

Riff Hat with Cirilia Rose

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview

- I'm gonna show you how to make a riff hat using any yarn you like, a couple of measurements, and a simple formula for figuring out your sizing. There's no shaping, and there's minimal finishing. We'll be working in the round in an offset rib pattern, but I'll also show you a simple formula for figuring out how to incorporate your own stitch variations. (soft instrumental music)

Chapter 2 - Materials

Materials

- You're gonna need some yarn between 100 and 200 yards depending on the size of hat that you want to make. We're gonna use a bulky wool-mohair blend today. You'll need two circular needles. I'm using a 16-inch with a size nine, and then we're gonna switch to a size 10. These are interchangeable needle tips, but if you'd rather use a fixed circular, that's totally fine. You'll also need a measuring tape, something to take some measurements with, scratch paper or a chalk board, scissors, tapestry needles for weaving in ends, and a stitch marker or two.

Chapter 3 - Designing and Knitting

Math formula

- The great thing about this pattern is that it's customizable, so you just need to get a couple of numbers straight and do some simple math and then you can go forward with your hat. This is actually the toughest part of the entire process, so once you get it out of the way, it's smooth sailing. You're gonna take a measuring tape and you're going to measure the head of your intended recipient. If you're doing this as a gift or if you don't know the actual size of the head, there are charts that you can consult to figure out what the standard sizes are. So you want to measure your head right around where you want the hat to fall. And you want to keep the measuring tape pretty comfortable, not too tight and not too loose. So I got 21 and a half, but I'm going to round down to 21. It's always better to have a hat rim that's a little too snug than one that's too loose. So I'm gonna make a quick note of my measurement at 21 inches. The next number you need is your stitch gauge. Ordinarily you would want a square that's about four by four or six by six, but hats are so small that I sometimes get impatient, do a couple of inches and then check my stitch gauge. With a yarn like this, it's a bit fuzzy and hard to see, so it helps to have a locking ring stitch marker to mark your first stitch. So that's what I do, I find a stitch, mark it with the stitch marker, and then I'm gonna just measure how many stitches are in one inch. So I have one, two, and three. I don't wanna rely on just that, so I'm gonna go to another place and take it again. So again one, two, and three. That works out nicely! So I'm gonna make note of my stitch gauge which is three stitches per inch, and then we're just gonna do the math. So we've got 63 stitches. This is how many stitches we'll need to cast on for our hat. But, this stitch pattern is a four stitch repeat, which I'll explain in a moment. We're gonna want this number to be divisible by our stitch repeat, so I'm just gonna add an extra stitch, it's not gonna be a big deal. Okay, now that we've done our basic math, we have our cast on number, and it's 64.

Create brim

- The first step is selecting a needle size. What you wanna do is check your ball band. It should have a recommended needle size. Here I have seven through nine, so it gives a range. This is actually in metric, so I'm gonna have to use this to figure out what size they mean. But you'd usually want to start with a smaller needle than what your ball bands recommends, just for the brim, to keep it nice and tight, and then you'll go up, for the rest of the body of the hat, to the next needle size. So I'm starting with a nine. Starting a project in the round can be a little tricky, but I'll show you a few tips that will help make it less anxiety-ridden. The first thing for long-tail cast on is to figure out how much yarn you need for the actual tail part of the cast on. Now I have a trick for that. Generally, you want three times the length of whatever project you're gonna be casting on, so we know that I'm doing 21 inches for my hat. So I'm just gonna go around three times, just like this, doesn't have to be precise. Do another one, and then I always do an extra for good measure, so you don't run out of yarn. Normally, you would wanna start with a slip knot, which is just where you make a loop like this and pull the working yarn through. Make sure you have your tail on one side and your working yarn on the other, and stick your needle into the slipknot and tighten it. You can also just start your long-tail cast on, and the way you do that is you drape the yarn over the knitting needle, get into your long-tail slingshot position, and just start. So I'm gonna wanna do this for 65 stitches. That's an extra, and I'll show you what I do with that extra stitch when I get to the end of the round. 64, 65. As you can see, this yarn, we have just enough, which is great. What I like to do with this tail end, though, is break it so it's only about six inches long, just so you don't accidentally start knitting with it and run out half-way through your row. When you join in the round with circular needles, it's a little difficult to see, but you wanna make sure that the end, the little knob end at the base of the stitch, is pointing down. So generally, you wanna lay the circular needle flat and just get those all situated. It has a tendency to twirl and twist up on itself, and before you join, you wanna make sure that it's straight and not twisted at all. So just check for any twists and correct them if you see them. Then you wanna bring the needle tips together. Again, checking to make sure that everything is aligned, the loops are over the needle, and all the little long-tail bumps are at the bottom. We're gonna jump right into our off-set rib, which is a really simple four-stitch repeat that goes for 14 rows. So the stitch pattern is knit, knit, knit, purl, and you just repeat that all the way around. And because we've cast on a multiple of four, it's gonna work out really nicely. There is that extra stitch, but I'll show you what to do with it at the very end of the row. Then you just proceed with the rest of the stitch pattern until you've worked seven rows of this, and then we'll switch to the rest of the rib. So you're going to finish your last repeat, knit one, two, three, purl one. Place your marker to mark the end of the round. And then that extra stitch is gonna be knit together with the first stitch from the next round. Knit those together. It'll help close the bottom of that gap where you joined and keep it looking nice and neat. So after you've knit those two together to close the gap, you're gonna continue as established in your off-set rib for six more rows. Just knit the knits and purl the purls, as you see them.

Knit hat body

- After you have your seven rows of the brim done, we're gonna switch to the next seven rows of our offset rib. And before we do that, we're gonna switch our needle tips, or if you're working with regular needles, you can just start knitting with the new needle, and by the time you get to the end of that round, it'll be onto the next size. You're gonna go up about a size or two. There's really no rule on this, you can just kind of go with a ballpark estimate, but I'm just going up one needle size. So this will make the brim a little tighter and the body of the hat more relaxed and slouchy. So

we've worked our seven rows of the offset rib pattern and we're gonna switch to the next bit of it, which is just slightly different. You're gonna get it set up for the first round and after that, you can just kind of go onto autopilot. So the first thing I'm doing is purling, and then I'm gonna knit a stitch, and then I'm gonna purl two more. So once you get through those initial four stitches, you're just gonna repeat that all the way around. You'll notice that the knit stitch lines up the whole way through. So you've got one knit stitch that is always forming kind of the stripe, and it's flanked by purl stitches on either side. So you can understand why it's called offset rib now, it's just slightly offset. So again, the stitch pattern this time is purl, knit, purl, purl. And then you repeat. Purl, knit, purl, purl. You'll see that there's one knit stitch that stays consistent the whole time, you're always knitting it. It forms kind of the stripe. You can see in the finished hat here that it's going all the way up. This is a really nice anchor, so it means that you don't have to consult your chart every time. You can just look at your knitting and see that that knit stitch is centered. This is what's called reading your knitting. You're gonna continue as established, switching every seven rows between the two rib patterns until the hat is about eight to 10 inches long. Normally, hats are shaped at the top and you only do about five to six inches in depth, but for these, you need a little extra fabric because of the way it's finished without shaping. So it's easy to do, but you have to do a little more knitting.

Binding off

- We're going to finish off our riff hat with the three needle bind off, and I love this technique for finishing because it doesn't involve any sewing. You're basically just knitting but you're kind of doing double the work at once. So you're going to take your circular needle, put the two tips together like this, and you're going to find your middle point so for this with 64 stitches cast on it's going to be 32. You're just going to count 32 and put a stitch marker right there. If you have a little extra cable you can pull it out when you start binding off your stitches I'll show you what I mean as I get going. You need an extra needle you can take if you've been working with two fixed circulars, you can take your first needle from the brim and use that, doesn't matter that it's a smaller size. Or you can just grab any needle that you have laying around, a double pointed needle would even work. I'm going to take my needle, and holding my two needle tips together I'm going to knit the stitch on the first needle and then the back needle as though they're one stitch, just knit them together and take them both off the needle tips at the same time. I'm going to do the same thing with the next stitch or the next set of stitches, get those off the needle and then I'm going to bind off as usual, leap frogging the stitch that's furthest away from the needle tip over the one that's closest to the needle tip. And that's two stitches bound off because you're doing them both at the same time. So you're just going to repeat those two steps all the way across your needle until all your stitches are bound off. So you're knitting those two stitches together at the same time and pulling this stitch over the first one, and that's two stitches bound off. So with the three needle bind off there's no seaming required, you're just going to continue this action all the way to the end and then I'll show you how to finish your hat. So we're almost to the last of our stitches, working the last two and then this final set. You put your other needle aside. You only need about six inches of yarn to finish this hat so I'm going to break the yarn or cut it, pull it through there. Tighten that loop up. And then you're going to bring these two corners together and just whip stitch them. You could leave it open like this. It would look a little bit like cat ears if you did that, it's really cute on a kid's hat, they look like a bear or a cat especially if you use a fuzzy yarn but with our hat we're going to make it look a little more traditional, kind of like a slouchy hunter's cap and we're going to bring the two corners together, just put the yarn in the tapestry needle and poke it through anywhere. And then just kind of anchor

it a few more times. Three or four stitches. This yarn is so fuzzy it kind of hides sloppy work so no need to be too neat, just weave it in later maybe. So then you just try it on and you've finished your first riff hat.

Chapter 4 - Variations

Variations

- The great thing about this rift pattern is that you can use any stitch pattern as long as you swatch and make sure that it makes a nice fabric. You can use any stitch pattern, any yarn that you want. So here I've got an even heavier yarn and I'm on a larger needle. This time it's a 13 and I'm gonna try and see what seed stitch looks like. So I have a little swatch going and I'm just doing knit one purl one, alternating that to see what it looks like. I think it looks really good. Of course I'll do a gage swatch and measure this. It doesn't roll which makes it a great candidate for a brim stitch. When you have a brim stitch. I started this hat with seed stitch and did that for about an inch and then switched to just knitting every round which is stockinette stitch. I thought it was a pretty plain hat so I embellished it with a bit of leather lacing here in the front and also with the tassel in the back which makes for a really playful but still masculine looking hat. Seed stitch can also be used all over. Here I just switched colors whenever I felt like it and the entire hat is knit with seed stitch. You can also sometimes use a reverse stockinette brim if you would like it to roll. Which means you just cast-on and instead of working a ribbing or a seed or a non-rolling stitch, you just let it roll and it forms this cute little brim and then I switch to reverse stockinette for the rest of the hat so you can see the texture of this thick and thin yarn. Finish this with a little bit of a feather embellishment that I found at a craft store. Something else you can do is switch colors half way through, and if you wanna emphasize that color change, you can just work the first round in a new color with seed stitch. So you can see the little bumps of the color change right there. It's a really clean but still striking touch. So with just the simple math you can see that you can find a hat that will suit anyone you're knitting for and with any materials. So, I hope that you'll have fun with this pattern and get in touch with your inner designer.