

Larch - a quick and easy scarflet



Yarn: 450 yards fingering/sock weight yarn (but as little as 350 yards will work, too, just see the Note below).

Needle: size 4 (3.5m) circular needle. A 16- or 24-inch needle will be more convenient when beginning the scarflet but you will probably want to switch to a longer needle by the time you start the lace section.

Gauge: It honestly doesn't matter. Pick a combination of yarn and needles that produces a fabric you like.

Notions: tapestry needle, plus a short piece of waste yarn and a crochet hook about the same size as your needle (if you want to do the crochet cast on).

Finished Size: This depends entirely on how much yarn you use, your gauge, and how aggressively you block the finished piece. Whatever you chose to do, you will be able to wrap the scarflet comfortably around your neck.

What's in a Name? I think of this little pattern just as "scarflet," but that's probably not a proper name. So I thought back to my inspiration for this piece. It's "almost Multnomah" since that pattern served as my inspiration for this piece. Naturally, I looked at the names of all of the other waterfalls around Multnomah Falls and "Larch" was the one that stuck.

INSTRUCTIONS

Using the crochet method, provisionally cast on 3 stitches.

Next row: k2tog, k1.

Work 9 rows in garter stitch (knit every row). You should have 5 garter ridges at this point.

Next row: Knit the 2 stitches on the needle and then, without turning the work, pick up and knit one stitch from each of the 5 garter ridges. Now unravel the crochet chain from the provisional cast on and knit the two stitches formed by the cast on. You should have 9 stitches on the needle.

ALTERNATE CAST-ON METHOD - if you don't like the crochet cast-on, instead cast on 3 stitches using the long-tail cast-on method with the following modification: don't start with a slip knot, instead just lay the yarn over the needle (this is the first stitch) and then cast on as usual for the second stitch.

Next row: k2tog, k1.

Work 9 rows in garter stitch (knit every row). You should have 5 garter ridges at this point.

Next row: Knit the 2 stitches on the needle and then, without turning the work, pick up and knit one stitch from each of the 5 garter ridges. Now pick up and knit 2 stitches into the bottom cast-on edge. You should have 9 stitches on the needle.

Set-up row: k2, yo, k2, yo, k1 (mark this as the center stitch), yo, k2, yo, k2 (13 stitches total).

Next row: knit

Row 1 (RS): k2, yo, knit to the center stitch, yo, k1 (center stitch), yo, knit to 2 stitches before the end, yo, k2.

Row 2 (WS): knit

Repeat rows 1 and 2 until you have 96 stitches on either side of center stitch, excluding the edge stitches.

What you are doing here is growing two garter stitch triangles, separated by a center stitch, with a 2-stitch border on the outer edges.



NOTE on working with a smaller skein

If you are worried about running out of yarn, just repeat rows 1 and 2 until you have a multiple of 12 stitches on either side of the center stitch, excluding the edge stitches. For instance, if you only have 350 or so yards, stop at 84 stitches per side.

OR, just work one and a half repeats of the lace chart on the next page.

Begin lace section:

Work lace chart (see next page) two times as follows: k2 [edge stitches]; work chart, repeating blue pattern repeat 8 times [7 if you stopped at 84 stitches per side]; k1 [center stitch]; work chart again, repeating blue pattern repeat 8 times [7 if you stopped at 84 stitches per side]; k2 [edge stitches]. Again, if you are worried about running out of yarn, stop after any row that is a multiple of 4 (the knit row following a lace pattern row).

Now cut your yarn, leaving a tail that is 3 times the length of the the widest part of the shawl (the working stitches still on your needle). Use this tail to bind off using a sewn bind-off.

How to work a sewn bind-off: thread your yarn tail through the tapestry needle and work as follows. ******Holding the piece with the right side facing you and working right to left, insert the tapestry needle purlwise through the first two stitches on the left hand needle. Pull the yarn all the way through, leaving the stitches on the needle. Now insert the tapestry needle knitwise into the right hand stitch (the first stitch on the needle). Pull the yarn all the way through and at the same time pull this first stitch off the needle. Repeat from ****** until you have only one stitch left on the needle. Insert the tapestry needle through this last stitch - it really doesn't matter how - and pull of the needle. You're done!

This technique seems to take forever but it really is the best bind-off for this project - it's very elastic and looks great with the garter stitch theme of the piece.

Weave in ends and wet block to desired size.

