7.5 cm/2-3 inches less than recommended sleeve length from the underarm), then sew in place.



References:

1. Provisional Cast On:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=GSwG6SJ1z2I&feature=related (I use the second technique shown in this video)

2. Directional Increases:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=CnrVoUf2cLk&NR=1

3. Working with Beads:

www.knitty.com/ISSUEspring06/FEATseducedbybeads.html (scroll to “Hooking beads as you go”)

4. Stretchy Bind Off:

www.knitty.com/ISSUEfall09/FEATjssbo.php

5. Seamless Intarsia in the Round

www.ravelry.com/patterns/library/seamless-intarsia-in-the-round

Acknowledgments:

♥♥♥ Heartfelt thanks and my deepest gratitude go to my wonderful group of testers (Barb, Charlotte, Eve, Inna, Janet, Karen, Lori, Marion, Melissa, Sarah, Sheena, Sofia, and Valerie), whose hard work and most valuable input made this pattern possible. Special thanks go to Janet for helping me with the presentation and editing of this pattern, and for providing a “Seamless Intarsia in the Round” technique. ♥♥♥

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