

Dear Sweater Knitters,

I'm very excited to guide you through using the basic charted instructions in *The Knitter's Handy Book of Top-Down Sweaters* to design your own sweater! This letter is to make sure everyone is equally prepared. Remember that this class is designed to help you create your own sweater using your choice of size, yarn, and gauge following the basic instructions in the top-down book. You will not be following a pattern that's already been published, though you're free to incorporate aspects of a published pattern into your own design.

The first online class will be hosted by Longmont Yarn Shoppe on Monday, May 8 at 6:00–8:00pm Mountain Time (8:00–10:00pm Eastern Time; 7:00–9:00pm Central Time; 5:00–7:00pm Pacific Time). Subsequent classes will be at the same time on Monday, May 15, 22, June 5, 12, and 26. Note that there is no class May 30 or June 19.

Longmont Yarn Shoppe will email you a Zoom link prior to the first class.

In preparation for the first class, please do the following:

1. Obtain a copy of *The Knitter's Handy Book of Top-Down Sweaters* (we will be following the basic charted instructions for Seamless Yoke Sweaters on pages 24–43).
2. Read the Introduction (pages 5–20).
3. Choose between a pullover and a cardigan.
4. Choose a size based on the finished chest/bust circumferences listed on page 24 for children (26", 28", 30", 32", 34") or page 33 for adults (36", 38", 40", 42", 44", 46", 48" 50", 52", 54"). Refer to the schematics on page 31 for all of the finished measurements. I'll discuss how to refine the fit during class, in case you want to make an "in-between" size.
5. Choose a yarn from fingering to bulky weight that will give a gauge of 3 to 7 stitches/inch (a yarn that's at least 75% wool will be easiest to work with). Note that your gauge doesn't have to be a whole number of stitches per inch—I'll show you how to accommodate fractions of stitches, such as 4.75 stitches/inch.
6. To determine the amount of yarn you'll need, refer to the charts highlighted in yellow tones on pages 24 (child sizes) or 33 (adult sizes). Photocopies of the charts are attached if you don't have your copy of the book yet. For example, if you want to knit a sweater with a finished circumference of 42" at a gauge of 5 stitches/inch, the chart for adult sizes on page 33 tells you that you'll need 1310 yards/1198 meters of yarn. It's always a good idea to purchase an extra skein of yarn for swatching.
7. I'll discuss how to knit a proper gauge swatch during the first class.

In the first class we'll review choosing sizes, working a gauge swatch and measuring gauge, and adding personal touches such as color or texture patterns, adding waist

or hip shaping, adjusting sleeve length, etc. We won't actually cast on until the second class on May 15, so you have ample time to consider your options.

I will be designing/knitting a sweater along with you, so you'll see demonstrations every step of the way. It might help you to know that I'm planning a child's pullover with a finished chest circumference of about 27" (68.5 cm). I'm planning on using Universal Yarns Sapling at a gauge of about 3 stitches/inch. According to the yarn requirements chart on page 33, I'll need 250 yards (229 meters) for a circumference of 26" (66 cm) or 310 yards for a circumference of 28" (71 cm). Universal Yarns Sapling has 109 yards (100 meters) per skein, so I'll need between 3 and 4 skeins total.

At this point, I'm thinking of incorporating a simple stranded color pattern around the yoke, and perhaps near the cuffs and bottom ribbing. Because some of the sweater will be knitted in an alternate color, I've purchased 3 skeins of the main color and 1 skein of the contrast color. This will give me plenty of yarn for swatching potential color patterns and determining my actual gauge.

I'm telling you all of this so you'll understand the types of choices you should think about prior to the first class. You don't have to have a mental picture of all the design details for the finished garment, but you should know the size, gauge, and yarn you're going to use.

I'm so looking forward to knitting together!

Ann Budd