



"If you prefer to economize and love to knit, make your sweaters with very fine wool and many stitches. A thin sweater weighs much less than a great heavy one, and broadly speaking, wool sells by weight. Fine knitting gives you many more hours of your favorite hobby before you have to sally forth and make another capital investment. "

— Elizabeth Zimmermann, in [Knitting Without Tears](#)



a newsletter from
Meg Swansen

Dear Knitters,

We are indeed honored to feature lace-designing-genius, Bridget Rorem, as our first Guest-Designer. Her exquisite shawl, [Near Solstice](#), features a series of bird-tracks in newly fallen snow and—across the top of the triangle—a haiku knitted in lace. Bridget is the author of the haiku:

*At winter's dawning
Birds are dancing on my snow
To silent music*



The version above was knitted by Marilyn van Keppel; the haiku is visible in photo at left. Photo at right was taken near dawn on the Solstice. [Near Solstice](#) is the first in an on-going series of splendid shawls from the amazing brain of Bridget Rorem. Because of the reaction to the lace haiku, Bridget's next leaflet will be her Lace Alphabet design, which contains two versions of the alphabet, identical in appearance, but not in process. The scarf is knitted in one piece - garter-stitch - with each version running along the entire length and upside down to each other. The pattern will be available this summer.

The next guest-designer is Dale Long; we will present one of his lovely Shetland Fair Isle pullovers, Christmas Past; first seen in a Land's End Christmas booklet celebrating knitting. Dale was so pleased that we were going to publish it—but, alas, he did not live to see the finished leaflet. We miss him Very Much and the pattern will be his memorial. Since Dale had come to Knitting Camp for well over a decade, we will put the proceeds from Christmas Past into a Camp scholarship fund in his name.

On the Web Site

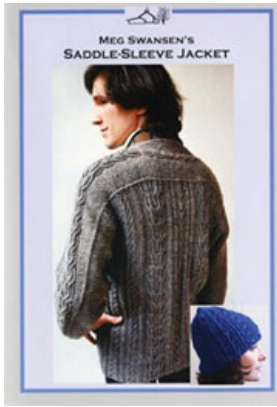
[Schoolhouse Press Patterns](#)

[ABCSJ Pattern](#)



[Box- the- Compass](#)



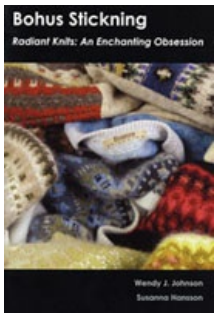


Another former video of mine has been DVD'd: the [Bavarian Twisted Stitch, Saddle Sleeve Jacket](#). Chris and I filmed the project during a trip through the Smokey Mountains. Recently, Cully and I augmented this new DVD with instructions for the Twisted Stitch cap from the cover of [Wool Gathering #80](#) (and —I'm whispering—I can tell you that we are working on an English translation of a splendid book on the subject: *Überlieferte Strickmuster* by Maria Erlbacher).

Arch-Shaped Stockings



We are offering a discount for orders of the [Bohus DVD](#) (which we import from Sweden) together with Wendy Keele's wonderful book, [Poems of Color](#). Bohus knitting is the topic of my article in the current issue of *Vogue Knitting* magazine.



This past Spring there was a comprehensive exhibit of Bohus knitting at the [American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis](#). The booklet published for the occasion, *Bohus Stickning, Radiant Knits: An Enchanting Obsession*, by Wendy Johnson and Susanna Hansson, is a wonderful adjunct to Wendy Keele's book. This booklet has scores of new photographs, an interview with Solveig Gustafsson, as well as short biographies of the Bohus designers with photos of their work. There are a few copies remaining; limited supply: 50 pages, \$14.95.

Featured DVD



Order the Bohus DVD with Poems of Color for a 20% discount

Also, photographer Wendy Johnson created a series of 6 note cards (with envelopes), shown here, for \$12.95.



Spindrift; 150 colors



[SPP#5](#) is back from the printer, the ABCSJ: [Adult, Baby and Child's Surprise Jackets](#). It includes row-by-row instructions for the BSJ; a reprint of the existing ASJ directions, and we added the new CSJ instructions. The pattern includes a number of options for adding a hood, a collar, afterthought pockets and even a BSJ Pullover. Cully drew up several charts for various BSJ sizes at various gauges, and there are two pages of techniques.

We like to make the newborn Baby Surprise Jacket in pure Shetland wool. As well as the full line of [J&S Shetland wool](#), we now also have in stock the complete selection of [Spindrift Shetland wool](#); over 300 colors altogether and the wools are interchangeable.

I am so pleased with all the BSJ translations: so far we have French, Spanish, Icelandic, Portuguese, and Danish; wouldn't EZ be gratified and Surprised?

Travel: Lloie and I are heading to England for [UK Ravelry](#) on 6 June. And Stephanie Pearl McPhee's mighty [Sock Summit](#) looms: August 7, 8, and 9 in Portland.

Knitting Campers Alert: Tshirt Orders are due by May 15th; you can order on the private camper url listed in your acceptance email.

Amy Detjen and I will be there with bells on to teach three classes for three different sock designs.

Hats: Want to get a glimpse of all the hats in the current [Wool Gathering](#)? Here they are:

Eleanor Haase's Garter-Band Hat



Cully's I-Cord Lattice



and my Albrecht Dürer Tour



Bavarian Twisted Stitch,



and Circular Brioche with horizontal or vertical stripes.



Baby Surprise DVD



Order the BSJ DVD with the ABCSJ pattern for a 20% discount.

qty: [Order Now](#)



Joyce Williams's [Sock-a-Long](#) was an enormous hit and the tutorial pages will be available free until June 30th '09.

The steady stream of queries I receive feed this electronic Newsletter beautifully; thank you—and keep 'em coming.

Q&A

Q: My main difficulty is I don't know how to begin Applied I-Cord, which needle holds what stitches; do I cast on 3 stitches first and then pick up a stitch from the main garment? or do I pick up the first stitch and then cast on 3 stitches. Then which stitch do I slip? Would a DVD help? and if so, which one?

A: OK Joan—let's see: you have picked up sts along the selvedge (on a pick-up-needle).
Onto another needle, cast-on three I-Cord stitches. Transfer them to the pick-up-needle and...

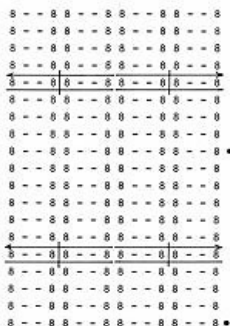
*knit 2 Cord sts, slip the last Cord stitch, knit a stitch from the pick-up-needle, psso.
Replace 3 Cord sts to pick-up-needle and repeat from *. (instructions would read: *k2, sl1, k1, psso. Replace to L needle and repeat from *)

IF you are using a strongly contrasting color for the Cord, you run the risk of having a blip of the main color peek through the Cord on the side that faces you as you work. Enter Joyce Williams with a solution: she adds a yarn-over to cover the blip as you work:

*k2, sl1, yo, k1, p2sso (the slipped stitch plus the yarn-over). Replace to L needle and repeat from *.

Q: I have trouble with the Bavarian Twisted Stitch cap (on the last page of WG#80). The #1 chart regarding the cable stitches. I've already printed [a copy](#) from the [Schoolhouse Press](#) website regarding the description of row 5. Could you please ask Meg how to do those cable stitches? Thank you.

A: Dear Pearl, Pattern #1 is 16-sts wide. Think of it as two 8-stitch cables (if you look closely, you will see a small break in the middle of the horizontal lines on the chart); each of those 8-stitches is a 4-over-4 cable. In the first section of 8, the second group of 4 is cabled over the first group of 4. In the second section of 8, the first group of 4 travels over the second group.



In this instance, I find the photograph to be most helpful... see how the inner groups of 4 travel over the outside groups?

Here are two related questions:



Q1: Is your book still available....the 30 patterns one? (**Meg Swansen's Knitting** [MSK] from Interweave Press).

and

Q2: Just wondering if there is any hope of re-releasing 38 **Sweaters from Camp** again (SFC)..... I love the book and only just started doing Fair Isle.

A: Both books are out-of-print, but you may have noticed that we are re-printing individual designs as SPP ([Schoolhouse Press Patterns](#)) and have already published [Box-the-Compass](#) and the [Arch Shaped Stockings](#) from MSK. We plan to continue to print designs from both the above books in future SPP and Guest-Designer Patterns.

Q: I have Elizabeth Zimmermann's [Knitting Workshop](#). In the pattern for the baby surprise jacket the directions say, that between the sleeve and the back to sl 1 knit 2 together and sl the one stitch over the two. That is on the first sleeve. But after knitting the back the directions say to do the exact same thing on the other end, which means to slip one of the back and knit 2 together on the other sleeve. This means that this sleeve becomes very much shorter than the other one, Can you explain this to me? I have taken it out several times and it is getting rather grubby.

A: Dear Millie, The "marked stitches" (#36 and #125) are actually on the mid-point between the sleeves and the back. You will knit to within 1 stitch of the marked stitch — then, sl 1 (stitch #35), k2tog (sts #36, 37), pss0. You have turned 3 stitches into 1 stitch, with the marked stitch in the center of the 3; a stitch to the left of center plus a stitch to the right of center have been consumed; the marked-stitch always remains the center of the double-decrease. It is beautifully symmetric. If this still doesn't make sense, please let me know.

Q: I have all of Elizabeth's [books](#) and [DVDs](#) as well as two of Meg's books and DVDs. My question is about short rows. Everything is fine except for hole I'm getting when I get around to the second wrap. I've tried SSK with the wrap and stitch as well just knitting the wrap and stitch together like I did successfully with the first wrap and stitch. Is there anything else I can do to prevent this hole?

A: It depends whether you come to the 2nd wrap from the k or p side. Also - for some reason, the second wrap needs to be Much Looser than the first, or it will dimple-in. If coming to it on the p side: lift the k-side of the wrap; put it on the l needle and p2tog. If coming to it on the k side: ssk should work (if you have left sufficient wool for the wrap itself); or, if you don't like that appearance, try k2tog.

The amount of necessary wool for the wrap was brought home to me one day when I was doing a Phoney Seam. I dropped the seam-stitch and was surprised at how much wool it takes to produce a single stitch. That is the amount you need to allow as you wrap around the base of the slipped stitch for a Short Row.

Q: What do you sock knitters use for reinforcement? I've used sewing thread in the past. Is there something better?

A: In the Olden Days, there were paper cards of 100% heel-and-toe-nylon; if you tried to break a strand, it would, literally, cut through your hand but not break. If you used it along with your sock wool—over time, the heels and toes of the stocking would become simply a web of nylon; with wool worn away altogether. Well, that was discontinued decades ago (it worked too well). I now use [Sock Nylon](#) that is soft and stretchy. Some knitters use two and three (or more) strands along with their sock wool. It is not nearly as strong as the old stuff, but works quite well—and yes, [we sell it](#) in nine colors.

Q: Hi. I just bought Elizabeth Zimmermann's [Adult Surprise Jacket](#) and as savvy as I thought I was about patterns, I cannot figure out some of the directions. I need help with a needle size and cannot understand how to go about the "measurement" criteria to get a [K] number, etc. How do I determine "my gauge" in order to multiply the inches, etc. P.S. I bought the Baby Surprise Jacket pattern, too, at the same time, so I'm stumped on both of them until I have a needle size and understand the "formula" so I can start knitting.

A: Since we all knit slightly differently, the needle size you end up using will be the one that gives you the gauge you want.

1. Choose the wool you want to use
2. Make a guess at the needle size
3. Cast on about 30-40 stitches and knit back and forth for a few inches
 - Do you like the resulting fabric?
 - if it is too loose, chose a smaller size needle and knit another few inches

- if it is too tight, chose a larger size needle and knit another few inches

4. If it is just right, steam-block it (just puff at it with the steam iron; don't press it) and obtain the gauge as follows: measure the whole swatch and divide the stitches by the number of inches... as it might be 30 stitches divided by 6-1/2 inches = 4.6 stitches to 1 inch).

NOW - armed with an accurate gauge, you are ready to plug that information into EZ's Percentage System.

For example: if you ARE getting 4.6 stitches to 1" and you want the jacket to be 21" across (43" around):

- $21" \times 4.6 \text{ sts per inch} = 96.6$
- $96.6 \text{ divided by } 3 = 32.2$; your Key Number, [K]; the important number that you will use for all other calculations (don't round off the fraction quite yet).

So, Cast On $9 \times [K]$... $9 \times 32.2 = 289.8$, which I would now round up to 290. On the first row, mark the stitches at A and B which will be $2 \times [K]$ stitches from each end of the row (the 64.4th stitch; round that to either 64 or 65). Does that help you to get started?

P.S. The Adult version is a LOT of knitting. I recommend that—even if you don't know any babies at present - you knit the baby version first to get a handle on this unique construction.

Do you have a question you would like Meg to answer in another newsletter? [Write to Meg](#).

P.S. If you have read down this far: we expect—any day—copies of books with extraordinary lace designs from the legendary Herbert Niebling. Hoo Boy! Keep an eye on our web site for details. The book will be listed in the [New Books](#) section as well as in the [Lace](#) department.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Outward, Meg". The word "Outward," is written in a cursive style, and "Meg" is written below it in a more stylized, looped cursive.