



From  
the Author of  
MITTENS FROM  
AROUND NORWAY  
and  
SOCKS FROM  
AROUND NORWAY

Nina Granlund Sæther

# KNITS FROM AROUND NORWAY

Over 40 Traditional Knitting Patterns Inspired by Norwegian Folk-Art Collections

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NINA GRANLUND SÆTHER

# KNITS

## FROM AROUND NORWAY



OVER 40 TRADITIONAL KNITTING PATTERNS  
INSPIRED BY NORWEGIAN FOLK-ART COLLECTIONS



TRAFALGAR SQUARE  
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## Something Old, Something New

It can be difficult to trace our path as knitters back through history. In the past, textiles of all kinds were often used until they were completely worn out, or turned in for a low price—factories needed fibers that could be re-carded and reused. Everyday textiles very seldom ended up in museums. The items that have been preserved were, for the most part, worn for parties and special occasions.

Fortunately, there are also paintings and photographs documenting clothing trends in earlier times. Some were inspired by colors in a flower bouquet, others by something cool in a fashion magazine. I'm always fascinated by older textiles—clothing and other fabric items that were at one time elegant and rich in color tend to fade and felt, and there's something special about the patina of faded colors. Perhaps it's because I know how much time and effort is behind each individual garment.

In this book, I've once again been on the hunt for knitted garments, or the traces of them, around Norway. Not to copy them stitch for stitch, but to find inspiration. A small pattern element can be enlarged and knitted with heavier yarn and larger needles. Or it can be placed in a new context. There are innumerable examples to work with, full of gorgeous, timeless pattern elements—and I've catalogued those examples here. This book isn't just about my designs, it's about history.

At a time when you can buy almost anything, and textiles, for the most part, are made at low costs in countries far away, I hope you all experience the joy of creating something with your own hands, a joy that lies in the design and construction of a garment. Yes, it takes time, and it can be really difficult ... but when it's done, you'll be rewarded with something unique, something irreplaceable. Something that will last; something worth all your time and effort. Something that carries on cultural traditions, and brings the things that matter the most to life.

*Nina Granlund Sæther*

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## TIPS BEFORE YOU BEGIN

**Charts:** All charts in this book are read from right to left and from the bottom up.

**Garment Care:** To give your garment a professional look, you should lightly steam press it, or wash it in lukewarm water with wool-safe soap and block it. You can buy sock blockers, or you can dry socks flat. Shawls or lace edges can be pin-blocked or stretched out with blocking wires. Leave items pinned out until completely dry.

**Decreasing on the right side (= left-leaning decrease):** Slip 1, knit 1, pass slipped stitch over (sl 1, k1, pss0) or ssk (see Abbreviations).

**Decreasing on the left side (= right-leaning decrease):** Knit 2 together (k2tog).

**Weaving in ends:** It's important to weave in ends well. You can do that by sewing ends through the stitch loops on the wrong side. Begin going one way; turn and sew back. Make sure the end doesn't show on the right side.

**Reinforced yarns for socks:** There are various yarns specifically spun for socks and stockings. Generally, these contain polyamide (nylon) or polyester to make the yarn more durable. Often, these yarns are also superwash so the wool won't felt. Norwegian Spelsau yarns were previously the sock yarns of choice. Spelsau fleece has both a soft undercoat and a long, strong outercoat, which makes for an especially strong yarn. Many small mills in Norway spin and sell this type of yarn.

Both horse and goat hair have been used to reinforce sock heels and soles on "ragg socks" (the Norwegian word ragg refers to tangled goat hair). Women's hair was also used. These days, though, it's more common to use nylon-reinforced yarn for socks. However, you might not want to knit with a blended-fiber yarn. In that case, you can carry along another strong yarn or thread, for the whole sock or on the heels and toes, whichever you prefer. Finely-spun Spelsau—for example, Røros embroidery thread—is good for that purpose, but the resulting knitted fabric will be considerably stiffer. You could also use silk sewing thread or nylon buttonhole thread, available in various colors in sewing supply shops. Sewing thread is less bulky than embroidery thread, and will be less visible.

**Yarn:** The yarns listed in the patterns are recommendations. If you use another yarn, make sure you match the listed gauge so the result will be the right size.

**Necklines:** Making a neat neckline on a knitted garment can be a bit of a challenge. Here's a method you can use: Find a garment with a neckline you like. Fold a piece of paper in half and lay it on the garment. Trace the neckline—first the front, and then the back.

Make sure the tracing is symmetrical and centered. Fold the paper in half again and cut away any unevenness. Mark the center front and center back as well as the shoulder seams. Don't forget that this pattern template can be used more than once, if you like the results. There's also a sample template on page 10 you can try, if you want to.

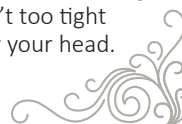
When you have lightly pressed the garment-in-progress, you should find the center front and mark it with basting thread. Lay your template on top and baste around it in a contrast-color thread. After finishing the front, do the same on the back.

Remove the paper template and machine-stitch above the basting thread, or completely inside it if you prefer. I recommend fine zigzag lines; it's also a good idea to sew two lines on each side to ensure the stitches won't slide out. You can also use vlieseline on the back. Hand-sewing or crochet will also work.

If your garment has set-in sleeves, you should also sew around the armholes. Join the shoulders by stitching or knitting them together, if you haven't already.

The next step is to pick up and knit stitches for the ribbing. Pick up and knit stitches about  $\frac{1}{4}$  in / .5 cm outside the basting line. Use a crochet hook to bring each stitch through and onto the knitting needle. At the center front, it'll be easy to see where to pick up stitches, but it's trickier at the sides. Usually, you'll pick up 3 stitches for every 4 rows in length. Work carefully.

After you've picked up stitches all around the neckline, make sure everything looks right. Trim away excess fabric following the basting and work the neckband as instructed. If you're making a doubled band, you can use it to hide the seam and cut edges. After completing a doubled neckband, sew it down on the wrong side with loose stitches so it isn't too tight when you pull the sweater over your head.







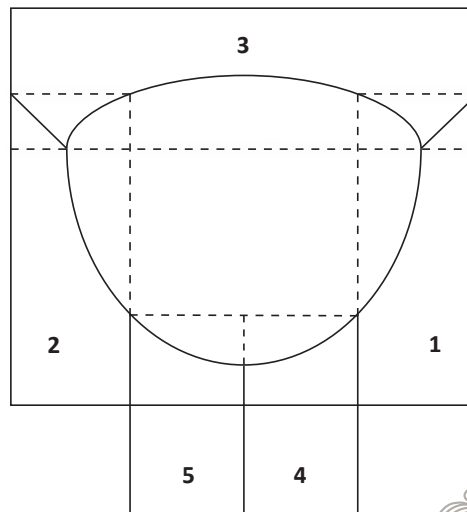
**Seaming facings/edgings:** Wash the fabric before you begin sewing it on. Begin with side pieces, marked 1 and 2. Trim a strip about 1½-2 in / 4-5 cm wide with ¾ in / 1 cm seam allowance on each side. Pin the fabric to the knitted garment and sew down on the long side furthest from the neckline, using small overhand stitches. Next, shape to the neckline and trim away any excess fabric before you fold the facing in and pin it to the edge.

Do the same on the back, marked 3. The fabric strip should be 2¾ in / 7 cm wide with ¾ in / 1 cm seam allowance on each side. Begin on the long side furthest from the neckline. Make sure the strip is long enough at the sides to cover the facing you have sewn on. Fold it in and pin. Sew the long side first. Fold in the corners and sew down firmly to the facing at the sides. Shape to the neckline and trim away any excess fabric before you fold the facing in and pin it in place.

Trim a strip about 2-2½ in / 5-6 cm wide with ¾ in / 1 cm seam allowance on each side for the bands. Pin it in place and sew down the edge, beginning at the neckline.

Lay a ribbon along the edge, all the way around; pin it down and sew it to the facing. Some prefer to place it edge to edge, while others prefer to fold the ribbon around the edge. Make sure there's enough ribbon to allow you to ease it in at each corner.

It's best to attach buttons through both the knitted fabric and the facing, and to thread the buttons through a twill tape or something similar. Sew down the ribbon to the facing.



# Triangular Shawl with Crocheted Scallop Edge

Many old shawls are edged with crocheted scallops. The first traces of crochet work in Europe date to the first half of the nineteenth century—which is about the same time that thin cotton yarn came onto the market in large quantities.

The introduction of spinning machines in the 1760s allowed for increased cotton production in America. The “spinning jenny” was one of the most important inventions of the Industrial Revolution.

When it first made its way to Scandinavia, crochet was a technique typically used by the upper class and was reserved for luxury work. In Denmark, the handcraft association, which was led by landed gentry, tried to keep farm women away from this “unnecessary and harmful handcraft.” In the meantime, in Ireland, crocheted lace with fine cotton thread brought in valuable income, desperately necessary because the country was ravaged by hunger from 1845 to 1850. Here in Norway, we’ve found a number of crocheted pieces from the middle of the nineteenth century and later.

This garter stitch shawl is knitted with a fine Spelsau yarn and is especially warm, a pleasure to lay over your shoulders on a late summer evening—or on a nippy day in autumn. It has a crocheted scallop edge inspired by the old garter stitch shawls found in the Folkenborg Museum in Eidsberg in Østfold.



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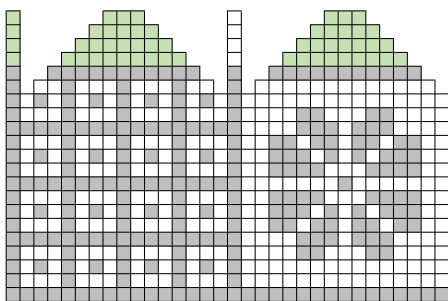
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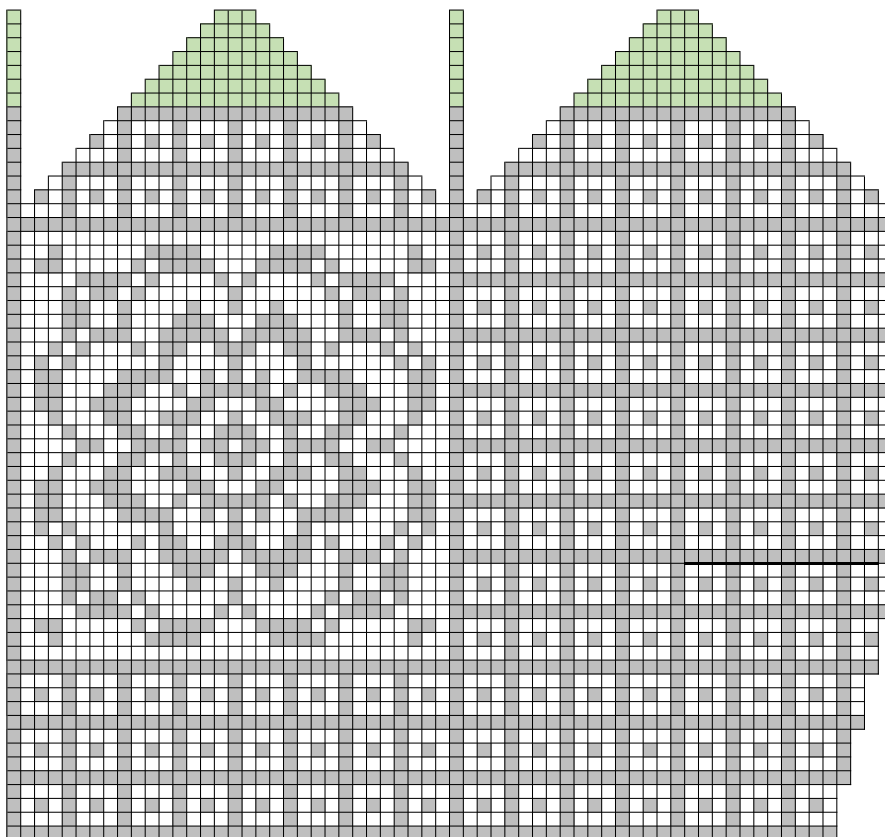
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**CHART 3: THUMB**

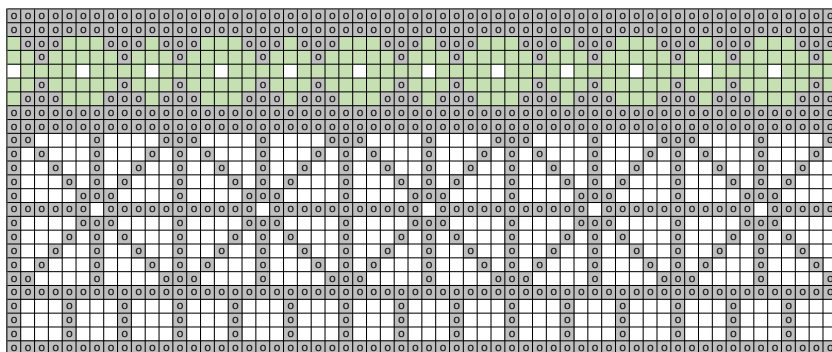






**CHART 2**



Set aside 14 sts  
for thumb

**CHART 1**



-  Color 1
-  Color 2
-  Color 3
-  Color 4

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## Children's Mittens from Valdres

The Norwegian Institute for Bunad and Folk Costumes has registered a pair of light blue and white children's mittens from Sør-Aurdal in Valdres. They are knitted with fine, soft wool yarn; there's a charming little panel on the bottom of the cuff, and the twisted ribbing above the panel means the mittens fit snugly around the wrists. This pattern is easy and can be adapted for larger sizes.



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# Hat with Snowflakes

Stars and snowflakes of all sorts have been a common motif on knitted Norwegian textiles. They are featured on both traditional textiles and garments by contemporary Norwegian designers. I chose blue and white for my snowflake hat.

The stocking cap was originally a men's hat. We've found the first traces of these caps in Phrygia, now in Turkey, in antique times. In the Roman Empire, we know that slaves were presented with a red cap when they were freed. During the French Revolution, red caps were very popular. Here in Norway, the earliest evidence of a stocking cap comes from a glass painting from 1700, but they were probably popular for a good while before then. Red stocking caps were seen in all areas of Norway, in the interior and along the coasts from south to north. Blue stocking caps were also common in many places.

Fishermen's hats had to fit well around their foreheads, and they often wore stocking caps that were then covered with a leather or wool hat. Even when southwesterers (waterproof hats) became common, many continued to wear knitted stocking caps underneath. These caps might or might not have had a pompom on top, and pompoms took various forms. Some caps were single-color, while others were patterned.

Some of these stocking caps were imported, but most were knitted by wives or sweethearts. This hat has much in common with stocking caps from Telemark.





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CHART 1

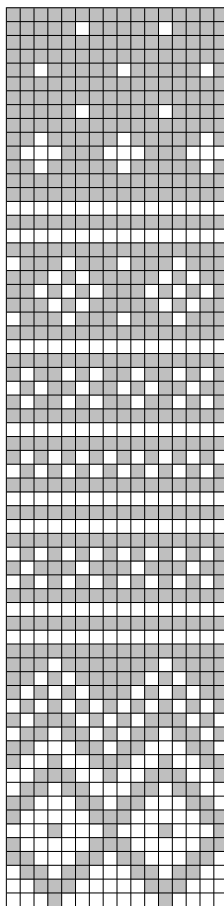
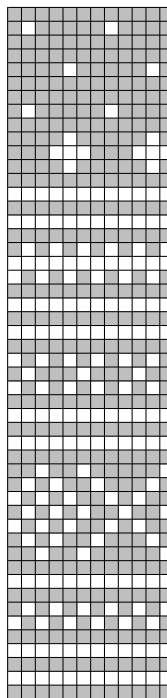
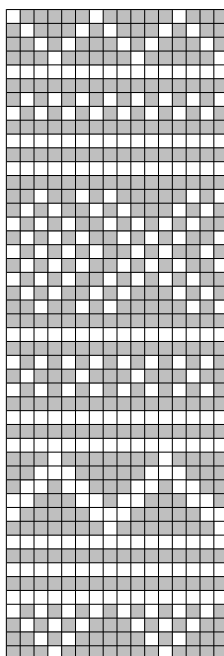


CHART 3



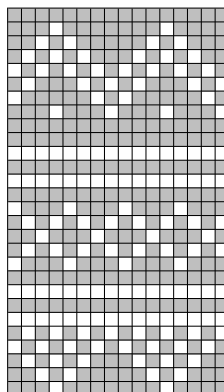
Repeat

CHART 2



- Natural White
- Sheep's Black

CHART 4



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## INSTRUCTIONS

**Skill Level:** Experienced

### SIZES

S (M, L, XL, XXL)

### FINISHED MEASUREMENTS

**Hip:** 37 $\frac{3}{4}$  (40 $\frac{1}{4}$ , 42 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 45 $\frac{3}{4}$ , 48) in / 96 (102, 108, 116, 122) cm

**Chest:** 36 $\frac{3}{4}$  (39, 41 $\frac{1}{4}$ , 43 $\frac{3}{4}$ , 46) in / 93 (99, 105, 111, 117) cm

**Waist:** 36 $\frac{3}{4}$  (39, 41 $\frac{1}{4}$ , 43 $\frac{3}{4}$ , 46) in / 93 (99, 105, 111, 117) cm

**Sleeve Length:** 18 $\frac{1}{4}$  (18 $\frac{1}{4}$ , 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 19, 19 $\frac{1}{4}$ ) in / 46 (46, 47, 48, 49) cm

**Total Length:** 26 $\frac{3}{4}$  (27 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 28 $\frac{1}{4}$ , 29 $\frac{1}{4}$ , 30) in / 68 (70, 72, 74, 76) cm

## Shawl from Karmsund

At the Karmsund Folk Museum and Haugland Museum, you'll find a traditional triangular shawl knitted with gray wool. What's special about this shawl is the finishing, which has pretty triangular points. It was a little difficult to tell whether the points were crocheted or knitted, but I let myself be inspired to knit them.

The neckline is edged with crocheted loops of "mouse teeth."

The shawl has ties at the long tips so it can be crossed over the chest and tied behind the back, as was common in the last half of the nineteenth century. This type of knitted shawl was a common everyday garment all around Norway; some are embellished with lace patterns, and others feature colorful stripes. In this case, the edging is the distinguishing feature, and this shawl is easy to knit and very warm.





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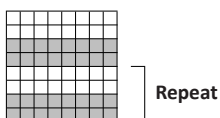
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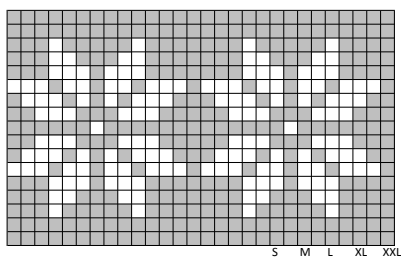


CHART 1



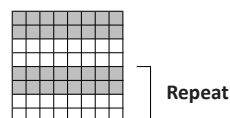
■ Light Blue-Violet Heather  
□ Natural White

CHART 2



Repeat

CHART 3



### SLEEVES

With Blue-Violet and dpn, CO 41 (45, 49, 53, 57) sts. Divide sts onto 4 dpn and join; pm for beginning of rnd. Knit 2 rnds. Make an eyelet foldline: (k2tog, yo) around. Now work star pattern following Chart 2. After star panel, work in stripes following Chart 3. *At the same time*, M1 before and after center underarm st on every 5<sup>th</sup> rnd until there are 75 sts. Next, increase on every 6<sup>th</sup> rnd until there are a total of 83 (87, 91, 95, 99) sts. Continue in stripes until sleeve measures 17 (17½, 18¼, 18½) in / 43 (44, 45, 46, 47) cm. BO. Make the second sleeve the same way.

### FINISHING

With Blue-Violet and circular, pick up and knit sts around neck (use a crochet hook to pick up sts if necessary). Purl 1 rnd, knit 4 rnds, purl 1 rnd (foldline), knit 4 rnds. BO (make sure bind-off is not too tight).

Attach sleeves with RS facing and mattress st. Fold edging on sleeve cuffs at eyelet rnd and sew down on WS. Weave in all ends neatly on WS. Gently steam press sweater under a damp pressing cloth.



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## NINA GRANLUND SÆTHER

has captivated knitters intrigued by the textile history of Norway with her previous books—deep dives into the rich pattern traditions for both mittens and socks, and their variations in all regions of the countryside. In this collection, she expands the scope of her work to knitwear of all kinds—shawls, sweaters, cardigans, hats, and more.

With the author's trademark attention to detail and patience for skilled reconstruction of patterning, based on both archival photographs and examples preserved in museum collections, knitters are guided through the origins of dozens of projects. Within you'll find a comprehensive selection of adaptable patterns for women and men in a range of sizes, using techniques including colorwork, relief stitch, open-work, and cabling.

A detailed instructional section explains how to achieve the perfect neckline, heels and heel flaps, thumbs, purl braids, and seaming, plus full-color photographs and step-by-step instructions, give every knitter the tools they need to explore the inspired beauty of Scandinavian patternwork for themselves.



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