

NEWSLETTER #30 APRIL 2016

TWISTED STITCH KNITTING

schoolhousepress.com

At the moment, we are focused on Twisted Stitch Knitting as we celebrate Meg Swansen's latest original design: her beautiful Twisted Stitch Pinafore, which is featured in the current **Wool Gathering #94**. Click [here](#) to subscribe.

In this NL, Meg will discuss some history and take you through a Twisted Stitch Clinic (right) to introduce you to this wonderful style of knitting - much like sculpting in wool.

Also, check out [Meg's latest blog post](#), which is a video tutorial on the basics of twisted stitch knitting. Plenty of inspiration and impetus for you to begin experimenting with some swatch caps, such as the one featured in [Schoolhouse Press Pattern #11](#). Stunning results and not nearly as difficult as you might imagine - jump in! Gallery on page 2.



from SPP#11

Meg writes:

I became consciously aware of Twisted Stitch knitting in 1968 through Barbara G. Walker's *Treasury of Knitting Patterns*. I was particularly drawn to the *Tyrolean Medallion* on page 247.

By knitting into the back of a regular Stocking stitch, it not only twists the stitch, but naturally tightens it and makes it more pronounced. Just a single vertical line of that stitch within a field of purl stitches looks decorative all by itself; like a miniature braid.

Then, in the mid 1970's came the Lisl Fanderl series of stitch-pattern books (we called her the Barbara Walker of Bavaria): *Bäuerliches Stricken*, *Bäuerliches Stricken 2*, and *Stricken 3* (all 3 now out of print). The first book had a handful of twisted stitch motifs; the second was predominantly twisted stitch, and the third included twisted lace patterns.



Traditional Patterns & Garments from the Styrian Enns Valley – a stunning book.

We had always referred to the stitch as *Bavarian Twisted Stitch*, until we met Maria, who is convinced that the stitch originated in Austria - the Enns Valley, to be specific. So as to cause no contumely, we removed the 'Bavarian' part of the name.

The Fanderl trio was followed by Maria Erlbacher's trilogy, *Überlieferte Strickmuster aus dem Steirischen Ennstal* which was entirely comprised of twisted stitch patterns ... 178 of them. Erlbacher's trio of books has now been merged into one, translated into English, and remains available today as *Twisted-Stitch Knitting*.

Very firmly knitted, and with no plain knit stitches (just purl, twisted knit, travelling stitch, and cables), progress is comparatively slow-going, but, if you use a firmly-spun-and-plied wool (such as our *Guernsey*, or *Québécoise Wool*) the results are most rewarding.

There are a number of different methods you can use to achieve the result, and I encourage you to knit a Twisted Stitch cap to test them all ... then choose your favorite. Balance your ease of execution against the final appearance. My eventual method of choice (method C, demonstrated on my new [blog video](#)) may not be the fastest, but it provides the least amount of stitch distortion for my style of knitting.

Note: As you become more interested in the Twisted Stitch technique, know that there is a whole world of patterns out there in the form of Arans and Cables. Any Cable pattern can be transformed to Twisted Stitch by simply replacing each **knit** stitch with a **knit 1 through back loop**.

Twisted Stitch Clinic

There are four different methods of working each twisted-travelling-stitch situation. I recommend you practice each one and check the results against the ease of execution. **Every time I write 'knit' it is understood that I mean Knit-into-the-back-of-the-stitch.** (If you do not want to test them all - C or D are my faves for least stitch distortion.)

Right Twist K over P

A. Leave the 2 sts on the L needle and work them out of order: go between the stitches and K into 2nd stitch. Bring wool to front and P the first stitch. Slip them both off the L needle. *Next are 3 variations of reversing the position of the sts on L needle and then working them.*

B. Take the 2 sts off the L needle and pick them up again in reverse order (with the K in front).

C. Transfer both sts to R needle. With L needle grab the P from behind and slide both sts off R needle - letting the K fall free for a moment. Pick up the K. Replace both sts onto L needle and work.

D. Leave sts on L needle. Grab K from front and slide both sts off L needle letting P fall free for a moment. Pick it up (from behind) onto L needle. Insert L needle into K stitch on R needle and work.

Right Twist K over K

As above substituting a K for the P stitch.

Left Twist K over P

A. Work sts out of order on L needle: from behind insert R needle between the 2 sts. Grab the near side of the P stitch and yank it to the back. Purl into it (with help from the L needle), then K first stitch.

B. Take the 2 sts off the L needle and pick them up again in reverse order - ducking *under* the working wool when picking up the P stitch.

C. Transfer both sts to R needle. With L needle grab K from in front and slide both sts off R needle - letting the P fall free for a moment. Pick up the P from behind (and *under* working wool) with R needle. Put on L needle and work.

D. Leave sts on L needle. From *under* the working wool, grab P from behind and slip both sts off L needle. Pick up K with L needle. Slip P to L needle and work the sts.

Left Twist K over K

As above substituting a K for the P stitch. A is not such a bear; and in B, C, and D there is no need to duck under the working wool.

Right Twist K2b over P

B, C, and D as in the first method - with the addition of a 2nd K stitch (A is not worth the effort).

Left Twist K2b over P

A, B, C, and D as in the second method - with the addition of a 2nd K stitch.



close-up images of Twisted Stitch knitting texture.



Saddle-Sleeve Jacket DVD

Wool Gathering #94

