

Circular shawl pattern – basic

Blog: www.gandesonline.com/blog-knitting

Modified from Elizabeth Zimmerman “pi” shawl, as described in her book “Knitters’ Almanac”, Dover Press, 1981. Available from Amazon.



Materials:

Sock yarn, 75% wool, 25% nylon. Various brands. 50 gm ball will have about 165 – 230 yards (150 – 210 meters). 100 gm balls/skein will have about twice that, 460 yards (400 meters). You will need from 500 to 700 yards for a typical shawl, 36” to 60” diameter, and more if doing one of the larger and more irregular patterns on the blog. As a rule of thumb, about 150 grams will be enough for a basic shawl, about 48” diameter.

Needles: #6 knitting needles: two 16”, two 24” one or two 48”, one or two 60” or equivalent. Crochet hook, size G/6 – 4.25 mm or similar.

Blocking wires and mats, or large quantity of pins and a suitable surface for blocking. We use interlocking rubber blocking mats, but you can also use a bed/mattress or carpet as a blocking surface.

Yarn for this example: Viking, Nordlys. 75% superwash wool, 25% nylon, color 965. 100 gm = 385 yd/350 m. I used about 120 grams for the shawl shown.

Instructions:

Pattern:

Row 1: Yarn Over; Knit 2 together – repeat for entire row

Row 2: Knit row

Cast on 8 stitches (I chose 8 because it divides easily onto two needles)

Use the Emily Ocker crochet cast on method, (see YouTube for instructions)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Vkpqdea-6o>

or you might use a long tail cast on, and join to continue in a circle. Either way, leave a long tail, and knit it into the first round after tightening the starting circle.

Row 1; Knit (8 sts) around with both yarns, then drop the starting tail

Row 2: Increase Row: (Yarn Over, Knit one) around (16 sts)

Row 3: Knit one row
 Row 4 and 5: Pattern rows (above, over 16 sts) - one pattern repeat
 Row 6: Increase Row: (Yarn Over, Knit One) around (32 sts)
 Row 7: Knit
 Rows 8 – 13: Pattern Rows (over 32 sts) – three pattern repeats
 Row 14: Increase Row: (Yarn Over, Knit One) around (64 sts)
 Row 15: Knit
 Rows 16 – 27: Pattern Rows (over 64 sts) – six pattern repeats
 Row 28: Increase Row: (Yarn Over, Knit One) around (128 sts)
 Row 29: Knit
 Rows 30 – 51: Pattern Rows (over 128 sts) – 12 pattern repeats
 Row 52: Increase Row: (Yarn Over, Knit One) around (256 sts)
 Row 53: Knit
 Row 54 – 101: Pattern Rows (over 256 sts) – 24 pattern
 Row 102: Increase Row: (Yarn Over, Knit One) around (512 sts)
 Row 103: Knit
 Rows 104 – 205: Pattern Rows (over 512 sts) – 48 pattern repeats
 Row 206: Increase Row: (Yarn Over, Knit One) around (1024 sts)
 Row 207 Knit

You can continue working in the established pattern, where the number of rows doubles with each increase or doubling of stitches. This would mean 96 pattern repeats, or 192 rows of pattern, after the increase to 1024 stitches. But by this time, you will likely be bored of the project and running out of yarn. After the increase to 1024 stitches, the shawl should block out to between 45 and 50 inches in diameter, depending on how assertively you do the blocking. Or, you may choose to get more yarn and keep going for a larger shawl.

Generally, I end my shawls right after I make the increase to just over one thousand stitches, as I am in a hurry to get to the next project. And it takes a long time to knit around over 1000 stitches.

Edge: After the increase row, knit one row and bind off the next row. Alternatively, knit two or three rows after the increase, then bind off. This makes a sturdy edge with a bit of a ruffle. When you block the piece, if you run the wires through the holes of the last increase, it will make a nice little picot edge.



Here is the shawl on the blocking mats. You can see the prominent spiral pattern created by the repeated yarn-over-knit-2-together pattern, which causes a slant to the right.

As discussed in the blog, and below, it is possible to change the spiral or break it up to make the pattern more interesting. In this example, however, since the yarn was so lovely and did not have vivid color changes, the basic pattern was used to let the spiral be a prominent feature of the design.

When using this method to make small circular motifs for inclusion in other shawls, I generally end the circle at about 256 stitches, leaving the stitches on the circular needles and just knitting them into the larger piece using short rows to fill in any gaps. See notes on other shawls.

Here is another basic circular shawl in which I varied the pattern to create areas of simple stockinette stitch or offset the yarn-over stitches by one to make the right directed spiral less prominent.



On the left is the finished shawl. On the right is a detail photo of the pattern created by varying the stitches used in the areas between the increased. In this case, the yarn used, Patons Kroy Socks yarn, 75% wool, 25% nylon, color "Blue Striped Ragg", three 50 gram (166 yd/152 m) balls, had vivid colors with rather abrupt color changes, and the colors are an important element in the design. In the detail photo, you can see the various stitches used, which are only the basic yarn-over-knit-2-together pattern alternating with several plain knit rows, and an occasional row in which the yarn over is offset by one stitch, simply by starting the row with a single knit stitch before starting the yarn overs.

The pattern variations are many, and you can have a great time letting the color changes suggest pattern changes as you work along. See the blog for how to modify the shape of the basic circle.