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## **Loom Knitting: Make a Hat** with Michele Muska

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### **Chapter 1 - Introduction**

#### Overview

(peppy music) - Hi, I'm Michelle Muska, and I consider myself a fiber artist. I'm the author of the new book *Quilting the New Classics*. I teach knitting, crochet, loom knitting, ^which we're going to be talking about today. ^So loom knitting is a great way to take a break from traditional knitting, and even crochet, and to try a new craft. Sometimes the charts and the directions are really complicated. In this class I'm gonna be teaching you how to make a rolled brim wool hat with a faux fur pom-pom. I'm gonna show you step-by-step how to do an e-wrap cast on, how to bind off, and how to make a pom-pom. So for me, loom knitting is all about the yarn. And I chose this really beautiful hand-dyed Malabrigo from Uruguay. When you choose a very special yarn, you can make some really lovely things.

### **Chapter 2 - Materials**

#### Materials

- So for this class we're going to be using a bulky Malabrigo rasta yarn. It's a pure merino-washed wool and it's about a size five or six. I'll talk a little bit later about the weight of the yarn and how it affects the gauge with the loom. This comes in about 90 yards but you'll need about 50 yards for this project. We're also going to be using a Boye round loom 9 1/2 inches with 36 pegs and then you'll also need a loom hook, some snips, a darning needle and an embroidery needle with some floss. Measuring tape is always helpful, a crochet hook and I like to have a medium crochet hook, an H or an I is preferable, scissors and then we're going to be making a faux fur pom pom so you're gonna need about a six inch piece of faux fur and some poly fill.

### **Chapter 3 - Rolled Brim Hat**

#### Cast on and knit

- I'd like to talk a little bit about the yarn that I chose to use. I chose a Malabrigo yarn, which is from Uruguay. It has 90 yards on it, and it is pure Merino wool. The great thing about looking at your tags, it's going to have your washing instructions on it, so you want to make sure to keep it or write it down in your little yarn journal. This comes as a hank, some yarns come with a center pull skein, but this one is a hank you'll get like this, and most hand-dyed yarns or hand-spun yarns will come like this, and I just kind of want to show you how it works. So you're gonna open it all up like this, and then you're gonna see it's tied in several spots, so you're gonna take this and either clip them or untie the knot, and then you're gonna find the end, and then you're just gonna start rolling it into a ball, like this. So you can either put it on a chair, or on your knees, or if you have a friend, you can have them hold it like this, and you can roll it up and get ready, so here's what you have, you're gonna need about 50 yards of yarn to do a rolled-brim hat, and I'd also like to talk to you about the weight of this yarn. This would be like a five or a six. Many smaller yarn companies don't put their weight on the yarn itself, so you're gonna have to gauge. You can go to the store and take it, look at some bulkies and super bulkies. I find with this loom, the number five bulky works about the best, and you can use a six if it's nice and fluffy and you can kind of pull it apart like this, so I'd like you to leave about an 18-inch tail, and make a slip knot, and you just wrap it around a few fingers like this, and then bring it through. And you're gonna put that on the anchor peg. You're gonna hold that on

there 'til couple rows, and that's just gonna anchor it down so it doesn't slip. I'm gonna show you how to do an e-wrap cast-on, and one important thing I wanna talk about here is tension. So you don't wanna wrap the pegs too tight, then you won't be able to knit the loops off. You wanna hold on to the yarn, and you're gonna wrap it totally around once, and when you go to the next peg, I often stick my fingers right there and kind of hold it, so you're not pulling too tight. If you don't do that, you're gonna get this really tight pull, and you don't wanna do that, 'cause you won't be able to knit the loops off, and I'll show you how we do that in a little bit, so. You wanna undo some of your yarn, and then you're gonna keep going. And you'll find, eventually, after you do this a few times, you'll have a rhythm that you can just kind of move right along. So if you can see how I'm holding the yarn down gently, and that's giving me the appropriate tension. So we're gonna go around the 36 pegs. So I'm almost to the very first peg, and what's really great about this little anchor peg, you can use this as your starting point, so here I am at the beginning, and then I'm going to wrap again. So for this stitch, you're going to wrap your yarn around each peg twice, and continue through the whole loom. So we're nearing the end, and we're approaching the anchor hook, and there, we're gonna leave that there, hold onto that, and you're going to be taking your loom tool, and see there's a little groove in there that can help you. I like to hold the tool like this to the side, but you'll find a way that you're comfortable with. So I reach in there, and this is where you'll see where the tension matters, and you're gonna take that loop and push it right over the top, and at the same time, push down that loop that was on the top, and then you're ready to go and do the whole loom. So first couple of them might be a little bit tight, but you'll be able to start moving down. So there's a little thumb print right here in the tool, and if you put your thumb there and hold it to the side, you can do two steps at once. So you can put the hook in the groove, you can lift it over the peg, and then you can take it and push the peg down all at once, and this will save you from having to go back and push the peg down. Here, and then we just move all the way around the loom. It's also helpful, you can take your fingers inside the loom and hold it, and help you push that down, as well. So now we knit off the whole row, and we're back to the starting point, which is the anchor peg. So this was actually just put on there to hold it to get started, so I'm gonna slip that off and pull the knot open, and I'm gonna take my loom tool and just pull it down here. And you're gonna leave that to the end and then you're gonna weave that in, and then we're gonna start weaving the hat, so cast on another row in the same manner that I showed you, wanna make sure the loops are already down, and make sure you're paying attention to your tension, so making sure you're not too loose, but wrapping gently around each peg. And you're gonna continue all the way around and knit that row off, and keep going 'til your desired length. So I've been working on this for a little while, going around, knitting my loops, and I have about four inches here, so I'd like to talk a little bit about fabric. I was a little confused when I first heard this term, but the fabric is the knitted piece, and it starts dropping through the loom. As you can see, the fabric is down, and it starts to roll naturally, and that's gonna be your brim. I'll show you another variation later with a flat hem. So this is also the opportunity to show you how you can actually count your rows. So if you take your loom tool, which is helpful, and you're gonna see these little v's right here, so I can actually count. So it's one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, 10. Just to give you an idea if someone's, in some directions that say, knit 30 rows, that you'll know how to count them. Often what happens if you're using a yarn that has a little bit of texture to it, you might have a hard time actually counting the rows, and this is where a tape measure could come in handy, so you could just actually measure your fabric to see how much you're actually need. Now we're ready to keep knitting, and then I'll show you how to cast off. I would say you need about 12 inches of knitted fabric, or about 40 rows.

As a sidenote, this particular project is so simple and easy, it's really like taking a break, so I can watch a movie, or sit outside, and I don't really have to pay too much attention, 'cause once I get the rhythm going of knitting, it's just super easy. Occasionally you might find, especially with some of the hand-spun yarns, it gets a little twisty, so don't worry about that, just gently pull the yarn out like this, and you can see the little, curly knots, but that will help from keeping your loops from getting twisted. And when you have the tail here, you always want to do that peg first, and then you don't have to worry about it unraveling, and then you can knit from either side. I know some of my students that are left-handed like to go this way, so whatever's more comfortable for you. And then every once in a while, it really doesn't matter, but I like to kind of pull it down a little bit, kind of gives me a sense of accomplishment to see how much I have done so far, so look at your stitches to make sure it looks good.

### Bind off and finish hat

- So I've knitted for a while, and I think I'm ready to cast off, so the next thing you want to do is unroll your hat, so you can count your stitches and your rows. So that's a little bit over 40. You can also measure, so you remember I want about 12 inches, and if I want a little bit of a slouchy hat I might go a little bit longer. And if you're watching TV, and you're not paying attention you might end up going longer, so you've gotta be careful, keep an eye on that. This is a little bit longer, but that's okay. I can just roll it up a little bit. You can also take the measurement of a hat that fits really well or that a friend likes that you were making a gift for, and you can measure that and then match that up. But remember, you're gonna have your roll, so you want to add a few extra inches for your roll as well. The rule of thumb is to wrap your yarn about one and a half times around your loop and take your snips. And you're ready to cast off. There's a couple different methods to do that. I'm gonna show you a real quick, easy way. It was with a darning needle. See how my yarn is a little bit twisty. This would be a good opportunity for you to kind of just untwist it with your hands. A little trick because you see it's all fuzzy on the end, and it would be too difficult to put through your darning needle, so a little trick is to take your yarn, fold it over the darning needle really tight, pull it off so it's a little bit flatter. And then you can try to kind of squish it in there, shimmy it through, and you can pull it through like that. And then you have a tail. So you can use the groove in the peg as a guide. Put your darning needle through there, pull through, so your loop is secure so you can actually take it and lift it up. See how that is. You're all set to move on to the next one. You're gonna continue to do that all the way around the loom until you're finished. You want to try not to twist your yarn as well as you're going or your loops because you're gonna have to take this yarn tail, and you're gonna have to pull and gather through all the loops gently. Also remember if you're working with a hand spun yarn or something that's really fluffy make sure not to pull too tight because I've actually had the occasion of me pulling and breaking the yarn. You can always fix that by gently tying a knot onto the end, and you can always hide that knot inside the hat, so you don't have to worry about that. But it's just something to keep in mind especially if you're working with alpaca or some really nice soft merino wool. We're almost at the end. We only have a few left, which is the exciting part, okay. Two more. And here's your last peg. And you're finished. You want to lay that out, and you can see how that tail went all the way through every single loop. And then you're gonna start to gently gather. So don't just pull it, gather and push the loops back. With the thicker yarns you're gonna find that the top sometimes leaves a little bit of a larger hole. If you're not gonna put a pompom on it, you can go on the inside and maybe sew it up a little bit if you like, and then we're gonna take out darning needle, put it through, and we're gonna put it very gently because this

it the worst part if you break it at the end. So then you're just gonna sew it. Might be a little tough, try to get it through a few loops. Try not to split the yarn with your darning needle because that will be hard to pull the yarn through, okay. And you're just gonna do a couple of slip stitches. You can also do this with your crochet hook if you feel more comfortable. I can even show that to you. I'd probably snip this off a little bit. I'd take a crochet hook, and I'd pull it through. I'd go inside a loop, and I would just pull it through like this. And weave it through. I'm gonna leave a little bit of a tail because I'm gonna do a pompom, and I might end up using this tail to help secure the pompom in the hat. You still have the tail on the other end on your rolled brim here. This was the beginning of the yarn, so it's really kind of fluffy, so I think I can probably snip that off, leave about six inches. That's secured with a knot, so it's not gonna come unraveled. You want to hide that maybe in the brim of the hat. You can also, if you're doing a flat brim you can actually secure the yarn straight up one of the rows inside. That would hide it as well. So at this point you're just going to continue to weave the tails in with your crochet hook or your darning needle.

#### Flat brimmed hat variation

- So now that you've made your first loom hat, I'm gonna show you a variation. And this variation will be a flat brimmed hat. So, I'm making actually an infant's hat. It's a 30 peg loom, seven and a half inch, which is really an infant or a toddler hat. But I'm gonna show you're gonna do the same thing that you did for the first hat. So we're doing the e-wrap, two around, and then knitting them off. And then we're gonna go about four inches. Four inches is good for a child's hat, and then you would knit about six inches for an adult's hat. So let's take our measuring tape. We've got about four inches there. And we're gonna take the bottom of the knitted fabric, and we're gonna find the peg that corresponds with the row. So it's really important to find that. And we're gonna bring it up around here. So you might wanna run your finger up like this, and you're gonna take that one loop, just one loop only, and slip that loop over the peg. And then you're gonna take each corresponding row and take that loop and keep slipping it over for each peg. So just makes sure that the loops are correspondent with the row that matches the peg. If you don't, your brim might feel a little twisted when you're done. And you're gonna continue that all the way around. Here's your tail, so you can get those out of your way. So this will give you a little bit more tailored look as opposed to the rolled brim hat that we made previously. But I kind of would caution you if you're using a really thick yarn, like a super bulky six that's maybe not that fluffy. It might be a little thick for a brim, so you're just gonna have to use your own judgment once you start working with the different yarns. So make your tails are out of the way. So we're almost to the end. So make sure you have two loops on each peg. And now here's your tail, so bring that back around. And this is what it's going to look like. And then you're just going to start knitting it off like you did before with your hook. And it'll go all the way around. And it might be a little bit tight, that bottom loop, but just kinda pull it a little. And you wanna do the same thing you did with your last hat. You wanna make sure that the bottom loop goes all the way down to the bottom so you're ready for your next row. 'Cause basically, you're just going to e-wrap the next row when you're done, and knitting til you get to the desired length. And we have a great little hat with a flat hem that gives you a little bit more tailored look.

#### Faux fur pompom

- So now that you're finished with your hat, we're ready to make our faux fur pom-pom, so I've chosen a really nice, long fur here and it's about six inches square, so I'm gonna use some snips and I can also use some scissors, but I would use a very long, pointy scissor, so you can really capture

just the fabric and not cut all the fur off, so this is really simple. You're just gonna round off the edges, and don't worry about being too fussy 'cause it's all gonna get sewn together in a little pom-pom. You'll never notice, and you wanna pull any excess fur off and then you're gonna do that on all the corners, and then use some embroidery floss, and I've used a contrasting color here so you can see. Start about a quarter of an inch in on the edge, and I'm going to do a running stitch all around the edge till I'm almost finished, and you can get a pre-made pom-pom out of real fur or faux fur, there's a lot of options, but the faux fur is really cost effective and it's also vegan, if you have any vegan friends that you're making a hat for. Sometimes, it's hard to see the edge, so you just wanna fold in your fur a little bit. I'm gonna go all the way around, but I'm not gonna gather it all. I'm gonna start stuffing it. It'll make it a little bit easier. You might capture some of the fur in your stitches, but you can just kinda pull it out like that. Here, gonna meet the other end with the knot. Okay, so you're gonna pull through so you have like a little bowl, and then you're gonna start with your polyfill. The polyfill that I like to use has a little bit of cotton in it. If it's 100% polyester, sometimes, it happens is what they call migrates, it's a little bit harder to manipulate, and this is really nice and soft, and then I can start pulling closed. Start pushing it way down inside, and then you wanna really stuff it good. Pull it tight, and then you're just gonna slip stitch it with a few stitches. It's a little bit hard, so you're gonna see, try to get both sides. It's hard to see through the fur, but you'll be able to fill it with your needle. The fun thing with faux fur, it comes in a lot of different colors and prints so you can really make some fun choices. Take your faux fur and fluff it up, and we're gonna sew it on to our hat. So remember, we have this little section here, and we're gonna actually take our needle, darning needle, and put it through one of the thick sections here, and we're gonna pull through. Pull it through kinda tight. Make sure sure you have it in a good spot, and then you wanna take, see that whole round section there? You wanna take your darning needle and kind of sew it around, back stitch a little bit. You don't wanna do it too tight, because you might wanna remove it. So it might be a good idea to keep it with a contrasting color so you can see where it is. You might wanna remove it for laundering or also for, if you wanna change out your color pom-pom, and then you could actually just tie this in a simple little knot with a tail, and snip it off. So, now you saw how easy it was to make this beautiful wool hat with this really simple faux fur pom-pom on top. You can make 'em for yourself and all your friends.

## **Chapter 4 - Variations**

Using various types of yarn

- So now that you made your first hat with the faux-fur pom, I'd like to show you some other options. I have this beautiful yarn that is a hand-dyed and hand-spun alpaca. So notice the thick and thin spaces, and don't be afraid to try some unusual yarns, they work up really nice and very interesting. So it's created this really beautiful texture, this fabric, and you can see how it's done thick and thin. So, this is from a little farm in Connecticut, where I'm from, and they're very sweet, and you can go buy their alpaca right at the farm, and they actually have like donated by Sophie or Evie, whatever alpaca that it's from, so you really get a sense of working with the farmer and buying something local too. So, I've also bought it in gray, which is a really beautiful tone, and I've added a real fur pom, so you can do that as well instead of making your own, and then I've added a little tag. So I like to make tags especially if I'm giving them as gifts, and this one will tell you what it is, so it's a rolled brim, loom knit hat, it's 100% alpaca, and I also do the laundry instructions as well, so it's hand-wash and dry flat, but remove the pom-pom before you wash it. So I often just tie it on loosely, or I actually use a really big, giant safety pin that I know will stay nice and tight so it's easy

to change out the color of your poms or to take it off for laundry, and here's another one. This is actually my absolute favorite. This is a Madelinetosh yarn, and it's also hand-dyed, so you get like these really beautiful variations in the yarn, which is natural. I did another label as well, but I also included the label of the yarn, so it has a little bit of information about where the yarn's from, what color it is, and the website of the yarn dyer so you can go and take a look, and this is kind of fun too. So this is a hat that looks a little bit more complicated, cause it has stripes, but it's actually the yarn that does all the work for you. So this is a flat hemmed hat, I'll show you another flat hemmed hat, the one that we made, this is done on the smaller loom, remember, that's the little blue loom that's seven and a half inches, so basically for an infant or a little toddler, and all the other hats will fit children and adults, so wide variety of sizes. So, pick out some gorgeous yarn, and during the length of one movie, you can knit yourself or a friend one of these absolutely gorgeous hats.