

Very Necessary Sweater

By Shannon Culbertson ([La Gringa Tejedora](#))



When my favorite store-bought sweater started to get too ratty to wear anymore, I was bereft. I'd become so attached to it that I decided I had to knit a copy. I'd never designed a sweater or written a pattern before, so I knew this would be a challenge. And since a small challenge is never quite enough for me, I added to it: designing and knitting this sweater would be my entry in the Knitting Olympics, which meant it would be done in 16 days. Sadly, a knitting injury kept me from completing winning gold, but I'm so thrilled with this sweater that I barely feel the agony of defeat. You can read my entire Olympic saga [here](#).

Pattern Notes

- A note on **gauge**: as many of you know, I knit loosely. Very, very loosely. I used 6s and 7s to knit this sweater, but I suspect many of you will end up using 7s and 8s.
- As I was knitting I kept row-by-row notes. When I went back to write the pattern out, I relied heavily on row counts to do it. As a result, you'll see that most sections (ribbing, armholes, etc.) include **row numbers** from beginning to end. I kept them in the pattern in the hope that

they might be helpful in allowing you to make adjustments if your row gauge is different from mine.

- One of the things that I love best about the model sweater is its flattering fit and high ribbing. In particular I like that the ribbing does not "pull in" too much, which allows the line of the sweater to continue uninterrupted. To get this look, this pattern calls for you to **knit the ribbing in larger needles** than the rest of the sweater. (Claudia describes another technique for achieving this look in her [Mariah wrap-up entry](#), in the paragraph that starts "Mods".)
- This pattern is fairly easy. The only technically complex section is the **short row shaping for the neck**, and though I think it makes for a smoother neckline, I've provided alternative directions if you don't want to use short rows.
- **Wanna help?** This was my first ever attempt to write a pattern, and as soon as I finished my sweater I wanted to share it with the world. Unfortunately, that means it's currently only written in one size: mine. I would love to size this up and down, and I would doubly love some help with doing that! If you make adjustments for size, please let me know (knit@gringa.org) how it goes. Provided that you get the same gauge, if you send in your numbers when you're finished I'll add them to the pattern and give you credit for the help. Likewise, I am 100% certain there are errors in this pattern. If you find mistakes and/or have suggestions, please let me know!

Pattern Information	Abbreviations
<p>Gauge 17 sts = just a hair over 4" (4.0625" to be precise!) 25 rows = 4" In st st on US6s</p> <p>Yarn 10 balls of GGH Samoa Mouline in 504 (orange) 50% cotton, 50% acrylic, 50g and 104 yds/ball</p> <p>Needles US7 for ribbing US6 for body (Or needle size to obtain gauge.)</p> <p>Size: to fit 36" bust</p> <p>Finished Dimensions <i>Chest:</i> 18" across <i>Body Length:</i> 20" from center of neck to bottom of ribbing <i>Sleeve length:</i> 26 ¾" <i>Turtleneck length:</i> 8" All ribbed sections are 5 ¾"</p>	<p>Decreases</p> <p>k2tog: knit the next two stitches together (leans right) ssk: slip next two stitches knitwise, return to left needle and knit them together through the back loop (leans left) p2tog: purl the next two stitches together (leans right) sspb: slip next two stitches knitwise, return to left needle, purl the two together through the back loop (leans left)</p> <p>Increases</p> <p>m1l: lift bar between last stitch and next stitch and place on left needle. Knit this new "stitch" through the back loop (leans left) m1r: lift bar between last and next stitch and place on left needle – make sure this "stitch" is twisted. Knit this new "stitch" (leans right).</p> <p>Short Row Techniques</p> <p>yo: yarn over yobw: yarn over backwards (for an awesome description and illustration of this technique, see page 2 of <i>Interweave Knits</i>' "Better-Than-Booties Baby Socks" (Summer 2005), available online here (it's a PDF!))</p>

Back

Ribbing

With larger needles, CO 74 sts.

Row 1 (RS): k1, *k2, p2, repeat from * until 1 st remains, k1.

Row 2 (WS): p1, *k2, p2, repeat from * until 1 st remains, p1.

Repeat these two rows 7 more times (16 rows total). *Maintain the st st selvedge edge throughout the ribbed section.*

Row 17: Dec 1 st each end of next row as follows: k1, k2tog, continue in ribbing as set until 3 sts remain, ssk, k1. (72 sts)

Work next and following 12 rows in ribbing as set. (30 rows total)

Row 31 (RS): Dec 1 st each end as follows: k1, p2tog, work in ribbing until 3 sts remain, ssb, k1. (70 sts)

Row 32 (WS): Work in ribbing as set.

Body

Switch to smaller needles and st st for the body.

Work 20 rows straight, ending on WS row.

Row 21 (RS): Inc one stitch each end of the row as follows: k1, m1l, k until 1 st remains, m1r, k1. (72 sts)

Work 19 rows straight, ending on WS row (40 rows st st total)

Row 41 (RS): Inc one stitch each end of the row as given above. (74 sts)

Work 9 rows straight ending on WS row. (50 rows st st total)

Armhole Shaping

Bind off (BO) 3 sts at the beg of next two rows. (68 sts)

Row 3 (RS): k1, p1, k until 2 sts remain, p1, k1.

Row 4 (WS): p1, k1, p until 2 sts remain, k1, p1.

Repeat these two rows one more time.

The edging established by the **bolded blue** text above is maintained on *all following rows*. Decreases should be worked inside the two-stitch edging at each end of the row. For example, a decrease row would begin: “k1, p1, k2tog...” and end “ssk, p1, k1”.

Rows 7-20: Maintaining the edging as described above, dec 1 st each end of this and every 4th row three times ending on a WS row. (60 sts)

Rows 21-52: Maintaining the edging as described above, dec 1 st each end of this and every following RS row 15 times ending on a WS row. (28 sts)

Row 53: BO all stitches loosely.

Front

Work as back until Row 34 of armhole shaping. (36 sts)

Neck shaping

Here's the part where you chose your own adventure. When I made the sweater I used short rows *a la* Priscilla Gibson-Roberts' Dream Socks. (Yes, that's right – I used heel techniques to do the collar shaping. But I promise it won't look like you're wearing a giant sock.) While this technique made perfect sense to me as I did it, once I sat down to write it out I realized it seemed a bit more complex. So I'm offering two options: short rows and non-short rows.

Option 1: Short rows:

Left side

Row 1 (RS): k1, p1, k2tog, k8, turn work.

Rows 2, 4, 6, 8: yobw, work stitches as set to end of row.

Row 3 (RS): k1, p1, k2tog, k6, turn work.

Row 5 (RS): k1, p1, k2tog, k4, turn work.

Row 7 (RS): k1, p1, k2tog, k2, turn work.

Row 9 (RS): k1, p1, k2tog, k1, *correct mount on next st and return to left needle, k2tog, repeat from * three more times, k until 4 sts remain, ssk, p1, k1.

You have now completed the shaping on the left side of the collar and are ready to begin the shaping on the right side.

Right side

Row 1 (WS): p1, k1, p8, turn work

Rows 2, 4, 6, 8 (RS): yo, k until 4 sts remain, ssk, p1, k1.

Row 3 (WS): p1, k1, p6, turn work

Row 5 (WS): p1, k1, p4, turn work

Row 7 (WS): p1, k1, p2, turn work

Row 9 (WS): p1, k1, p1, p3tog four times, p until 2 sts remain, k1, p1. (26 sts)

Next row: BO all sts loosely.

Option 2: No short rows

Left side



Row 1 (RS): k1, p1, k2tog, k8. Put sts remaining on left needle on a stitch holder and turn work.

Row 2 (WS): p1 p2tog, p6, k1, p1

Rows 3, 5, 7: k1, p1, k2tog, k to end

Row 4 (WS): p1 p2tog, p4, k1, p1

Row 6 (WS): p1 p2tog, p2, k1, p1

Next row: BO all sts loosely

Return sts on the stitch holder to the needles. With RS facing, join yarn and BO center stitches loosely until 10 sts remain on left needle. These are the sts you will use for the right side of the neck shaping.

Right side

Row 1 (RS): k until 4 sts remain, ssk, p1, k1

Row 2 (WS): p1, k1, p until 3 stitches remain on left needle, ssb, p1

Repeat rows 1 and 2 two more times, then work row 1 one more time.

Row 8 (WS): BO all sts loosely

Sleeves (make two)

Ribbing

With larger needles, CO 42 sts.

Row 1 (RS): k1, *k2, p2, repeat from * until 1 st remains on left needle, k1

Row 2 (WS): p1 *k2, p2, repeat from * until 1 st remains on left needle, p1.

Repeat rows 1 and 2 15 more times (32 rows of ribbing)

Body

Switch to smaller needles and st st.

Rows 1–14: Work straight ending on WS row.

Rows 15 - 46: Inc on st each end of the next and every 10th row 3 times as follows: k1, m1l, k until 1 st remains, m1r, k1. End on WS row.

Work straight until sleeve measures 19.25”

Armhole Shaping

CO 3 sts at the beg of next two rows. (44 sts)

Row 3 (RS): **k1, p1**, k until 2 sts remain, **p1, k1**.

Row 4 (WS): **p1, k1**, p until 2 sts remain, **k1, p1**.

Repeat these two rows one time.

The edging established by the **bolded blue** text above is maintained on *all following rows*. Decreases should be worked inside the two-stitch edging at each end of the row. For example, a decrease row would begin: “k1, p1, k2tog...” and end “ssk, p1, k1”.

Rows 7-18: Maintaining the edging as described above, dec 1 st each end of this and each following RS row until 32 sts remain, ending with WS row.

Rows 19-20: Work two rows straight, ending with WS row.

Rows 21-46: Maintaining the edging as described above, dec 1 st each end of this and every fourth row 5 times ending with a WS row. (20 sts)

Rows 47-53: Maintaining the edging as described above, dec 1 sts each end of this and every RS row until 12 sts remain, ending on a RS row.

Row 54 (WS): BO all sts.

Finishing and Turtleneck

Steam- or wet-block the stockinette sections of the sweater – leave the ribbed sections alone. Seam pieces together with mattress stitch.

With larger needles, and starting at point in the neck where the front and the right sleeve meet, pick up and knit 72 sts evenly around the neck. Work turtleneck in a k2 p2 rib to desired length. Bind off very loosely (I bound off with US 9s!). Weave in ends.

