

Free Pattern of the Month
September 2004
Double-Rectangle Poncho



This is the easiest of the poncho shapes for the beginner. It can be worked with any yarn, any size needles, loose and lacy or thick and warm. Add some cables or a lace pattern and create an original work of art. The options are many. If you'd like to add lace or cables to this pattern, e-mail me and I'll work up a chart for you.

Yarn: About 600 yards of worsted weight wool. I've lost the ball-band for this particular poncho, but any worsted weight yarn will do.

Gauge: 3 ½ stitches per inch with a US #8 needle or whatever size you need to get gauge. Since this poncho can be worked in any yarn, it will save you much time if you take the time to work a gauge swatch.

Size: The poncho shown is a Medium, but changing the size of the rectangles will give you any size you wish.

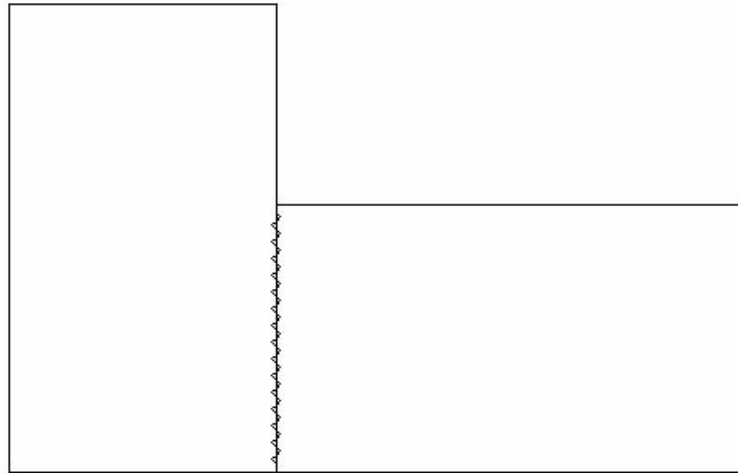
Cast-on enough stitches to give you a width of 16" (here's where that swatch is invaluable!) with needles 2 sizes larger than those you used for your gauge swatch (you want to keep that cast-on edge loose.) I cast on 56 stitches.

Work in stockinette stitch (Knit on the Right Side, Purl on the Wrong Side) for 28" and bind off **loosely**.

Work a second rectangle the same way. Block both pieces using your favorite method, being careful that they end up the same size and that the edges are straight. Since stockinette fabric tends to roll, use lots of pins.

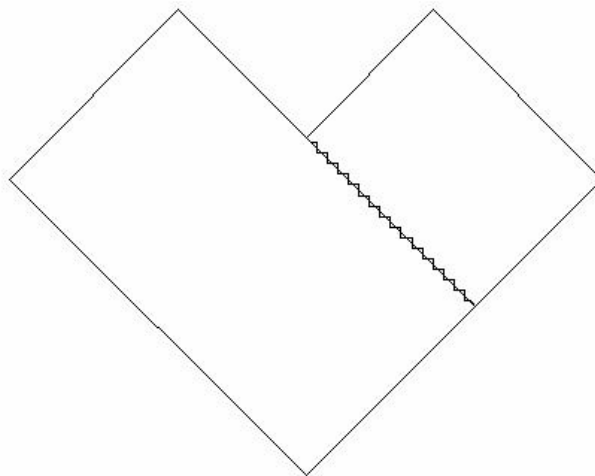
Now for the fun –

Sew the short end of one of the rectangles to the longer end of the other like this:



It really doesn't matter how you sew it together, just do it neatly. You can go over it later with a contrasting crochet chain, or sew on an I-cord, or add beads or braids or whatever your heart desires.

Now sew the short end of the left panel to the long end of the right panel to finish:



This is what the front (and the back) of your poncho will look like.



Since the edges of stockinette fabric tend to roll (even after blocking) some sort of edge treatment is called for, at least on the bottom edge. As you can see, I left the neck edge free to roll a bit – I like the drapy effect – but the bottom edges needed something.

There are several ways to deal with this. For the blue poncho, I picked up stitches all around the **long** edge with a contrasting yarn and worked an I-cord bind off like this –

Pick up however many stitches you need to get around with a long circular needle. With a DPN needle, knit 3 stitches from the circular needle. Put these 3 stitches back on the circular needle. * Knit 2, Knit 2 together. Put the 3 stitches back on the circular needle * Repeat from * to * until you reach the end. Sew beginning to end and you're done! A tip on the I-cord bind-off – Be sure to pull that first Knit stitch tight – you'll end up with a neat, round edge.



Another option is to work a Single Crochet edge – quicker and not all those stitches to pick up! Simply start at one seam and work a SC over the edge all the way around with a contrasting (or not) yarn. Work a second round of SC if the edge still wants to roll. Done!

You could also add fringe to weight the edge, or sew on beads or leather strips or even add a fabric edge. The sky's the limit. Wear it with the points fore and aft, or side to side, or off center entirely – the choice is yours!

If you choose to use this pattern to create your own original, I would love to add a pic to my Customer Gallery page.

Happy knitting!

Mary

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