

It is my understanding that the little varmet in Pennsylvania has predicted six more weeks of Winter. Here it is, more snow with chances of more on the way. Luckily for yarn lovers My Sister Knits has new yarn arriving every week to keep you busy kintting, warm and happy.

We have been eagerly awaiting our December 1st order from Madelinetosh. Thanks to the kind folks at "tosh", we were able to fill-in our stock with some orphaned/cancelled orders to whet our "tosh appetites." The official Madelinetosh order has arrived!!! We have Tosh DK and Tosh Sock in many fabulous colors. We will be ordering Tosh Vintage (worsted weight) as well as some of the other weights of amazing yarn, but please be patient as perfection takes time (and so does the UPS man)!

We are working on putting together some Knit-A Longs (KALS) for you to enjoy. The first will be the Square-in-a-Square reversible blanket from Dovetail Designs. There will be a \$5.00 charge to join the KAL and you will receive 20% off your selected yarn for your project (the example in the shop is in Frog Tree Melange and there are many equally great yarns to choose from, so let's find your favorite). We will meet every other week beginning on March 4th from 6-8pm. The second KAL will be socks. We haven't any firm plans about this yet, so keep watching and waiting! These are NOT classes, just a relaxed time to knit, compare projects, have coffee and a snack, and of course some FUN.

As featured, we have some new Frog Tree yarns that are so soft and pretty...well worth the trip upstairs! We're still offering all FIESTA Yarns at close-out discount of 40% off....great yarn; we just need space.

Don't forget to turn in knitted squares for the afghans by February 16th. Tickets will be available for purchase at 1 for \$3.00 or 2 for \$5.00 through March.

Keep knitting, Julie, Kate, Dawn, Freba and Barbara

New Frog Tree arrivals for summer. **Upper Right and Lower**

Left: Pima Silk, a sport weight pima cotton and silk blend.

Upper Left and Lower Right:

Picoboo, a DK weight pima cotton and bamboo blend.



Upcoming Events

Now through March 31st Raffle Tickets for the three Manos del Uruguay blankets are on sale - \$3 ea or 2 for \$5. All proceeds to go to the Central Asia Institute.

February 2, 9 & 16, 5:30-6:30pm - Pure and Simple Socks

February 6 & 13, 1-3pm - Double Knit Mittens

February 16 - Manos Blanket Squares for CAI due at shop

February 20, 27, March 13 & 20, 10-11:30am - St. Denis Abstract Leaves Vest

February 23, March 2, 9 & 16, 5:30-6:30 - Your First Sweater

February 27 & March 6, 1-2pm - EZ's Mitered Mittens Modified

March 4 & 18, 6-8pm - KAL Night! Dovetail Designs' Square-in-a-Square Reversible Blanket

March 13, 20 & 27, 1-2:30pm - Sun-dog Sweater

Every Thursday 9-10am, Drop-in Beginning Knitting for \$10.

Every Wednesday 10am-2pm, Drop-in Help from Master Knitter Kathy Hartmeister

Download the Full Class Schedule Now

Choosing Knitting Needles

It takes little effort to obtain knitting needles of various forms and made from a plethora of materials. This selection raises quandaries on which needles to add to your growing collection. The types of projects you like to knit and your preferred yarn types can be used as a guide in your decision making.

Choosing Needle Type

The logical first step in choosing needles is to decide what needle type you need -- single point, double pointed or circular? Each type of knitting needle has its purpose. Some types are a bit more versatile than others, but ultimately the best needle type for you is the one you most enjoy working with for the types of projects you like to knit.

Single point needles are the most common.

- Used for items that are knit flat such as scarves, small baby blankets or items that are seamed.
- The knit fabric hangs from the needles without support which can strain the hand and wrist.
- Single point needles can comfortably hold fabric about 60% wider than the length of the needle, or more if using lighter yarn.

Double pointed needles, often abbreviated as dpns, have points on each end.

- Used to knit small circumference things in the round such as socks, mittens, sweater sleeves and the crowns of hats.
- The shortest lengths are best for fingers and thumbs of gloves or baby socks and booties. The longer ones are needed for larger circumferences like hats and upper sleeves.
- Some find dpns uncomfortable to work with due to all those points and ladders of looser stitches can sometimes form at the join between needles. It is also easy to twist your cast-on stitches when joining for knitting in the round.

Circular needles are two needle points joined by a cable of varying lengths.

- They can be used to knit flat items such as afghans and scarves and items knit in the round such as seamless sweaters, hats and cowls.
- The total length of the needle from point-to-point, the measure given on packaging, should be smaller than the circumference of the knitting.
- Circular needles can comfortably hold up to 40% more knitting circumference than their total length in the shorter sizes and as much as 50-60% more in the longer sizes. Generally a slightly crowded circular needle can be knit faster than one that is a near match in length to the circumference being knit.
- When knitting flat on a circular needle use the shortest length that has a comfortable needle length for you and can hold the number stitches required.
- Circular needles can also be used to knit smaller circumference items by using the Magic Loop or two-circs methods.

Choosing Needle Material

Each type of needle is also available in myriad materials from plated aluminum to plastic.

Wood is a common material.

- Available at a variety of price points depending upon the type of wood used.
- Knitters with arthritis or other hand or wrist issues prefer wooden needles because of their warmth.
- Wooden needles do have more friction than some other materials which can be helpful when working with especially slippery fibers or for loose knitters.
- Tighter or faster knitters may find wood slows them down.

Bamboo shares many properties with wooden needles.

- Bamboo needles are lighter than the same size wooden needles and have a bit more flexibility making them less likely to break.
- They can develop permanent curvatures, but that often does not affect their usability.
- Like wood, bamboo has some friction, though some companies offer ultra-polished versions that are a bit slicker than wooden needles.

- Due to the growth rate and methods of harvesting, bamboo is considered a renewable resource making bamboo needles an environmental choice.

Like wood and bamboo, plastic knitting needles are warm and flexible.

- As a rule they have greater flexibility than wood and bamboo and are less likely to dent or scratch, maintaining the smooth surface through more abuse than wood or bamboo needles.
- In larger sizes plastic needles are beneficial as they can be hollow to lighten them while maintaining their strength and durability.
- In circular needles plastic joins between the cable and needle portion may not be as flexible as other options.

Metal knitting needles are widely available at various price points, though often more expensive than other materials.

- Currently, they are typically made of aluminum to keep the weight lighter.
- Due to their slick surface these needles are ideal when working with higher friction yarns such as cotton, linen, hemp and mohair.
- Great choice for fast or tight knitters.
- Like bamboo needles, the smallest sizes sometimes develop a curvature and in some extreme cases can even be bent at rather severe angles.

Ultimately, choosing your needle material all comes down to your own personal preference. Try the different types out and decide for yourself. For maximum knitting enjoyment you just need the right needle for the right job! See our upcoming blog posts on this topic for more tips on choosing the perfect needles for your next project!



Kristi Schueler's **Laridae Mittens**

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Yarn

Misti Alpaca Chunky Tonos; 50% baby alpaca, 50% merino wool; 108 yds per 100 gm; color Avocado TTC05; 2 skeins.

Needles & Notions

Size US 9 / 5.5 mm set of 4 or 5 double pointed needles (dpns) *Adjust needle size if necessary to achieve required gauge.*
Cable Needle (cn)
2 Stitch Markers
Tapestry Needle

Gauge

16 sts and 26.5 rnds per 4" / 10 cm in St st knit in the round

Size

7½" / 19 cm circumference unstretched and 10½" / 26.5 cm tall to fit most adult women. Additional sizes can be achieved by changing gauge.

Special Instructions

Abbreviations used follow the standards at <http://www.craft-yarn-council.com/knit.html>.

c1 over 2 left - sl 1 st to cable ndl and hold to front, k2, k1 from cable ndl

c1 over 2 right - sl 2 sts to cable ndl and hold to back, k1, k2 from cable ndl

kfb - knit into front and back of stitch

Right Twist - k2tog, leaving sts on lft ndl, knit first st again and slip both from left ndl

The licensing for this free pattern has expired. It is available for download through Ravelry or in print format at the shop. Be sure to sign up for the newsletter at http://www.mysisterknits.com/newsletter/newsletter_subscribe.php so you don't miss out on future free patterns.

Valentine's Day Ideas

- Use novelty yarn to knit this fun heart cushion!
- Use small scraps of yarn and bits of paper to make crocheted valentines for everyone!
- This fun Valentine Mug Cozy lets you combine Fair Isle knitting and cabling in one small project!
- Keep your favorite Valentine warm with St. Alban's Valentine cabled scarf!
- Or be styling with this quick to knit Hugs and Kisses Beret made with bulky yarn.

Artist Profile: Freba Karimzad



Having grown up in Kabul, Afghanistan, Freba was surrounded by knitting women and took up the needles, fashioned from a dry branch, herself at age 5 after asking her mother to teach her. Freba is an active woman who loves the outdoors and traveling. Before having her two sons, Zaki and Rabi ages 13 and 9 respectively, she trekked to the Mount Everest

basecamp in Nepal and climbed Aconcagua in Argentina, Mount McKinley in Alaska and several 14er's in the US.

Seven years ago Freba's husband accepted a position with the City of Fort Collins and it has been their home ever since. She loves spending time hiking and rock climbing with her boys, especially at Horsetooth Park and Piano Rock.

Freba enjoys all types of knitting. Currently she is attracted to designs by Jared Flood, Elizabeth Zimmermann and Kate Jackson. When asked what project she is the most proud of making she replied, "Whatever I am working on today." She has a similar attitude towards techniques she wishes to learn, "Everyday I keep myself open to learn whatever technique comes my way." She would like to expand her fiber arts skills and learn to crochet, sew and do Afghan embroidery in addition to knitting.

The driving force behind bringing back the community knitting aspect to Tuesday nights at My Sister Knits, Freba is wishing to not only bring our local knitting community closer but to also reach out to other people locally and globally to lend them our love and support.

All Fiesta Yarns
40% Off Until Gone!