

Ribbon Stitch Pullover



The idea for this neat looking sweater came from one in an old Threads magazine. I have modified it and changed it enough so that I may offer it to you. Barbara Walker's "Knitting From the Top" was most likely the inspiration for this and almost all top-downs.

Gather up as many colors as you'd like - all to please your own sense of color. For the average sweater, you'll most likely need about 20 ounces of yarn - or about 1200 to 1500 yds of dk or sport weight yarn (this is also based on the size you are making). This is a guess, remember, so have an ample amount. You might decide to use more of a certain color etc - as you proceed from the top-down! My sample used about 1300 yards for a size 40 chest (sport weight yarn).

If you're using sport or dk weight yarn - then I'd suggest size 5, 6 or 7 needle (a smaller one for the neck ribbing.) For worsted weight or heavy worsted, try from size 7 to 10 needles, or higher. Work up your sample so you can not only see how many stitches to the inch you are making, but check the fabric to see if it is too loose or too tight. (Block this gauge sample before measuring.)

This can be all one color (using different stitches as in a sampler), or a few colors, or MANY colors. For this sample I have used 4 colors (one an accent and not used too often) and incorporated a simple stitch pattern when changing from one color to another. Another I worked in all off-whites and beiges, with a black accent. This has many stitch variations in the different sections and uses at least 8 different yarns.

Choose a number to cast on that is divisible by 4. So for a smaller neck (suitable for a child or small adult) CO 72. I have chosen 88 for a comfortable neck (using Main Color - MC). Cast on with your larger needle (the one for your body) and then change to the smaller needle for the ribbing.

Rib either k1, p1 or k2, p2 - or make it fancy, such as a twisted rib etc. Work in the round for 1 ½ to 2 ½ inches - your choice. On the last row, place 4 markers evenly spaced - and designate the beginning of the round with 1 color and the other 3 markers can be the same. I love red as my beginning - others choose green for GO!

Now change to Color #1. Keep in mind that you will be increasing BEFORE and AFTER each marker EVERY OTHER ROW for the entire yoke of the sweater (I'll indicate when to stop).

The Ribbon pattern stitch on the photo begins with the very first row as follows:

1. Knit every stitch with color #1
2. Purl every stitch with color #1
3. Knit 2 sts of color #1, and 2 sts of color #2
4. Knit 2 sts of color #1, and PURL 2 sts of color #2
5. Knit every stitch with color #1
6. Purl every stitch with color #1

I WOULD SUGGEST THAT YOU WORK YOUR INCREASE ROWS ON #1, 3, AND 5 of this Ribbon Stitch.

Note for ample bustlines: Increase more often (than every other row) on the Front & Back points only. (not the sleeve increase points) For instance, every inch add an extra increase row. Be sure to mark the Front & Back points so as to not get confused.

Now continue knitting all stitches with color #1, for desired length (remembering to increase every other row!) Note on the color changes: I worked these "stripes" of color in different numbers on the sample sweater - for example: 7 of the green, 11 of the purple, and 15 of the green. They can be even numbers of rows, or alter them any way you would like - always beginning a new color with the 6 row Ribbon Pattern Stitch and then plain knit for your desired length.

Now work until you have the number of stitches you need or desire as per the formula below:

Chest width, plus 6 inches ease x gauge per inch, x 2 equals.....
40 + 6 x 4.25 x 2 = 391 (or 400sts on my sample)

This is what I call the completed yoke - where you stop!

Place the entire piece on 4 strings. Begin 1st piece by dividing ½ way before a marker, and continuing ½ way after the marker. So on my sweater which is a large square, each string will have 100 sts on it, (400 sts divided by the 4 sections) with a marker in the very center of each string. Gently pull and pat out this whole knitted piece, so the neck ribbing is laying flat also. Don't stretch too much of course. Either use a spray bottle or a wet towel, and saturate it (of course this might depend on your fiber - mine was 100% wool.) Let it dry, and then we'll begin the sleeves.

SLEEVES: With the same size needle as on your body (but using only a 16" circular), pick up stitches from 1 of the 4 sections of your work. Join in the round, and continue your color pattern if you have one. Place a special marker to designate the top of your sleeve, and another at the bottom. You will now INCREASE 2 sts at the top, and DECREASE 2 sts at the bottom (the width of the sleeve remains the same.. Do both the increasing and decreasing EVERY OTHER ROW. Use the same form in increasing as you did previously, and for the decreases you can k2 tog through back loop, slip marker, knit 1 st, then knit 2 together.

Work for 2 inches, and your number of sts will remain constant. Now begin decreasing 2 more stitches near the underarm marker EVERY INCH or ¾ of an inch. Take off at least 10 stitches, so the sleeve will be somewhat tapered. (work in this manner for approx 7 inches)

Measure yourself or the recipient from the center back neck, gently stretching out your knitted arm. Stop knitting when you are 3 inches from your desired sleeve length. If you are following my Ribbon Stitch design, then stop after the 6th row of that pattern stitch.

At the top of the sleeve, place 1 marker. You will now be working on the knit side (right side) and the purled side (wrong side) of the sleeve for the CUFF SHAPING: work to the sleeve top, and turn your work around You will now be on the purled side and do as follows: Decrease 1 st at the beginning, end, and at the underarm markers every row until all sts are gone.

Now using the smaller double point needles, pick up all the stitches around the cuff, and then decrease on the 1st round evenly spaced, to 36 or 40 sts. Work whatever ribbing you wish - or try a hem or a picot edge. Try on the sweater and see how long a cuff you need to make it fit. Bind off very loosely (with a needle at least 2 to 3 sizes larger). **NOW WORK THE OTHER SLEEVE IN THE SAME WAY.**

BODY OF SWEATER

Place the last 2 sections of stitches waiting for you on one (1) circular needle (at least 24 inches long). Unless you wish your sweater to be very short, you now will add length to the body section. Continue in the Ribbon Pattern (I added 4 more inches or 1 whole colored section), PLUS the Ribbon pattern only, of a new color. Now place the 2 sections on 2 separate strings or holders - from center back to center front.

Continue in the new color just established by the Ribbon pattern, in this way. Start with 1 set of stitches: you will work the decreases the same as you did on the sleeve. Begin every row by decreasing 1 st (you will either knit 2 together, or purl 2 together when you are on the wrong side.) You will do this EVERY ROW. At the underarm marker, you will decrease 1 st before AND after the marker, but only on the RIGHT SIDE of your work. This is important, as we do not want to make your sweater taper in - but keep it the same width from the underarm down.

After all the stitches are decreased - you will be finished. Except for whatever bottom ribbing or edging you wish. I picked up a stitch in every bound off stitch, and worked a ribbing to match the neck ribbing for 2 ½ inches.

There is no finishing - except tidying up your ends on the wrong side and maybe checking under the arms. If there is a small hole there, just darn it together!

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