

Unspun Icelandic Overblouse

by Elizabeth Zimmermann (Meg Swansen's Stocking-stitch version)



from schoolhousepress.com



Dear Knitter,

My mother's Icelandic Overblouse first appeared in her 6th book, *Knit One Knit All*. As titled, all patterns in that book are Garter stitch.

Here is a Stocking stitch version of that Icelandic Overblouse with the option of an hourglass shaped waist. It is worked from the lower edge of the body. Once you reach wanted length to underarm, mark each side of the underarm sts and work the reverse of a Raglan (we call it a Nalgar): INCREASE 2 sts at each of 4 markers every other round. Continue to wanted upper sleeve depth/shoulder height and put all sts on a thread. You have already knitted the tops of the sleeves; join shoulders, cast off neck, and pick up the sleeve sts and continue to wanted length and girth of sleeve. This design specifically has 3/4 length sleeves, but there is nothing to stop you from making long sleeves, decreased to the cuff.

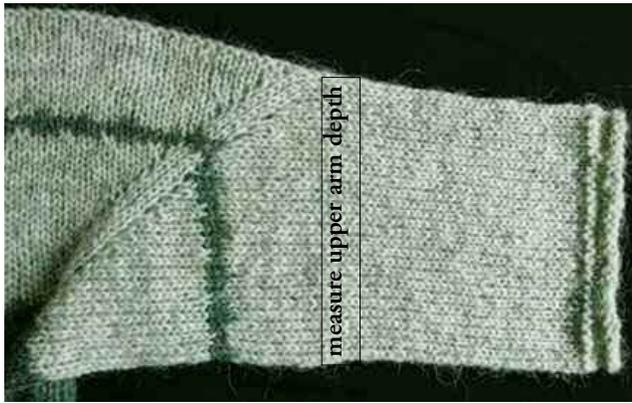
Numbers for one size are given, but they are easily adjustable for custom sizing (see diagram on page 2).

Size Woman's medium: 40" hips, 36" waist, 39" chest. 23" overall length (7" lower edge to waist, 2" waist, 7" waist to underarm, 7" upper arm depth).

Materials: 1 wheel each of 3 colors Unspun Icelandic wool, worked single-strand.

Gauge: Loosely knitted single strand @ 4.5 sts to 1".

Rolled Lower Edge: With smaller size needle, cast on 180 sts. Knit 1". Purl 1 round and change to body-sized needle. Knit to within 2-1/2" of waist. Mark 3 sts at each side "seam" and decrease each side of marked sts every 4th round, 4x (16 sts reduced; alter that number for a smaller or larger waist circumference). Knit 2" straight, then begin to increase each side of each "seam". I did not return to the original number, but increased only 3x (12 sts) = 176 body sts.

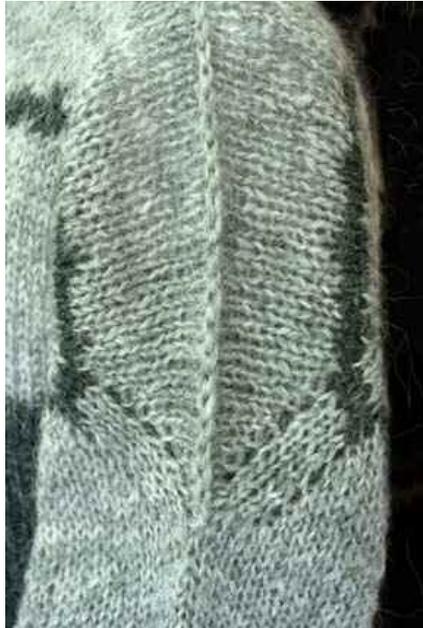


Underarm: Mark 3 + 13 + 3 at each side (3 + 8% of body sts + 3, centering the 13 directly above the 3 side "seam" stitches; adjust 8% to be an odd number, for centering).

Nalgar Shaping: Increase each side of each of the 4 groups of 3-sts, every other round, as follows:

*M1, k3, m1, k13, m1, k3, m1. Repeat from * at other side. Work next round without shaping. Use whatever increase you like, I worked a Yarn Over for lacy holes.

After increasing 18x (8 sts per inc round), there are 320 total sts, and the upper sleeve is 7" deep. To measure sleeve depth, fold each side so the increase lines meet, then measure (see photo).



Neck: At wanted shoulder height/upper sleeve depth, put all stitches on a thread. Isolate the center neck sts (approx 38 sts across; a wide boat-neck style) on both front and back and place them on a thread. Line up the remaining shoulder sts and work 3-needle cast off along each shoulder. Cast off neck sts.

Sleeves: Pick up sleeve sts and work around for wanted length. These 3/4-length sleeves are unshaped, but you may decide to narrow them -- or taper them to a full length sleeve. At cuff, to match the lower border, purl 1 round, switch to a smaller needle and knit about 6 rounds. Cast off.

Details: I softened the color changes by working (k3, slip 1 p'wise) during the first round of a new color. I also put a narrow color stripe in the yoke so as to emphasize the right angle/Nalgar shape, as follows: K3 dark, slip 1 pale p'wise for one round. Knit one round dark. Then k3 pale, slip 1 dark p'wise - staggered above the first round.

Close up of my (yo, k3, yo) increases, meeting at the shoulder/upper sleeve.

P.S. On EZ's brown Garter stitch Overblouse below (from her book, Knit One Knit All), the color-change blips were worked as follows: On the first row of the new color, work (k3, slip 1) across the row. As you knit into the slipped stitch on the way back, a blip will appear on the front.

Stocking stitch Version

