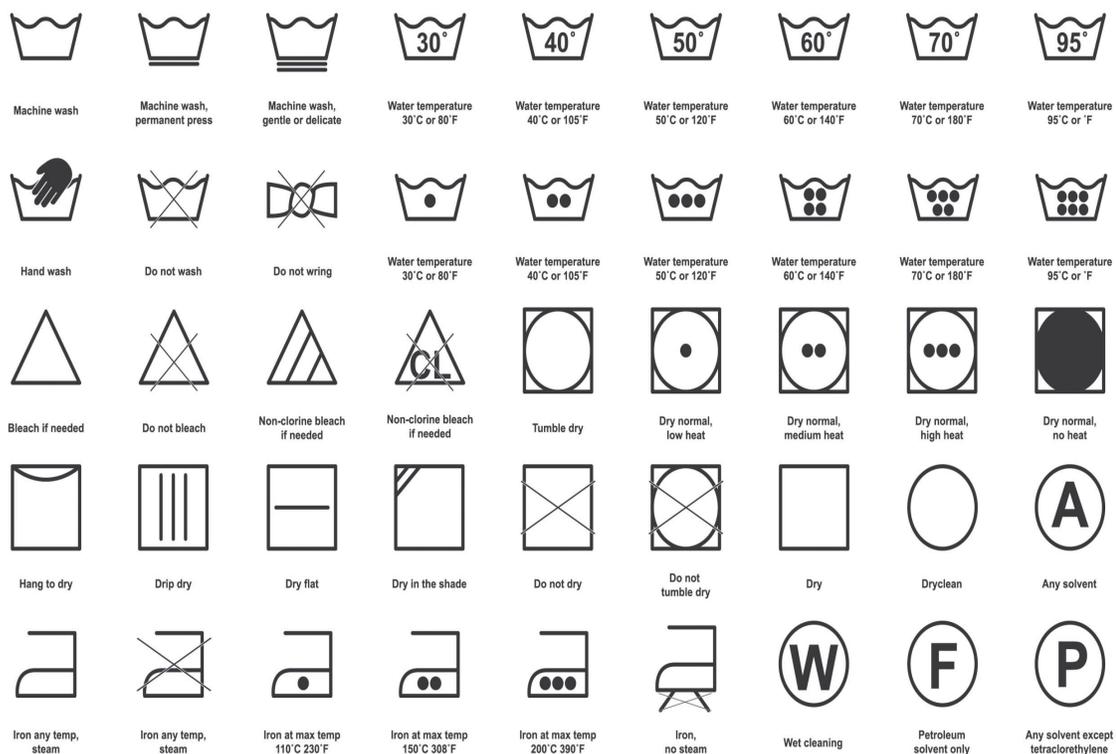


# Knotty Lady YARN S

## Washing Hand Knits

As we all begin a fresh new year, we all have ambitions that may stick longer than others. Controlling my sweet tooth has already failed! One that we all struggle with and wish to improve is washing handmade items. Many of our wearable handmade items are given as gifts, used as decoration, and occasionally we keep a few for ourselves. It can be a bit scary when it comes to washing these pieces of art, however we all know it needs to happen. As we see on our store-bought clothes those funky symbols, which are also present on the yarn labels, we sometimes still have no idea what they mean. Well, let us try and shed some light. Fiber content is the biggest factor in this article. Some yarns don't mind the washer while others will completely change in one. For example, a cotton and bamboo blanket in the washer will do fine on a gentle cycle with warm water. Whereas a wool blanket on the same settings will go in with excellent stitch definition but come out as a felted mess.

Understanding those symbols will help lead you in the right direction so you can take care of your items with out fear!



Some of the more common and relevant symbols are the washtub and any square. These two will tell you how to wash and dry your hand knit/crochet items. Anything with the symbol and an "X" through it tells you NOT to machine wash, tumble dry, bleach, or iron. Some symbols are more for dry cleaners and not as relevant in a household or handmade item situation. So let us go over the basics and more commonly used symbols starting with washing.

# *Knotty Lady* YARN S

The washtub with the hand means hand wash only, simple. A washtub with one line under is machine wash on permanent press and two lines mean gentle/delicate cycle only. Adding a temperature or dot in a washtub tells you the temperature to set your water. The number shown in the washtub tells you the warmest the water should be. More importantly, the numbers are in Celsius! Now, we all have different models and ages of washers. In general, hot water is 130 F (54.4 C) or above. Warm water is between 110 and 90 F (43.3 to 32.2 C). Cold water is generally between 80 and 60 F (26.7 to 15 C). Remember this is a generalization when it comes to washing handmade items it may not be a bad idea to double-check your owner's manual...if you know where it is! Water temperature is important when it comes to handmade items and varies depending on fiber content.

With washing, it is best to use a mild detergent if using a machine or if hand washing your items look for a no-rinse wash, such as Eucalan. This will make washing your items by hand a lot easier so you aren't spending so much time making sure all the soap comes out. If you don't have either on hand you don't have to use any at all!

Commonly, once your item is washed you will roll it up in a towel and squeeze, NOT WRING, out the water then lay it flat to dry. The drying symbols are all squares with circles or lines within. A simple square with a circle means tumble dry, if it has one dot that means low heat, two for medium, and three for high heat. A square with a curved line at the top means hang to dry while a straight horizontal line in the middle, which we prefer, is lay flat to dry. Two lines in the top left-hand corner mean dry in the shade, which isn't bad advice for handmade items since most fibers can be affected by direct sunlight. Three vertical lines in a box mean drip dry or to use a clothesline. I suppose if you want to stretch out the handmade item this is a way to do it but the effect will be irreversible. This method is also HIGHLY unadvised for any handmade item or any store-bought knitted item!

Let's thoroughly discuss the remaining symbols so you can take this information to your general laundry habits. Any circle with a letter in it means to dry clean and how the dry cleaners will launder your clothes. If an old fashion iron is present you can iron that item and the dots mean the same as with the washing icon, the more dots, the higher the temperature. An iron with two lines coming out the bottom indicates if you can use steam or not. Lastly, the triangle tells you the bleach parameters, mainly if you can or cannot. If it's accompanied by the two lines you may use non-chlorine bleach if needed.

As much time, effort, and love we all put into our handmade items we want to make sure they are taken care of and will last as long as possible. A few final tips are to machine wash in a pillowcase or a mesh laundry bag. This will keep your machine from clogging up with fiber and protect your project! Also, avoid washing them with heavy items such as jeans, or items that give off a bit of lint, like towels. Remember to use mild detergent, wool wash, or nothing. If you are unsure what to use don't hesitate to reach out to your local yarn store for advice they may even have something that will work perfectly. With so much invested in stunning handmade items, special soap may not be a bad option. Double-check yarn labels for fiber content and washing instructions. If washing instructions are not on the label visit their website for care instructions. Lastly and most importantly for most yarns, the colors like to bleed when washed so careful washing that red hat with your white t-shirts!