



EVENTS

February 26

Professional Finishing Techniques 11 am - 4 pm

Donna Druchunas, \$65 + supplies. Bring your own lunch.

March 1 & 11

Toe up Socks on Circular Needles, 5:30 - 7:30 pm

Margaret Sturgill, \$45 + supplies.

March 5

Studio Visit and Trunk Show at Jukebox Quilts, 10:30 am - 3 pm

Kelly Gallagher-Abbot, \$25, incl demos & free patterns.

March 5

Learn to Knit I, 10am - 12 pm

Julie Conway, \$30 + supplies.

March 8

Learn to Knit II, 5:30 - 8:30 pm

Julie Conway, \$30 + supplies.

March 9, 16, 23 & 30

Lacy Toddler Dress, 6:30 - 8:30 pm

Jenny Hubbard, \$65 + supplies.

March 19 & April 2

Tip Toe Through the Tulips 10 am - 12 pm

Kathy Hartmeister, \$35 + supplies.

March 26

Successful Sweaters, 10 am - 4 pm

Ann McCauley, \$65 + supplies.

Wednesdays

Drop-in Knit & Crochet Help 10 am - 2 pm

Kathy Hartmeister, \$10 drop-in fee.

Download the full schedule through June at http://www.mysisterknits.com/files/MSK_Classes_2011.pdf

Welcome to the midst of winter! I absolutely love this time of year. The cold reminds me that I am alive. A good excuse for hot chocolate, warm fires and lots of knitting too!

The most exciting news is that Cat Bordhi is coming! We booked only this week and we already have ten knitters signed up. The classes will be September 11th and 12th, a Sunday and Monday. All day classes, with six hours of learning from an incredibly engaging teacher, designer, writer and leader in knitting. If interested at all please get your name to me. As the event nears I will get deposits to hold class placement.

New to the shop - Alchemy Yarns!!!! If you have not experienced these yarns, you have something to look forward to. So far we have stocked the Silk Purse, Haiku and Temple. I am currently knitting the Super Easy Baby Blanket found on www.purlbee.com using Temple. Silk Straw is also on order and will be a great Spring/Summer fiber. Beautiful colors!

Malabrigo yarn is here to stay! The Rios is fabulous and more is on the way. Sock,

Aquarella and Worsted are also here. Just today Lace and Rasta arrived!

A talented local knitter/quilter, Janet Slagle is making needle cases and fabric bowls which we are now carrying. Many are sewn with colorful batiks. I have seen many needle cases and fabric bowls, but these kick it up a notch! I guess being an engineer helps with the phenomenal attention to detail.

Another local I have to mention is Vic England. If Vic did it, it is guaranteed to be well done! She has written many patterns, including numerous original sock patterns, hand wear and children's accessories. Vic joins us for the Knit A-Longs every other Thursday and brings much to these gatherings. Some of the garments Vic has brought to show us are worthy of being framed and hung in my house as original art work. Seriously!

Thank you for being a part of the community of My Sister Knits. Without all of you My Sister Knits would not be nearly the special place you all have made it!

Keep Calm and Carry Yarn,

Julie

NEW ARRIVALS



We have fallen head over heels for the yarns from Malabrigo. Clockwise from center top are plied Rios and Sock, then singles yarns Worsted and Aquarella (a thick thin). Lace and Rasta just joined the line up. These yarns are unbelievably soft. You must come fondle them!

Fear Grafting No More!



Three words that tend to strike fear into the hearts of many knitters: “Kitchener stitch” and “grafting.” But there is little reason for these heart palpitations. I could have thrown you over the edge by possibly trying to cover this all with the addition of steeks! Haa ha!

There are many places where grafting to seamlessly join two pieces of knit fabric comes in handy. Likely you were first exposed to it when knitting socks. Grafting is commonly used for the toes of top-down socks with wedge toes and for toe-up socks with short row toes. It can also save a knitter when a finished garment needs lengthened or shortened. I like using it when making scarves so that stitch patterns are oriented the same on both halves. In the case of this month’s free pattern, it allows you to create a large, seamless circular infinity scarf that is knit flat rather than knitting 400+ stitches per round.

If you have grafted before it is likely that you did so on stockinette fabric. This is the most common method of grafting called for in patterns. It may be referred to as the Kitchener stitch. If you need grafting to save a project though you may not be so lucky. The Kitchener stitch is not just for stockinette. It can be used on garter stitch, reverse stockinette stitch and even ribbings with a little care. Really it may be employed on any pattern if you are truly dedicated to figuring it out and not rushed for time.

There are a couple different ways to graft. One involves laying the fabric on a flat surface with the right sides up and the live stitches on needles (or not if you are brave) butted together. I find this method works best for me if on one side I knit beyond the edge to be grafted with a contrasting yarn. Then trace the path of the contrasting yarn with the threaded tapestry needle. You can do all the tracing and then unravel the contrasting yarn or you may unravel as you go.

This method is much more visual and does



▲ Grafted Wedge Toe

Grafting is a popular technique for seamlessly finishing the toes on top-down socks.

not have any pithy verbal queues to go along with it. You just analyze the fabric as you go. If it is your first time there may be some trial and error. I recommend it for those who have strong analytical and spatial skills.

I prefer to graft with the wrong sides of my knit fabric held together and the fabric hanging down from the two needles. This has the right side of the stitches on the front needle and the wrong side of the stitches on the back needle facing me. I often insert my left index finger between them. I prefer this method as it does not require me to have a clean, flat surface handy in order to graft. It also has several different sing-songy mantras you can utter to yourself to keep the rhythm and directions clear in your head.

The saying I first learned applied only to the Kitchener stitch on stockinette fabric. There is a better, nearly universal mantra that applies to most cases of grafting you will encounter:

“Same off. Opposite On.”

Analyze the stitches as you view them -- the right side of the fabric for the front needle and the wrong side for the back. So for stockinette fabric “same” on the front needle

will require a knitwise motion of the needle and “opposite” would be purlwise. Similarly, on the back needle it would be purlwise and knitwise, respectively.

You work the whole mantra on each needle, alternating between them. Some set-up is required, however. Work only the second sentence of the chant, “opposite on” on each needle, starting with whichever needle is not attached to the yarn tail. For example, if the yarn is coming from the back needle and you are grafting two pieces of stockinette stitch you would pass the threaded tapestry needle through the first stitch on the front needle as if to purl and leave it on; then pass the needle through the first stitch on the back needle as if to knit and leave it on. That’s it. The set-up is complete. From there, you simply follow both parts of the mantra on one needle, followed by the other.

While it does require a bit of extra thought because you have to read each stitch for whether it is a knit or purl, this more versatile incantation I have found serves me best in the long run since it applies to most grafting situations.

There are instances where this mantra will not work. For example, when you are grafting a row where the stitches will not match the stitch of the existing rows on the needles when viewed from the right side. The most notable stitch pattern that falls into this category would be seed stitch where you knit the purls and purl the knits as you work it. Since grafting adds an additional row of stitches you need to be grafting two right side knit stitches with what will be a right side purl stitch and vice versa for the following stitch. In those instances, flipping the mantra around should work.

Be sure to watch the blog at <http://mysisterknits.wordpress.com> over the next several weeks to be walked through many common grafting scenarios, including ribbing!

Infinite Scrunch

BY KRISTI SCHUELER | PHOTO BY KRISTI SCHUELER

High fashion trends aren't always wearable or widely flattering. But, this trend can fit anyone - and in a variety of ways. For this infinity style scarf a soft, fuzzy yarn knit at a loose gauge creates luxurious drape. Wear it looped about your neck a couple times or fold it in half and draw one end through the loop of the other. The generous size even allows it to be worn like a shrug to provide extra warmth across your entire back in the cool nights of spring. How will you wear it?



Yarn

Rowan Kid Classic, 70% wool, 26% mohair, 4% nylon; 153 yds / 140 m per 50 g; 4 skeins. Shown in color 846 Nightly.

Note: With 2 skeins you can make a generous sized standard cowl of approximately half the size as that shown. Just knit until you are nearly out of yarn, stopping at the end of a pattern repeat and finish as directed.

Needles & Notions

- US 10.5 / 6.5 mm needles, or size needed to obtain gauge
- Tapestry needle

Gauge & Size

Shown at 14 sts and 20 rows per 4" / 10 cm in stockinette stitch worked flat.
60" / 152.5 cm in circumference and 13" / 33 cm tall.

Special Instructions

Abbreviations used follow the standards at <http://www.craftyarnCouncil.com/knit.html>.

Body

Using your preferred method, provisionally CO 46 sts.

Row 1: Knit.

Row 2: Sl 1 wyif, purl to end of row.

Row 3: Sl 1 wyib, knit to end of row.

Row 4: Sl 1 wyif, purl to end of row.

Row 5: Sl 1 wyib, kfb in every stitch to last stitch, k1 -- 90 sts.

Row 6: Sl 1 wyif, purl to end of row.

Row 7: Sl 1 wyib, knit to end of row.

Row 8: Sl 1 wyif, purl to end of row.

Row 9: Sl 1 wyib, knit to end of row.

Row 10: Sl 1 wyif, purl to end of row.

Row 11: Sl 1 wyib, knit to end of row.

Row 12: Sl 1 wyif, purl to end of row.

Row 13: Sl 1 wyib, k2tog to last st, k1 -- 46 sts.

Row 14: Sl 1 wyif, purl to end of row.

Row 15: Sl 1 wyib, knit to end of row.

Row 16: Sl 1 wyif, purl to end of row.

Row 17: Sl 1 wyib, knit to end of row.

Rep Rows 2-17, seventeen more times.

Cut yarn leaving a tail of approx 1 yd.

Finishing

Undo provisional CO and place sts on a second needle. With wrong sides together and yarn tail coming from the back ndl on rt side, graft the sts using the Kitchener stitch as follows:

Set-up: With the tail threaded on a tapestry needle, pass the tapestry needle through the first stitch on the front needle as if to purl and leave stitch on needle. Then pass tapestry needle through the first stitch on the back needle as if to knit and leave on.

Step 1: Pass needle through 1st stitch of front needle as if to knit and take off the needle.

Step 2: Pass needle through the next stitch of front needle as if to purl and leave on.

Step 3: Pass needle through 1st stitch of back needle as if to purl and take off the needle.

Step 4: Pass needle through the next stitch on back needle as if to knit and leave on.

Repeat Steps 1-4 until 1 stitch remains on each needle, then repeat Steps 1 & 3 only.

Weave in ends and trim. Wash according to manufacturer's directions and lay flat to lightly block.

Alchemy: Yarns of Transformation



“The first touch, the initial glimpse of Alchemy Yarns of Transformation tells you we are passionate about everything we do.

Combining time-honored Fine Art techniques, the highest quality fibers available worldwide, and a reverence for Nature’s palette, we create yarns – and thereby opportunities for creative expression that transcend the typical. Pleasing the senses, soothing the soul – we strive for nothing less than the transformative moment in art and life.”

Alchemy Yarns of Transformation is a California company based out of the Sonoma Hills region in the northern part of the state. It is their desire to create yarn from start

to finish with compassionate responsibility. They partner with small companies and fiber producers who also respect and honor traditional hard work and sustainable agriculture to source their fiber and get it custom milled. Each stage of yarn production is made with care and commitment.

No artificial chemicals are used during the production of their yarn. Instead, natural dyes and mordants are employed. They hand paint each skein then steam set the dyes over an open fire and let them naturally air dry from bamboo poles. This means a single skein may take as much as 3 days to produce! It is this attention to intention that makes their yarns some of the most respected and luxurious yarns available today.

Like My Sister Knits, Alchemy is also dedicated to community service, both locally and globally. We are excited to offer such socially responsible, yet refined yarns from Alchemy. Currently you will find all the in-stock Alchemy on the display counter along the east wall as you enter the store.



PHOTO FROM ALCHEMY



Alchemy Yarns Web Site:
<http://www.alchemyyarns.com/>

Alchemy Yarns on Ravelry:
<http://www.ravelry.com/yarns/brands/alchemy>

Interview with co-Founder Gina Wilde:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LXFgidAkDgY>

Alchemy Yarns on Facebook:
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Alchemy-Yarns/>

Free Patterns for Alchemy Yarns

Temple:

- Purl Bee’s Super Easy Baby Blanket - <http://bit.ly/f819jd>
- Leila Raabe’s Nalu Mitts - <http://bit.ly/hPsjLX>
- katushika’s Wurm Hat - <http://bit.ly/bbhEE1>

Haiku:

- Cheryl Niamath’s Wisp Stole - <http://bit.ly/fxK0bN>
- Pickle’s Waffle Hat - <http://bit.ly/eRwFyH>
- Sharon Miler’s Birch Shawl - <http://bit.ly/hciXgT>

Silk Purse:

- Vyvyan Neel’s Argosy Scarf - <http://bit.ly/fZ8mUG>
- Kate Gagnon Osborn’s Spring Time Bandit Triangular Scarf - <http://bit.ly/gHp9YP>

