



Three French Hens

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FINISHED MEASUREMENTS

Each hen is 3.5" (9 cm) tall and 3" (7.5 cm) long

YARN

Barrett Wool Co.'s Home Fingering Weight (100% American Wool; 370 yards [338 m] / 100 grams).

1 skein each in Picket Fence, Red Flannel, and Peppercorn.

Hen #1:

Main Color (MC—background):

Picket Fence

Contrast Color 1 (CC1—base):

Red Flannel

Contrast Color 2 (CC2—woven

lines): Peppercorn

Hen #2:

MC: Peppercorn

CC1: Red Flannel

CC2: Picket Fence

Hen #3:

MC: Red Flannel

CC1: Peppercorn

CC2: Picket Fence

NEEDLES

One set of 4 double-pointed needles (dpns) in size US 2 [2.75 mm] or size needed to obtain gauge

MATERIALS

Detachable stitch marker

Scrap yarn to hold stitches

Tape measure or ruler

Tapestry needle

Poly-Pellets stuffing beads, optional (**A note of caution:** these are a choking hazard for small children.)

Polyester fiberfill

Black embroidery floss

GAUGE

7.5 stitches and 9 rows = 1" [2.54 cm] in stockinette stitch

These adorable French Hens are the perfect size to sit on a windowsill or, better yet, to fit lovingly into the small hands or pocket of a child. They have a fun, smooth, and slick construction with lovely results. This completely seamless design makes for a fun and fast knit. In fact, knitting the hens can be somewhat addicting. You may end up wanting to knit an entire brood!

Pattern Notes

Each hen is worked from the bottom up, starting with a flat garter stitch piece for the base. Stitches are picked up around the edges of the base for the body, which is then knit in the round. The body is completed with a bit of grafting at the top, leaving live stitches from which the head is knit. Pick up some stitches for the beak, and before you know it you have created a beautiful little hen.

Begin Base

The base is worked back and forth on two double-pointed needles.

With the CC1 and using the long-tail cast-on, CO 4 sts. Work back and forth on two dpns as follows:

Row 1: Knit.

Row 2: K1, kfb twice, k1—6 sts.

Row 3: Knit.

Row 4: K1, kfb, k2, kfb, k1—8 sts.

Row 5: Knit.

Row 6: K1, kfb, k4, kfb, k1—10 sts.

Row 7: Knit.

Row 8: K1, kfb, k6, kfb, k1—12 sts.

Now work even in garter st (i.e. knit every row) until you have worked a total of 16 ridges (32 rows) from the cast-on edge. End after an even row.

BEGIN BASE DECREASES

Row 1: K1, ssk, k6, k2tog, k1—10 sts.

Row 2: Knit.

Row 3: K1, ssk, k4, k2tog, k1—8 sts.

Row 4: Knit.

Row 5: K1, ssk, k2, k2tog, k1—6 sts.

Row 6: Knit.

Row 7: K1, ssk, k2tog, k1—4 sts.

Row 8: Knit. Do not turn.

Begin Body

Continuing with the same dpn and then adding two more dpns, pick up and knit 1 st from the edge of each garter ridge as follows:

N1: Pick up and knit 12 more sts (4 sts are already on the dpn).

N2: Pick up and knit 16 sts.

N3: Pick up and knit 16 sts, then knit 2 sts from N1 onto N3.

Now you have the following counts: N1—14 sts; N2—16 sts; N3—18 sts (48 sts total).

Tip: Don't worry if you don't end up with these exact stitch counts after picking up a stitch from each ridge. The first round is simply knit around, so you can increase a stitch here and there if needed to get the correct counts.

The following is worked in the round with the stitches on three double-pointed needles (N1, N2, and N3) and using a fourth needle to knit.

Insert a detachable stitch marker into the first st on N1 to mark BOR. The first st is at the front of the body.

Rnd 1: Knit.

Switch to MC.

Rnd 2: Knit.

Rnd 3: *(K5, kfb); rep from * to end of round—56 sts.

Rnd 4: Knit.

Redistribute stitches as follows: N1—24 sts; N2—8 sts; N3—24 sts.

Rnds 5-20: With the MC and CC2, work rnds 1-8 from the Woven Pattern chart twice (repeating the sequence of sts 7 times around the circumference of the hen). The chart is on pg. 4.

Tip: If you want a solid-color hen with no colorwork, simply knit every stitch for 16 rounds instead of working the chart.

Rnd 21: Separate sts for the back and head as follows:

Knit 8 sts onto **N1**; transfer just-worked sts onto a piece of scrap yarn.

Knit 20 sts onto **N1**.

Knit the next 20 sts onto **N2**.

Place the rem 8 sts on scrap yarn (you can use the other end of the scrap yarn already holding 8 sts). You now have sts on two dpns and some scrap yarn.

(Leave the stitch marker on the first stitch of the round. You will come back to that stitch when you start working on the head.)

Cut the yarn, leaving a 12" (30 cm) tail. Thread the tail through a tapestry needle.

If you are using Poly-Pellets, now is the time to pour the pellets into the body, enough to fill about 1/2" (1.25 cm) up from the base. Stuff the rest of the body with fiberfill up to the needles.

Do not overstuff: the body should be firm but still squishy.

Tip: At this point, if you have done the colorwork chart, you may want to steam the body using a steamer or your iron on the steam setting (never touch the iron to the knit fabric). This will block the fabric lightly and help to even out your stitches.

After the body is stuffed, use the kitchener st to graft together the sts on the two dpns. Tuck the tail to the inside and trim.

Begin Head

Transfer the sts from the scrap yarn onto two dpns, 8 sts per needle. (N1 should begin with the st with BOR marker attached.)

Select a yarn color for the head. Redistribute the sts among three dpns and attach the yarn.

Work rnd 1 in the head color as follows:

Rnd 1:

N1: K6.

N2: K2, pick up and knit 2 sts over the graft, k2—6 sts.

N3: K6.

(18 sts total)

Rnds 2-7: Knit.

Stuff the head with fiberfill and continue to add stuffing as you work to the end.

BEGIN DECREASES

Rnd 1: *(K4, K2tog); rep from * to end—5 sts per dpn (15 sts total).

Rnd 2: Knit.

Rnd 3: *(K3, k2tog); rep from * to end—4 sts per dpn (12 sts total).

Rnd 4: Knit.

Rnd 5: K2tog to end—2 sts per dpn (6 sts total).

Finish stuffing the head.

Begin comb

Redistribute the first 3 sts onto one dpn and the last 3 sts onto a second dpn.

Select a yarn color for the comb. Attach the yarn and use a third dpn to knit 2 rnds on the two dpns.

Bind off

Hold the two dpns parallel. You have a front and back needle.

Bring the yarn under the back needle and hold to the back.

*Insert a third dpn (RN) knit wise through the first st on both needles and knit the sts together, but do not take the knitted sts off the front and back needles. Knit through the back of the first st on the back needle again. Slip the 2 sts just worked off the front and back needles.

Knit together the 2 new sts just added to the RN as follows: insert the tip of one of the dpns in your left hand into the front of the 2 new sts on the RN and k2tog. Rep from * two more times—3 sts rem.

Cut the yarn leaving an 8" (20 cm) tail. Thread the tail on a tapestry needle.

*Using the tapestry needle, thread the tail through the first st on the dpn and take the st off the dpn. Thread the yarn under the strand in the gap before the next st on the dpn. Rep from * two more times.

Pull the tail to the inside and trim.

Begin Beak

The beak stitches are picked up vertically on two double-pointed needles on the front of the head.

Starting with the st immediately to the **left** of the center front and 2 sts up from the start of the head, insert the tip of a dpn vertically upward under the right leg of 4 consecutive sts. Repeat with a second dpn, starting with the st immediately to the **right** of the center front, 2 sts up from the start of the head. You will have 4 stitches on each of two dpns directly across from one another and separated by a single column of undisturbed head sts—8 sts total.

Select a yarn color for the beak. Attach the yarn and use a third dpn to knit 2 rnds on the two dpns.

Next rnd: K2tog to end of rnd—2 sts per needle (4 sts total).

Next rnd: K2tog to end of rnd—1st per needle (2 sts total).

Cut the yarn and thread the tail through the tapestry needle. Thread through the rem 2 sts. Pull tail through to the inside and trim. Pull the other end of the yarn through to the inside and trim.

Begin Eyes

Cut a length of embroidery floss and separate the strands. Thread two strands onto the tapestry needle and make two tiny straight stitches for each eye. Pull the ends of the floss to the inside and trim.

Begin Tail Feathers

Select a yarn color for the tail feathers. Cut a 12" [30 cm] length of yarn and thread through the tapestry needle. Poke the needle through the body and out the end of the grafting at the top of the body, in position for the tail feathers. Pull the needle through until the opposite end of the yarn disappears inside the body.

Insert the needle into a bit of the knit fabric to make a loop approximately 1" [2.5 cm] long, then reinsert in roughly the same place two more times to make two more loops. Wrap the yarn around the base of the loops 3 or 4 times. Poke the needle back through the body to anchor the end of the yarn and trim.

ABBREVIATIONS

BOR begging of round

k knit

kfb knit through the front then back of the same stitch

k2tog knit 2 stitches together (1 stitch decreased)

N1, N2, N3 needle 1, needle 2, needle 3

P purl

rem remain(ing)

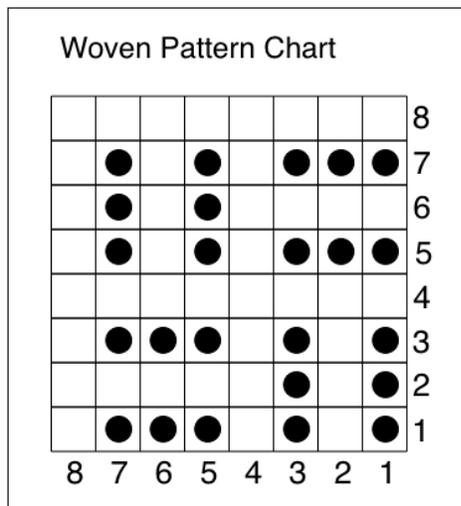
rep repeat

RN right needle

rnd(s) round(s)

ssk slip, slip, knit (left-slanting decrease)—Slip 2 stitches, 1 at a time, knit wise to the right-hand needle, return stitches to left-hand needle in turned position and knit together through the back loops (1 stitch decreased)

st(s) stitch(es)





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