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Bedlam

A slightly crazy cabled hat
by Melissa Rotert

I have to admit that when it comes to counting rows, I'm lazy. I'll do it if I have to, but I don't like it. I'm not sure why. Needless to say, this can present a slight problem when doing cables. So when I decided to make a hat as a fast afternoon project, and further decided I wanted to use cables, it occurred to me that not only would it be easier, but that I would enjoy the knitting far more, if I didn't *have* to keep track of rows. The concept for this hat grew from there.

It is a standard beanie-style hat, worked in 2 strands of worsted yarn throughout. The cables are worked semi-randomly. (It was not truly random, as I intentionally worked no more than 2 cables per row, and kept the interval between cables at between 3 and 7 rows.)



Materials:

Needles: 1 16-inch size US 13 / 9mm circular needle, 1 set of US 13 / 9mm double pointed needles

Yarn: Brown Sheep Co. Lamb's Pride Worsted (85% wool, 15% mohair): 2 skeins in Blue Blood Red
(Note: The hat is worked in 2 strands throughout.)

Additional Items: Tapestry needle, stitch marker

Gauge: 6 sts / 9 rows over 2" in stockinette

On your circular needle, cast on 60 stitches loosely. Place marker and join to begin working in the round, being careful not to twist.

Work k 2 p 2 rib for 4 rows, or roughly 1".

Round 1: Sl 1, k 1, pss0, k 2, k2tog, p1fb, p 4, p1fb, repeat around

Round 2: K 4, p 8, repeat around

Round 3: Put first two stitches on a cable needle, bring to front of work. Knit next two stitches, then knit stitches off cable needle. P 8. Repeat around.

Repeat Round 2.

Here's where the Bedlam comes in. You're going to continue to knit the knits and purl the purls, creating five cable ribs running up the hat. Every so often, throw a cable in there across the knit stitches. If you would like a seemingly random but still balanced look, you can follow the guidelines in the description above. For a truly random distribution, employ a set of dice or a random number generator, but remember that this might put cable twists one row after another, which in turn could cause problems with the fabric of your hat, or be just plain unattractive. To keep the insanity to a minimum, always keep your twist going the same direction, as in the example. For added crazy goodness, you can mix that up too. Knit in this manner until the hat measures 6.5" from the edge.

The decreases are distributed into the purl fields until the very end. The cable ribs are referred to as "k 4", but continue adding cables any time you like until Round 7 of the decrease rounds. Switch to DPNs when it behoves you to do so.

Round 1: K 4, p 1, p2tog, p2tog, p2tog, p 1, repeat around. (45 stitches)

Round 2: K 4, p 6, repeat around

Round 3: K 4, p2tog, p 1, p2tog, repeat around (35 stitches)

Round 4: K 4, p 3, repeat around

Round 5: K 4, p2tog, p 1, repeat around (30 stitches)

Round 6: K 4, p2tog, repeat around (25 stitches)

Round 7: K 3, sl 1, p 1, pssso, repeat around (20 stitches)

Round 8: K 1, k2tog, k 1, repeat around (15 stitches)

Round 9: K 1, k2tog, repeat around (10 stitches)

Break yarn, leaving a long tail. Pull tail through remaining 10 live stitches and remove from needles. Pull tight and weave in ends.

Fin.

