

READY, SET, KNIT

Air Date: March 8, 2008

Colorwork Series, Workshop#1, Stranding and *Bird in Hand Mittens*

Knitting the Mitten

Reminder: If you haven't yet done your swatch, be sure to do it in pattern as stranding will tend to tighten up your gauge.

Tip: If you decide to use a variegated yarn as your pattern color, be sure to pick one that has no color repeats that are close to the color of your main yarn. Otherwise, that color will get lost in the main color and your pattern will not be as clear.

a. Cast 54 stitches onto one dpn. Then move 18 stitches to another dpn and 18 more to a third dpn. Join being careful not to twist. You can place a marker at the beginning of the round, but I just use the tail as my marker. Knit rounds 1 – 4 even. Be sure to give a tug to the first stitch you knit on each needle to avoid ladders.

b. If you'd like to avoid sewing the hem at the end, you can do a provisional cast-on with waste yarn, follow the pattern directions for rounds 1 – 9, then remove the provisional cast-on carefully and place the live stitches on another set of dpns (smaller size is better), fold the hem to the inside and knit the 2 layers of stitches together with another dpn. See Nancie Wiseman's *Knitter's Book of Finishing Techniques*, pp. 92-93 for further info. I worked 2 rounds even before starting the Estonian Braid.

c. Be sure to work the round before each Estonian Braid loosely...you'll see why when you do it! This braid is beautiful but challenging. This is what you do:

- Make One. There is more than one way to M1...I did mine by inserting the left needle from back to front under the horizontal ladder that extends between every 2 stitches and then knitting into the front of this stitch to twist it so there wouldn't be a hole. You only do the make one at the beginning of the round.

-Knit 1 and slip this stitch purlwise back to the left needle.

-Now, take the right-hand needle behind the stitch you just moved to the left needle and knit into the back loop, keeping the right needle behind the work as you knit.

-Next, move the right needle (with the stitch just formed by knitting into the back loop on it) to the front of the work and knit into the first stitch on the left needle. This is the stitch you originally slipped onto the left needle. Drop both stitches off the left needle.

-Repeat around as above, omitting the Make One.

- When all stitches have been worked, slip the first stitch of the round (the first stitch on the left needle) to the right needle, pass one stitch over the slipped stitch as if to bind off, and slip this stitch back to the left needle.

If you'd like an illustration of how the braid is worked, please check Nancy Bush's *Folk Knitting in Estonia*, p. 50; it's the "one-color traveling stitch/vikkel braid".

d. If you are a relatively new knitter and you find the Estonian Braid and the hem a bit daunting, there is no reason why you can't just knit a ribbed cuff and then jump into the stranding on the main part of the mitten. If you do this, skip rounds 1 – 34 and start with the Right Hand Chart after you've knit the ribbing. Increase or decrease on the last round of ribbing to be sure you start the Chart with 59 stitches on the needles.

e. After you work the first braid, you will work one round even in the main color. This is the first row of the Right Flower Chart. Then, join your contrast color and work 3 repeats of the rest of the chart. Be sure to start at the bottom of the chart and work up. Since you are working in the round, read the chart from right to left for each repeat.

Next Week: No show; Kathy and Steve are on vacation.