



skill level: medium

Rosie Knits

James Dean's Hat

by Lisa R. Myers



This is not your typical hat -- an alternative construction using short rows creates a shape that beautifully shows off a self-striping yarn.

SIZE:

Women's large [see copious notes on sizing on p.3].

Finished circumference as written: 22"

MATERIALS:

size US #7 (4.5mm) needle (or size to obtain gauge).

Darning Needle.

YARN:

Model shown in Noro Kureyon, 100% wool, 110 yds./50g skein (2 skeins)

GAUGE:

19 sts and 25 rows = 4" over stockinette st

ABBREVIATION:

W&T (wrap and turn): Slip next st purlwise from left needle to right; move yarn to front of work; slip stitch back to left needle; turn the work around.

PATTERN NOTE:

Hat is knit from side to side in segments using the short-row technique.

James Dean's Hat continued....

PATTERN:

Using a provisional cast-on, cast on 51 sts. K one row.

Work Short-Row Segment:

Row 1 (RS): P46, W&T.

Row 2 and all other even-numbered rows: K.

Row 3: P44, W&T.

Row 5: P42, W&T.

Row 7: P40, W&T.

Row 9: P38, W&T.

Row 11: P36, W&T.

Row 13: P34, W&T.

Row 15: P32, W&T.

Row 17: P30, W&T.

Row 19: P28, W&T.

Row 21: P26, W&T.

Row 23: P24, W&T.

Row 25: P22, W&T.

Row 27: P20, W&T.

Row 29: P, hiding wraps as follows: when you come to a wrapped st, insert the point of the right-hand needle into the st and then under the "wrap" (this looks like a little purl bar across the bottom front of the st). Bring the yarn around the needle in the usual way, then complete the st, ducking back under the wrap and out through the stitch. (If you're a tight knitter, you may have to use your fingers to get the wrap off the needle on the way back out.)

Row 30: K.

Rep these 30 rows 4 more times for a total of 5 Short-Row Segments, but on the fifth segment, stop after Row 29.

Finishing:

Open the provisional cast-on and replace the live sts on a needle, with the point of the needle at the top (narrow end) of the hat. Cut the working yarn, leaving about a 60" tail, and graft the last row to the first row using Kitchener Stitch. Weave in ends.



NOTES ON SIZING:

Because this hat is worked side-to-side rather than bottom-to-top, finished circumference has little or nothing to do with the cast-on number. Instead, the size is determined by the total number of rows worked. There are two ways to change that number: (1) add or subtract a whole short-row segment, or (2) change the number of rows in each segment. If you add or subtract a whole segment, you'll be making big changes; each segment is more than 4" wide, so adding or subtracting even one changes the hat drastically.

The second option sounds scarier, but isn't bad. You want to keep the 20 sts at the end of the row that are always plain, and make any necessary adjustments in the short-row section where the number of stitches worked keeps decreasing by 2. To increase the number of rows in a segment, change the last increments from 2 to 1—after Row 23, say, do P23 instead of P22, then P22, then P21, then P20. The P20 row will be Row 31, and you'll have added 2 rows to the segment total: 10 rows throughout the hat, or about 1.5" increase in total circumference.

To decrease the number of rows in a segment, change the first increments from 2 to 3—after Row 1, say, work P43, then P40. The P40 row is Row 5, where it used to be Row 7: you've subtracted 2 rows from the segment, 10 rows throughout the hat, and 1.5" decrease in total circumference.

Why do I make increasing changes at the end of the segment, but decreasing changes at the beginning? Because the first increment—the P46 in Row 1—is already larger than the others, so I like to continue the trend of having the larger increments at that end of the process and smaller ones at the other. This helps to accentuate the swirl effect.

Should you ever change the cast-on number? If you're making the hat much smaller (say, for a child), I would; it's already a pretty tall hat, and a kid may start to look or feel silly. If you're enlarging the hat just for a larger adult head, I probably wouldn't; the hat's already deeper than the head. If, on the other hand, you're enlarging the hat to fit an adult head with lots and lots of hair—say, dreadlocks—then I might add another inch.

My impulse in both cases would be to make the adjustment in the plain section at the bottom: this is the part that actually fits the head, while the short-row section is pretty much decorative. So if you cast on 46 stitches instead of 51, the last short row would be P15; if you cast on 56 stitches instead of 51, the last short row would be P25.

One final note: if you lose count somewhere and one segment has one or two more rows while one has one or two less, nobody's ever going to notice.