



Knit Wits

Monthly Newsletter



From the Owners

It's time to make resolutions and look expectantly and hopefully into what 2009 will bring. Allow us to help you reach some of those New Year's goals - come in, and let's start something new together!

This year, we resolve to make your experience at the Knook positive and educational and to be of the greatest assistance possible to you. Let us know what we can do to make your visit pleasant and rewarding.

We are *excited* about this coming year as we make plans to increase the quantity and variety of yarns and accessories in our shop, schedule more classes and workshops. We have been blessed by each one of you!

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Featured Fiber: Soy

About Soy:

- Original fiber produced from the soybean was named Azlon
- Soy fiber lost commercial popularity to nylon and rayon

Making of Soy:

- Fiber is made from left over pulp of the soy beans after being pressed for their oil
- Proteins from the pulp are isolated, rendered into liquid, and wet spun into yarn with polyvinyl alcohol

Soy Properties:

- Warm and wicks moisture away from your skin
- Soft, lustrous, and has a very nice drape

Specialty Classes

SOCKS!!

Dates: January 8th and 22nd *or*
January 10th and 24th

Times: Thursday evenings 5:30 – 8:00pm *or*
Saturday mornings 8:30 – 11:00am

Cost: \$40/person + supplies

Description: Learning to knit socks is really fun challenge. If you have never tried on a hand knit sock, we encourage you to come to the shop to try one on.

The comfort is unmatched! We are offering you a choice – learn to knit them using the Magic Loop method, or learn to knit them using 2 circular needles. Make a pair for yourself and/or for someone special!

Remember with class participation at the Knook, you will enjoy a 10% discount on all purchases the day of the class!



Knitting Retreat

Take a minute to ask yourself the following questions...

- #1: After a busy holiday, are you ready for some relaxation and fun?
- #2: Would you like a weekend with no cooking, cleaning, washing, tidy-ing, or menfolk (☺)?
- #3: Does getting together with a fun group of ladies for a sleepover that has lots of yummy food, laughter, and knitting sound good?

If you answered an emphatic "YES!" to any of these questions, this is just what you need!

This year our winter knitting retreat will be the **third weekend of February (21st & 22nd)**.

Here is a *brief* description of what each day will entail:

Saturday: 11:00 - Arrive

12:30 - Eat lunch

1:30 - 4:30 Afternoon workshop*

6:00 - Dinner

Sunday: 10:30 - Brunch

2:00 - Return home ☺

**For the Saturday afternoon Workshop, you will be able to choose between 2 projects, (the supplies are included).*

We are planning some other fun activities - most of which we want to be a surprise! But, don't worry - there will be **lots** of time for working on your own projects and for talking, laughing, and enjoyment!

What should you bring, you ask? Yourself, your current project(s), and a piece of fruit that describes your personality.

This retreat will be at a location near Charlottesville. For carpooling information, inquire at the shop.

Also, this retreat will be limited to **15 people**. The cost is \$75, with a **\$30 deposit required** to hold your place. We will begin taking reservations on January 2nd. Come in soon to claim your space!



Tips and Tricks

1. We often use a DVD case to make fringe. If you wrap the yarn around the long side of the case, you have a nice fringe for an adult garment. Wrapping the short side of the case is a nice length for a child's garment.
2. Many yarns are labeled in the metric system, meaning you will see the length given in meters instead of yards. The difference is relatively simple – add 10% to the meters and you will have the length in yards. (e.g. 90 meters = 99 yards)
3. When wrapping your completed gift for someone special, don't forget to include a label from one of the skeins of yarn with the garment. This will provide the recipient the wash and care instructions to properly care for his/her garment.
4. Keeping a journal with your knitting and crocheting is a good idea. You can write down tips, make notations on yarns you like (or dislike), jot down project and pattern ideas, the time it took to make a project, and even keep track of the needles and hooks that you have at home!
5. Ripping back is usually a pain, and gives some a mild heart attack. To make it easier on yourself to catch all your stitches, consider inserting one of your needles through *each stitch* of the row you are ripping back to *before* you being tugging. This way, you won't have to worry about dropping them when you get there – they will be waiting for you on your needle.

Point(s) to Ponder



“With a little practice and patience, our hands learn to knit, and then our minds are free to enjoy the process.”
Bev Galeskas

“In knitting, as in life, there are usually two ways to go: The easy way and the hard way. Often we find out about the easy way only when we are three-quarters of the way through with the hard way.”
Ann Shayne and Kay Gardiner

“The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble.
He cares for those who trust in Him.”

Nahum 1:7

Let's Talk About Gauge

Is checking gauge really that important? The answer to this question is: it depends on the project. Gauge *is not critical* when you do not have to make a specific size. For example, dimensions may not matter much if you are knitting or crocheting a long scarf, a felted purse, or a blanket. However, if you are making a sweater, hat, or anything that needs to be a very specific size, getting the proper gauge *is the most crucial* step for your project.

Let's use an example to discuss gauge further.

Gauge: 22 sts and 16 rows to 4" over stockinette.

This means that when knitting in stockinette, (knit the right side and purl the wrong side), you should have 22 stitches in 4 inches width, and 16 rows in 4 inches length.

When making your swatch, always cast on more stitches and work more rows than what is listed in the gauge. In this example, I would suggest 30 stitches and 20-25 rows. This will give you a more accurate measurement of your gauge.

Once you have completed your swatch, take out your needle before measuring. Don't fret about the work unraveling, because you're going to do that anyway!

If you have too few stitches (e.g. 18 instead of 22), go down a needle size and remake your swatch. If you have too many stitches (e.g. 26 instead of 22), go up a needle size and remake. The same is true for rows.

So, what is more important, the number of stitches or the number of rows? Good question! For the most part, the number of stitches. This determines the width of your garment. The number of rows controls the length. Generally in a pattern you work until “piece measures a ‘certain’ length”, and then proceed with the next shaping. So, row gauge is not too crucial in garments that do not have a lot of shaping. **However**, if you have a sweater with a lot of shaping (such as hourglass or corset shaping created by evenly spaced rows of decreases and increases) or a sweater with a lot of patterning, the row gauge becomes very important as well.

“In knitting, as in everything else, you learn as much from your mistakes as you do from your successes.”

Pam Allen

Meet Mrs. Patti Black

Mrs. Patti Black is the newest addition to our staff at the Knook. She has recently move to the area from Buena Vista, Colorado and brings with her a plethora of knowledge about knitting. Patti's first book is titled In Love With Wool, and she has designed patterns for Mountain Colors in Montana and Serendipity Yarn and Gifts, which includes an assortment of very popular fingerless gloves. Patti grew up in Maryland, has spent 16 years living in Europe in Germany and England, and now has her home in Stuarts Draft. We are so excited and privileged to have her with us! Make sure to drop by to say hello!