

Meditation Mittens by Mary Keenan

It's soothing to draw very special, minimally processed yarn across the back of every stitch, weaving two strands back and forth for perfect balance, but watch your tension level – knitting and otherwise! Small changes there can lead to a big difference in mitten size, making this pattern a meditative exercise.

Materials

Approximately 60 (90) yards of 100% wool in 2-ply fingering in Color A (green), and 50 (80) yards in Color B (white)

Two 6" lengths of slippery waste yarn

2 ¾" buttons or other embellishments (optional)

3 mm straight needles (or size to obtain gauge)

1 set 2.5mm dpns (or size to obtain gauge)

Gauge

Salt and Pepper Stitch: 30 sts and 32 rows = 4"

Sizes

S (adult woman): 8 ¼" wide across the palm

L (adult man): 10 ½" wide

Notes

Pattern includes both sizes; larger size is in brackets. Where only one number appears, it applies to both sizes.

Top decreases begin where mitten brushes the top of the little finger; mitten ends 2" beyond that.

Colors A and B can be the same, if you want to make solid-colour mittens.

Abbreviations

dpn: double pointed needle

K: knit

K3tog: k 3 sts together (decrease)

Kfb: k into front and back of st (increase)

K1-A: k one stitch with Color A

K1-B: k one stitch with Color B

P: purl

st(s): stitch(es)

Directions

Using 3 mm needles, cast on 48 (56) sts in A and work flat (to make a slit for checking your watch).

Cuff

Next Row: Slip 1 st as if to purl, *P1, K1; repeat from * to last st, P1.

Repeat this row six times more for a total of seven.

Change to 2.5mm dpns and divide stitches evenly across needles.

Join and place marker.

Rows 8-13: *K1, P1; repeat from * to end of rnd.

Row 14 *Kfb, work 5 (6) sts in ribbing pattern; repeat from * to end of rnd – 56 (64) sts.

Hand

Two-strand pattern begins. Knit with A held in front of B.

Rows 1, 3, 5, 7: *K1-B, K1-A; repeat from * to end of rnd.

Rows 2, 4, 6: *K1-A, K1-B; repeat from * to end of rnd.

Row 8 (this row begins with A): For Left Mitten, K14 (18) in pattern; for Right Mitten, K20 (24) in pattern. For both mittens, *K into next st with both colors, still holding A in front of B. K into the next stitch the same way again, with both colors. K8 in pattern; repeat from * once more. K into the next two sts with both colors, as before. Work in pattern to end of rnd – 62 (70) sts.

Rows 9-13: Work in 2-color pattern as set.

Row 14 (this row begins with A): For Left Mitten, K20 (24) in pattern; for Right Mitten, K34 in pattern.

For both mittens: K into next stitch with both colors, holding A in front of B. K into the next stitch the same way again, with both colors. Work 4 (8) more sts in pattern. K with both colors into the next two sts as before. Work in pattern to end of rnd – 66 (74) sts.

Rows 15-25: Work in 2-color pattern as set.

Row 26: For Left Mitten, K22 sts in pattern; for Right Mitten, K36 (42) in pattern. For both mittens: using waste yarn, K8 (10). Slip these 8 (10) sts back onto left needle and knit again in Colors A and B in pattern as set. Work in pattern to end of rnd.

Rows 27-28: Work in 2-color pattern as set.





Row 29: For Left Mitten, K16 (18) in pattern; for Right Mitten, K31 (37) in pattern. For both mittens: *K3tog in color of middle st, K5 in pattern; repeat from * twice more. Work in pattern to end of rnd – 60 (68) sts.

Continue in pattern for approximately 6 ½” (7”), or 51 (55) rows from beginning of 2-color pattern. To ensure a perfect fit, open up the thumb stitches as directed below, slip them onto holders, and try on the mitten. Decreases should begin once the top of the completed work grazes the top of your smallest finger.

Fingertips

Row 1: *K3tog in color of middle stitch, K12 (14) in pattern; repeat to end of rnd – 52 (60) sts.

Rows 2-3: (and for every 2 rows following a decrease row) Work in pattern as set.

Row 4: *K3tog in color of middle stitch, K23 (27) in pattern; repeat to end of rnd – 48 (56) sts.

Row 7: *K3tog in color of middle stitch, K5 in pattern; repeat to end of rnd – 36 (42) sts.

Row 10: *K3tog in color of middle stitch, K3 in pattern; repeat to end of rnd – 24 (28) sts.

Row 13: *K3tog in color of middle stitch, K3 (4) in pattern; repeat to end of rnd – 16 (20) sts.

Measure out an 8-10” tail and cut both yarns. Thread both threads through all remaining stitches, pull tight, and tack down inside the mitten. You can improve the roundness at the top by threading the tails around in circles that increase in size from the centre.

Thumb

Pull out waste yarn. Slip 8 (10) exposed bottom loops onto dpn #1 and the top loops onto dpn #2. Starting with dpn #1, work 8 (10) sts in pattern, pick up and knit 4 (5) sts between hand and thumb; work 8 (10) sts from dpn # 2 and pick up and knit 4 (5) sts between thumb and hand – 24 (30) sts. Distribute sts evenly on dpns, join and place marker. For comfort, use a slightly looser tension knitting the thumb in size Small.

Row 1-15: Work in 2-color pattern as set.

Row 16: *K3tog in color of middle stitch, K5 (7) in pattern; repeat to end of rnd – 18 (24) sts.

Rows 17, 19, 21: Work in pattern as set.

Row 18: *K3tog in color of middle stitch, K3 (5) in pattern; repeat to end of rnd – 12 (18) sts.

Row 20: *K3tog in color of middle stitch, K1 (3) in pattern; repeat to end of rnd – 6 (12) sts.

Size Large only:

Row 22: *K3tog in color of middle stitch, K1 in pattern; repeat to end of rnd – 6 sts.

Finishing

Measure out an 8-10” tail and cut both yarns to thread through all remaining stitches. Pull tight and tack down inside. Block mittens and sew buttons onto cuffs if desired.