

a newsletter from
Meg Swansen

Dear Knitters,

We are well and truly launched into this brave new decade (did you see the full, blue moon on New Year's Eve?) and so grateful for our knitting, as we do whatever small things we are able to assist the heartbreaking devastation in Haiti. The situation seems utterly overwhelming; I am awed by the courage and dedication of the scores of people who have physically rushed to help.

Things seem to clip along at an increased pace these days. One of my mother's favorite sayings from a dear cussie: "They aren't making years the way they used to." It's just about time for [Summer Knitting Camp](#) applications (February 1st through 7th). We're also offering a [Mini-Workshop in May](#) to explore the subject of Two-Color Knitting.

[EZ's Green Sweater pattern](#) has been reprinted and includes corrections plus additional clarifications which may be useful. If your SPP#13 has a red border and red schoolhouse logo on the cover, please download the updated information (below). If your pattern has a green border and logo, you have all the new printing with changes included.



[SPP 13 Green Sweater Errata](#)

We have touched the bottom of the year and are springing back to the surface. I am fortunate to live in a location that enables me to see each sunrise and sunset and the added time to the length of each day is palpable. Do any of you remember that lovely and moving children's book we used to carry, "Welcome Back Sun" by Michael Emberley - alas, now out of print, but keep an eye out for a used copy.

Now, on to your queries:

Q&A

Q: I`m a knitter since many years from Sweden and I have a problem with cables. The left side of the cable and the following purl stiches gets looser than the right side cable, stiches. I have tried to knit harder on the left side but I can` t get them good enough. This makes me avoid cabled patterns although I like them. I have have asked different knitters and some just don` t understand the problem others sais tighten your knitting but it must be something I do wrong.

A: Dear Anki,
Your problem is a very common one - and you are not doing anything 'wrong'. There are several things you can try to tighten that last cable stitch:

- Wrap the wool the 'wrong' way round the needle, which will use a tiny bit less length of wool. Next time you meet that stitch, it will be backward on the needle, so knit into the back of it - and wrap the wool the wrong way again, etc. OR
- Some knitters purl-into-the-back of the purl stitch that follows the last knit stitch. OR

[On the Web Site](#)

[Schoolhouse Press Patterns](#)

[Ron Schweitzer's
Flowers of Life](#)



Ron Schweitzer's pattern
coming soon.

From Ron's series Remembered Voices, this first design is tesellated, a style that reflects equal color elements so there is no background or foreground.

- Amy Detjen invented this trick: when you have 2 knit stitches remaining on the Left needle (from the cable, or even just k2, p2 ribbing): knit one, but do not remove it from the L needle; knit the second stitch and slide them both off together. This transfers the looseness to the penultimate stitch, which has a better chance to even itself out unobtrusively.

I hope one of those will work for you...

Q: My Ribwarmer is not getting the same result as Elizabeth's diagram! It's the 'turning corner' which I am muddled up with, I end up with a pouch and/or one side has a rounded corner while the other side is a large slit. Is the Rib Warmer not suitable as a beginner project? Next, would the DVD help? Lastly, should I knit something else which is more suitable for beginners?

A: Thank you for your enquiry, dear Dora. I think the Ribwarmer is an ideal beginning project. Perhaps the 'corner' will make sense if you practice on a 10-stitch swatch:

Cast On 10

1. k9, turn, k back (abandon the 10th stitch; just leave it on the needle)
2. k8, turn, k back (2 abandoned sts)
3. k7, turn, k back
4. k6, turn, k back
5. k5, turn, k back
6. k4, turn, k back
8. k3, turn, k back (You CAN work down to k1, turn, k back - but that makes a sharp corner which, with wear, becomes sharper and sharper. Better to stop at 2 or 3 sts for a gently rounded corner - or even 5 or 6 for a curve.)

NOW: - with the 7 abandoned sts waiting on the needle, unite them again, one at a time, as follows:

- k3, turn, k back
- k4, turn, k back
- k5, turn, k back
- k6, turn, k back
- k7, turn, k back
- k8, turn, k back
- k9, turn, k back
- k10. Corner turned. See?

Because most knitters are a visual lot, the DVD may be useful to you as well.

Q: I have a question regarding EZ's Moebius Ring as published in Holiday 1987 Vogue Knitting. I knitted the mobius ring all in garter stitches, and overlooked to slip the first stitch and knit the last stitch instruction. Now I'd like to add an I-cord border by picking up the stitches along the garter stitch edge. My question is: do I just pick up the ridges (i.e. only just the bumps along the border) or do I pick up 3 stitches for every 2 ridges? Your hints will be very much appreciated in finishing this wonderful scarf.

A: Indeed, Gwen -- you are on the right track. Regardless of the selvedge, pick up 1 stitch for each ridge and work EZ's Applied I-Cord all around (only ONE edge!). If you are applying a strongly contrasting color, add Joyce Williams', yo, to the Cord as follows: For 2-stitch I-Cord, *k1, slip 1, yo, k picked-up st, p2sso (slipped stitch, plus yo). Replace 2 sts to L needle and repeat from *.

Q: I was reading Vogue Knitting 2009 and loved your belted hat however confused at the instructions and wondered could I order a kit and new pattern. Looking forward to hearing from you.

A: Dear Dianne, I'm glad you wrote, because there is an error in the VK instructions - for which I abase myself.

Shape Top: *(slip 2 tog, k1, p2sso), k8 (this should read, k9) Knit 1 round plain, maintaining seed-stitch pattern. Repeat from * around, with 2 fewer stitches between dbl-dec. When you have 24 sts, work the dbl-decreases every round down to 4 sts. Finish Off. The horizontal 'belt-loop' section is knitted first. it is just a narrow strip of knitting with Built-In-I-Cord along each edge. Every few inches, the I-Cord sts get stranded across the back of the strip to form the belt loops.

Two Guernseys



Bridget Rorem's Lace Alphabet Scarf



Latvian Mittens Pattern



Latvian Mittens Book



When the strip is long enough to go round your head, the end is woven to the beginning.

Then you knit up sts from along one of the selvages and join into a circle.

Knit around ... you can work plain stocking stitch if you prefer it to seed stitch.

The top is shaped by working a double-decrease (turn 3 sts into 1) with 9 sts between (that is where the mistake is... see above). The between-sts are fewer each dec-round until you end up with 4 sts.

Q: Hi Meg -- do you have a pattern for a nice Moebius scarf in your files? I have a skein of cashmere wool I'd like to make into a present, and am not crazy about any of the patterns I find on the Web.

A: Dear Jeanne,

In recent years, the Möbius has undergone a transformation from a flat piece which is turned 180-degrees and woven - to a new mode: cast onto a 60" double-folded-circular needle, then knit into the bottom of the cast-on and work the whole thing with the twist automatically built in.

I still like my ma's original, flat version; the sheer simplicity of knitting an oblong and by simply giving it half a turn, one can create "the riddle of the universe".

The cashmere will knit up beautifully on a largish needle - in plain garter-stitch, or perhaps a simple lace motif. Find a gauge you like, then Provisionally cast on about 7-8" worth of stitches. Work straight for about 48" to 52". Do not cast off. Turn one end 180-degrees and (remove aux thread from Provisional Cast On) weave it to the beginning. Instructions may be found in my ma's book, [Knitting Around](#). For a nice finished selvedge, you may want to include EZ's Built-In-I-Cord as you knit, or add EZ's Applied I-Cord after the fact (in a contrasting color; see Joyce Williams' variation above).

Q: Having looked at the Armenian Knitting book, I admit I'm perhaps in over my head as well as in "information overload" mode. There's a question that nags me in general:

1. Why are some backs of necks higher and others lower? Such as the higher back neck in round yoke sweaters a la WG#79 ([Yoke Sweaters](#)) and then lower as in the Olive Branch sweater of Joyce Williams design, for example?

2. It looks as if the Olive Branch sweater has short rows only on the front of the sweater which would make the front higher but it looks like all the stitches for the back are kept waiting while the front is shaped. Is this done on straight needles? Am I reading that right?

3. The Monarch Sweater pattern says to use the EZ Bog Jacket shaping where you increase stitches in the shoulders both front and back, but does that make the shoulder seams drop down lower on the upper arm? I can't see how that wedges up the shoulders as you head toward the neck.

A: 1. Yoke sweaters need a number of short rows across the back of the yoke - not so much to raise the back as to lower the front. Without them, the front neck would cut across the middle of your throat. Dropped-shoulder sweaters, however, (like Joyce's Olive Branch) often fit better with sloping shoulders and a lowered neck-back and -front.

2. Yes, Joyce came up with working short rows across the front only (staggered from shoulder-tip to neck edge) which slopes the shoulders nicely, but keeps the neck-back-and-front low.

3. EZ's Bog Jacket increases as you head up to the shoulder top - then a corresponding decrease down the other side. The extra stitches are very subtle and unobtrusive - but they 'steer' the sleeve down in a more anatomical fashion (as opposed to the straight-out Norwegian drop-shoulder).

Q: I have been searching for the definitive answer to how you measure garter stitch gauge. One source said count the bottom bumps; one source says count the top bumps. Is each bump a stitch? or do a top and bottom bump equal one stitch? My gauges have been off, so I figure I'm counting stitches incorrectly.

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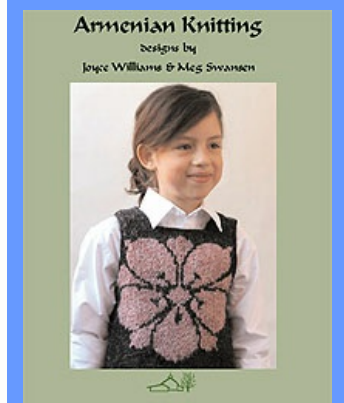


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A: Dear Bonnie,
Top and bottom bumps are pillars-and-spaces. Count either one, just be consistent.

Yes, each bump is a stitch. For an accurate gauge reading, stay away from the selvages where it is sometimes difficult to determine numbers of stitches. For your row gauge, count ridges; 2 rows = 1 ridge. Have your gauges been too large or too small? I usually recommend knitting firmly when working garter-stitch; it is a fabric that tends to stretch in both directions.

Q: I have purchased the [BSJ DVD](#) and when I got to the 5th ridge the instructions read that I should increase 9 stitches at the beg and end rows. I watched the dvd and increased 9 stitches accordingly and knit 2 stitches before the centre stitches which worked out fine. At the other end, according to the DVD, Meg knits 2 stitches and increased one stitch and then she carried on knitting 3 sts make 1. But she did not do that at the beg when she increased the 9. As a result I am short of 1 stitch. Please clarify this for me.

A: Dear Sheila, I am sorry to have confused you: I was merely being meticulous about mirror-imaging the two ends. Since I ENDED the first section with M1, k2, I BEGAN the second section with k2, M1. It certainly will not make any difference how you set it up as long as you get 9 additional sts into each end section ... more-or-less evenly spaced.

If you have questions you wish to see answered in a future newsletter, please write to [Meg](#).

Outward,
Meg