

hat2cowl – tips and tricks by Susan Ashcroft

Hat patterns are already designed to be worked in the round, so it's fairly easy to change almost any hat pattern into a straight tube type cowl.

There are just a few things to think about so that you get a good result. I have shown some examples - all the ones here are based on my patterns that use slipped stitches, but you can probably use the guidelines for virtually any hat pattern.

The first question I would ask myself is about the crown - is the hat all about the crown ? If so, it may not be as effective as a cowl.

But if it will work as a cowl, then there are 3 things to think about:

1. Gauge - do you need to knit at a looser gauge than for a hat ?
2. Sizing - single or double loop ? - how many stitches for the cast on ?
3. Border - do you need or want a border ? If so, which one will be the best option ?

EXAMPLES: I have shown some examples of hat2cowl conversions - there are more on the next page, and the tips and tricks start on page 3.

Click on the pattern names to go directly to the relevant pattern page.

Use the photo credit names to find the specific projects.

Hat patterns with non-curling fabrics:

<p>Lagom - this is a flat, non-curling fabric - no border is needed.</p> <p>This would also work well as a double loop.</p> <p>Bind-off: work "in pattern" on a row which has purl stitches.</p>	 <p>stitchnerd</p>	 <p>docdaisymae</p>
<p>ZaggedyAnn - this is another flat, non-curling fabric - possible double loop. The motif looks nice framed by a few rows of garter stitch in the MC. The hat already has the MC border at the bottom edge, you just need to mirror it at the top.</p> <p>Bind-off: purlwise after a knit round.</p>	 <p>stitchnerd</p>	 <p>wrenknits</p>

Hat patterns with stockinette-type fabrics - these generally do not work well as double loops. They need to either have a border or be double thickness and joined together at the bottom.

Avian Snowshoes

I think this works best with the smallest possible border or joined together.



carolsumie



eharris11

Up North

Because of the purl bumps in the fabric, a seed stitch border is a nice option.



miriamspooner



rwilliams

Imitation Game

If you want to use corrugated rib, you need to work it double thickness like for the hat - but you might want fewer rounds than for a hat.

Also works well with 2/2 rib or garter stitch.



stitchnerd



miriamspooner

Gauge and sizing:

Gauge: For a cowl often it's better to have more drape than with a hat, so you may wish to knit to a looser gauge than indicated for the hat.

Sizing: the usual size for a hat is about 55cm/22" in circumference - this can work for a cowl. if you like that size, you can use the number of stitches from the hat pattern.

But you may wish to have your cowl looser, or even a double-loop - in that case use the table below to get an idea of the number of stitches you need for various sizes with different gauges.

Use this number as a guide to the number of stitches in the main section - BUT YOU WILL NEED TO FIND THE CLOSEST MULTIPLE that will work with your chosen pattern.

I have suggested the likely needle size if you have average tension - the main thing is the gauge.

<u>Yarn weight</u>	<u>Probable needle size</u>	<u>Gauge per 4"/10cm</u>	<u>60cm/24"</u>	<u>80cm/32"</u>	<u>120cm/48"</u>	<u>140cm/55"</u>
Fingering knitted tightly	3mm	22 sts	132	176	264	308
fingering	4mm	20 sts	120	160	240	280
DK/sport	4.5mm	18 sts	108	144	216	252
Worsted/aran	5mm	16 sts	96	128	192	224
bulky	6mm	14 sts	84	112	168	196

Border:

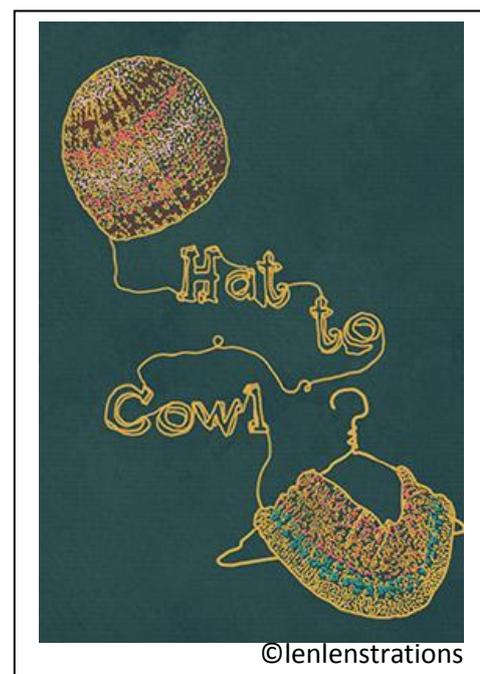
Unlike on a hat, for a cowl you **don't** want the border to pull in; if anything, you want it to flare out.

So don't use a smaller size needle for the border.

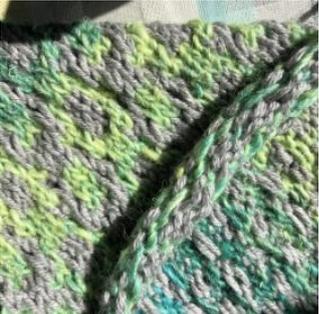
If the pattern is a stockinette-type fabric you will need an edge treatment.

If the pattern is not a stockinette-type fabric you will not need an edge treatment, but may wish to have one to frame your knit.

See next 2 pages for details of the various options.



Do you need a border ?

<p><u>Stockinette-type fabric:</u></p> <p>Any fabric with a stockinette or reverse stockinette background - will curl without edge treatment (see photo)</p>		<p>You have two choices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - make a border to break the rolling - make a double thickness cowl and join the cast-on and bind-off ends together: by kitchenering, or using 3-needle or crochet bind-off.
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Borders: Generally for a cowl I would work less border than for a hat - usually between 3-6 rounds - because I want the fabric to be the focus, not the border.

There are lots of options, but I have detailed 3 simple options that work well for most cowls.

I use cable cast-on and work one row of your chosen border before joining to work in the round, so that the nice braided edge shows on the RS.

Link for cable cast-on: <http://stitchnerd.blogspot.be/2011/10/cable-cast-on.html>.

When binding off, be sure not to work too tightly (you may wish to go up a needle size).

<p><u>Knit/purl rib :</u></p> <p>I personally do not usually like the look of 1/1 rib - mine never looks very even - so I would use 2/2 rib (or similar). Sometimes it is nicest to vary the rib to suit the motif and work 3/2 or 2/3 for instance.</p>	<p><u>Instructions for 2/2 rib:</u></p> <p><u>Bottom edge:</u> Cast-on using cable cast-on and a multiple of 4 sts. If your main section is not a multiple of 4, use more sts and reduce down (flare out rather than pull in) All rows: k2/p2 to the end of the round.</p> <p><u>Top edge:</u> use the same multiple of 4, work 1 knit round and then k2/p2 on all rounds. Bind off in pattern (knitting and purling) .</p>
<p><u>Seed stitch:</u></p> <p>For a minimal border work just 3 rounds. You may like to consider which round to stop on to align the purl bumps with your motif.</p>	<p><u>Bottom edge:</u> Cast-on using cable cast-on and a multiple of 2 sts. Round 1 - k1/p1 to end of round. Round 2 - p1/k1 to end of round.</p> <p><u>Top edge:</u> use the same multiple of 2, work 1 knit round, and then repeat Rounds 1 + 2. Bind off in pattern (knitting and purling as if working the next round in the sequence).</p>
<p><u>Garter stitch:</u></p> <p>If the motif has garter sections this can be a very pleasing option.</p>	<p><u>Bottom edge:</u> Cast-on using any number of sts and cable cast-on. Round 1:purl all sts Round 2: knit all sts.</p> <p><u>Top edge:</u> start with knit round, then purl - alternate knit and purl rounds . Bind off purlwise after a knit round.</p>

No border - folded and joined instead:

If you want to just see fabric (no border) when using a stockinette-type fabric that rolls, the best option is to make a tall tube that you fold in half and then join the edges together.

There are various options for joining: icord, kitchenering or sewing the cast-on and bind-off edge together, 3 needle bind-off or crochet bind-off (one of my favourites + detailed below).

***Bind-off:** I used a crocheted bind-off which gives a neat edge and joins the two sides together.*

Be sure to secure any ends before working the bind-off.

You do not need to weave in the ends as they will be between the two layers.

***Note:** the photos show a different cowl, but the technique is the same.*

*When you are ready to bind-off, **start by knitting one round with your MC**, so that all the sts on the needle are in the MC.*

Then fold your work in half and hold it so that the cast-on edge is closest to you, the live stitches on the needle behind, and live yarn behind the needle (as shown in the photo).

Make sure you have not twisted your work and that your first stitch on the needle is in line with the first stitch on the cast-on edge. Use a crochet hook which is the same size as you used for the knitting.



Step 1 - set-up:

Insert the crochet hook right through the first stitch on the front side, then slip 1 stitch off the needle onto the hook knitwise. You now have 2 loops on the hook.

Pull the yarn through both loops. You now have one stitch on the hook.



Step 2 - the repeat:

Insert the hook through the next cast-on edge stitch, then slip the next stitch off the needle onto the hook. You will now have 3 loops on the hook.

Pull the yarn through the first 2 loops, so that you have 2 loops left, then through the second 2 loops.

You will now have 1 stitch again.

Keep repeating step 2 until you get to the last stitch.

Pull the yarn end through to secure and then join the edge and weave in the end.

***Blocking:** a light blocking will generally even up the mosaic stitches.*

