

SIMPLE CABLE HAT



Miles Riley
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Needles

One set of double pointed needles for the main body of the hat (I used US #7's, use whatever you're comfortable with and gives you a gauge you're happy with)

One set of slightly smaller double pointed needles for the ribbing at the brim and finishing the decreasing on top (I used a US #5, but it doesn't matter too much what size you use as long as they're a little smaller)

One significantly larger needle for casting on (I used a US #10.5, alternately you could use two of your double pointed needles held together)

Yarn

I used Jo Sharp Classic DK Wool for this project but any DK weight should be fine, if you have sensitive skin you would probably want to go with something much softer than regular 100% wool. You might be able to just squeak by with one ball of yarn for the small, but I'd recommend two to be on the safe side and for the larger sizes.

Gauge

I would recommend knitting a test swatch of one pattern repeat with at least a little extra fabric on each side. The 12 stitch pattern segment should measure about 1 ½ inches across unstretched, and about 2 inches gently stretched to get the hat sizes Small (20 inch), Medium (22 inch), and Large (24 inch). With that said, this is a “one size fits most” type of pattern so chances are you’ll be all right if you’d prefer to just start right in.

Instructions

Brim:

Cast on 120 (132, 144) st on your US #10.5 needle using the long tail cast on method in knit 2 purl 2 rib.

You’ll need quite a bit of tail, maybe four or five yards. Carefully transfer to US #5 double pointed needles and join for knitting in the round. Stitches will be very loose when you first transfer, I would recommend splitting them over 4 needles but you can get away with using 3 if you're cautious. Mark the beginning of the round with a stitch marker (or piece of yarn) and then knit 2 purl 2 rib for 10 rows (about an inch and a half).

Pre cable round:

At your start marker, switch to your #7 needles (optionally you can mark all your pattern repeat segments) as you go around, you should have 10 (11, 12) pattern segments of 12 stitches each.

Knit 6 purl 2 knit 2 purl 2 *repeat

It can be easy to lose track of your pattern at this juncture since you don't yet have the visual of the established cable to guide you. Remember that the only thing you're doing differently in this round from the k2 p2 pattern of the round before is that the first k2 p2 k2 of your 12 stitch segment has become k6, the two purl stitches in the middle are now being knit in preparation for the cable. So if you ever find yourself purling where the previous row was knit, then you will know something is off and that you need to go back a ways and re-count.

Main hat pattern:

Cable: twist your six stitch cable (left or right, whichever you prefer), purl 2, knit 2, purl 2 *repeat

Plain: knit 6, purl 2, knit 2, purl 2 *repeat all around for 6 rounds

Repeat these seven rounds 6 (7, 7) times, ending on a cable twist round (don't continue on with the plain rounds yet). Remember to be gentle when you twist your cables and resist the urge to pull them too tight, when the hat stretches you don't want your beautiful cables flattened and straining at the seams!

Crown shaping:

Before you begin the crown shaping, carefully try on your hat (or attempt to place it on the head of its intended recipient) to make sure it's long enough. It should comfortably reach your earlobes. The crown shaping goes pretty fast and will give you maybe another half inch or so. If it's too long or too short for your tastes at this point then now is the time to either rip back a few rounds or knit a few more rounds plain until you're satisfied with the fit.

Basic approach: because of the stretchy double ribs on either side of the cables this is a very forgiving crown to shape and we don't need to worry too much about calculating a perfect dome, only creating an attractive pattern. We're going to start the crown shaping by chipping away at the cables from the inside by alternating left and right leaning decreases (abbreviated as LLD and RLD) until they are all "eaten". The last knit stitch will be eaten by one of the purl stitches from the ribs next to it leaving you with a nice point at the top of your cable. Then the k2 ribs will begin chipping away at the purls on either side of them until those are gone, then they will each take a bite out of each other and you will finally gather the last 10,(11, 12) stitches. About halfway through you can switch to your smaller size needles which I think makes things a little neater looking, but it's not absolutely necessary so if you forget to in the heat of the moment don't worry.

1st decrease round: you should be at your start marker, about to knit across a cable. Knit 2, make a left leaning decrease, knit 2, purl 2, knit 2, purl 2 *repeat all around. You should have a new total of 110, (121, 132) stitches.

One plain round: knit 5, purl 2, knit 2, purl 2 *repeat

2nd decrease round: knit 2, right leaning decrease, knit 1, purl 2, knit 2, purl 2 *repeat. Total 100, (110, 120) st.

One plain round: knit 4, purl 2, knit 2, purl 2 *repeat

3rd decrease round: knit 1, LLD, knit 1, purl 2, knit 2, purl 2 *repeat. Total 90, (99, 108) st.

One plain round: knit 3, purl 2, knit 2, purl 2 *repeat.

4th decrease round: knit 1, RLD, purl 2, knit 2, purl 2 *repeat. Total 80, (88, 96) st.

One (this is the last one) plain round: knit 2, purl 2, knit 2, purl 2 *repeat

5th decrease round: LLD, purl 2, knit 2, purl 2 *repeat. Total 70, (77, 84) st. All of your cable should be “eaten” except for one last stitch.

Optional: switch to your smaller size needles.

6th decrease round: Right leaning purl decrease (this is just a normal right leaning decrease, except you purl the two stitches together instead of knitting them), purl 1, knit 2, purl 2 *repeat. Total 60, (66, 72) stitches

You may have noticed at this point that your start marker has become more of a start guideline, leave it in your (now eaten) first cable to let you know the general area where you’ll need to switch back and forth decreasing at either side of the purl wedge around your cable.

7th decrease round: starting with the k2 rib right *before* the start marker, LLD, purl 3, knit 1 *repeat all around. Total 50, (55, 60) stitches

8th decrease round: purl 2, RLD, k1 *repeat. Total 40, (44, 48)

Continue decreasing each round until you have only 10, (11, 12) stitches left. Break yarn and gather tightly, weave in ends.