

A woman with long blonde hair is wearing a purple knitted sweater with a geometric pattern. She is also wearing a beaded necklace and a black bracelet. The sweater has a V-neckline and short sleeves. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Vivian Høxbro

TRADITIONAL DANISH SWEATERS

200 Stars and Other Classic Motifs from Historic Sweaters

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FOREWORD

A number of years ago, I visited Falster Minder Museum in Nykøbing, Denmark for the Sunday Weekly magazine. Birgit Schytt, the textile curator, opened drawer after drawer containing knitted sweaters (called “night sweaters”) from nineteenth-century women’s traditional wardrobes, which she clearly venerated. All the sweaters were single-color—many green, some red, and a few blue or black. Most were knitted with only knit and purl stitches, while others featured traveling stitches. They were quite felted and torn, but they all shared a fantastic wealth of patterns.

I felt that messages to me flew out of the drawers, both from the sweaters and from the people who had knitted them, and I was deeply moved. Think of the women who, almost 200 years ago, had designed these unbelievable patterns! The knitters of the sweaters came alive for me. I sensed that some had knitted out of duty, some for love of handwork. On some of the sweaters, the patterns were beautifully formed; others were less skillfully worked. Some of the patterns were perfectly designed, others asymmetrical and imprecise in their construction. What more could these sweaters tell us?

I later had the opportunity to visit the Lolland-Falster Museum every Thursday for more than a year. After that, I visited several other museums in Denmark—on Zealand (Hillerød and Kalundborg), Fyn (Odense), and Jutland (Ribe, Varde, Herning and Holstebro). I studied sweater after sweater. I photographed, sketched, and knitted all the motifs. This led to the documentation of 87 complete

knitted night sweaters, as well as a number of sleeves and front pieces (*brystduge*). In the course of my research, I was greatly privileged to be able to examine at least half of the preserved Danish night sweaters. Most of the preserved sweaters are stored on Falster (where I live) and Lolland, and they are the backbone of this book.

These sweaters, which our great- and great-great great grandmothers wore, can, with a few small adjustments, be worn with style today. This book includes patterns for some of the old sweaters in contemporary sizing. Stars were a fashionable motif in nineteenth-century knitting, and star designs embellish the new sweaters in this book. You’ll also find a multitude of star motifs to choose from. I hope the traditional patterns will inspire you to try new designs!

Traditional night sweaters are so beautiful and the techniques so sophisticated—they deserve notice, and this book is intended to pay tribute to them. It’s important to remember that our past is what makes us who we are; and for those of us who love knitting, it enriches our work every time we learn something new about knitting history.

Best wishes,



NIGHT SWEATER PORTRAITS

In this section of the book, you'll find portraits of some of the many original night sweaters which can be found preserved in our Danish museums. Most of them are carefully stored away and not available to everyone, but here you can see them together with a short summary of their characteristics.

C = Circumference

TL = Total length

SL = Sleeve length (from top of sleeve to bottom of cuff)

At each museum, the sweaters have been catalogued with unique numbers. These museum numbers are listed alongside the picture of each sweater, and referenced throughout the book.

As might be expected, the old sweaters were photographed under all kinds of light conditions. However, I think these small "portraits" will give an idea of how much these sweaters varied, even though they also have many similarities to each other. I especially want to show how lovely they are and how cleverly they were made.



200 PATTERNS FROM HISTORIC SWEATERS

200-YEAR-OLD WOMEN'S SWEATERS

The sweaters in this book are from the 19th century: “night sweaters,” as they were once called, which have roots deep in Danish history. Yes, they are single-color—minimalist, you might say, with quite artfully designed relief patterns. You could also find them in south Sweden (where these garments are referred to as *spedetröjor*) and in Norway—both areas that were considered Danish territory at one time or another, where women knitted sweaters as part of traditional folk dress. Similar sweaters were worn by men, at least up to the beginning of the 19th century, but I have concentrated only on women’s sweaters.

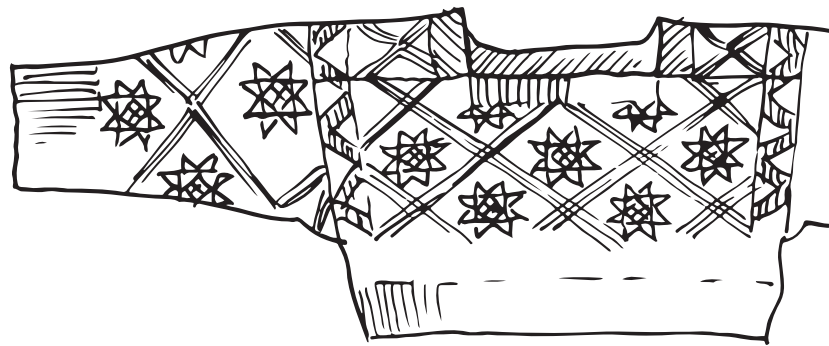
Single-color women’s sweaters like these, whether Danish, Norwegian, or Swedish, went out of fashion at the end of the 19th century. They were discarded, deconstructed so the materials could be reused, or, in the best case, forgotten but conserved in our museums.

Beautiful, multicolored patterned sweaters from the Shetland Islands, the Faroes, Norway, Sweden, and Finland are easily recognizable. Most of them were originally men’s sweaters, and were often lavishly embellished with motifs. In Denmark, we’ve found one sweater with multicolored knitting, specifically from Sejerø, dating from 1908—and it was a man’s sweater, too.

KNITTED SWEATERS IN OTHER SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES

Sweaters from the Shetland Islands use colors in a very distinctive way, inspired by the location and landscapes. In Norway, the traditional knitted sweater (*koften*) has survived, and, originally part of men’s traditional folk costumes, it has become a common everyday sweater for both men and women. It is, quite simply, a living part of contemporary international style, as well as a signifier of Norwegian national identity—just think of the lice sweater (*lusekofte*).

What connects these sweater styles is that traditional pattern motifs were used and reused, redesigned and



referenced and given new life. Now they’re recognized all over the knitting world, while Danish traditional sweaters have been consigned to oblivion—not least because Danish people simply stopped wearing them. I hope to remedy that situation with this book!

PATTERN TREASURES AT MUSEUMS

When night sweaters disappeared from the Danish sartorial landscape, their patterns did also. I had no luck finding written or sketched patterns for them from the time period when they were knitted and worn. However, more than 150 sweaters and some knitted sleeves have been preserved in Danish museums. In Mariann Ploug’s book, *Knitted Night Sweaters in Danish Museums* (1979), approximately 136 items are listed. The same book lists 37 sweaters from museums on Lolland and Falster, but by the time I visited them, these museums had a total of 60 complete sweaters. That means 23 new items have been acquired since 1979, and with any luck the situation is the same in other museums around the country.

The sweaters, now museum items, are fragile, and not many museums put them on display. They typically end up packed in acid-free paper in cardboard boxes, tucked away in storage areas. If you have the opportunity, you can see how they were knitted—how fine and light the yarn was, how thin the needles must have been, and how complex the designs can get. The patterns have common features as well as local influences, but the clearest shared feature

is the rich designs. Danish knitters should be proud of this heritage, which deserves our admiration.

They are, nevertheless, not available for everyone to see, which is one of the reasons I wrote this book. Contemporary knitters deserve to have the fine art of our foremothers' knitting recognized and available to be appreciated—this book offers a glimpse into our own past.

200 PATTERNS

I have collected 200 patterns that were used for Danish night sweaters, primarily from Falster and Lolland. They are shown on pages 78-139 as knitted samples with corresponding charts, grouped according to where they appeared—as edges, horizontal and vertical panels, background patterns, or as decorative stars.

KNITTING INSTRUCTIONS

In this book, you'll also find five traditional sweater patterns reconstructed with contemporary sizing, plus four new sweaters as well as one top and one stole designed with traditional design principles in mind—complete pattern instructions are included for all of them.

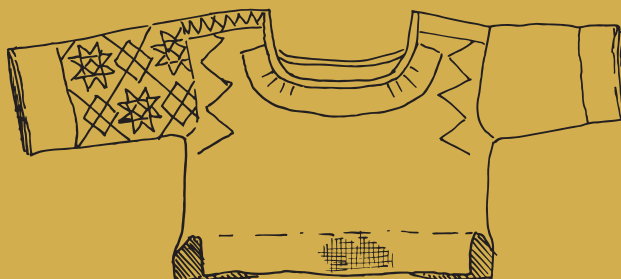
Specific knitting techniques used for the original sweaters are explained on pages 60-77. Additional knitting help, abbreviations, and a chart symbol key are provided at the end of the book.

This book is primarily a pattern and knitting book. I am not a historian; I've worked all my life as a designer and pattern writer for hand knitters. However, I've included a little knitting history, found in various sources I discovered as I worked on this book.

Read the sections in any order you like. Use the motifs for your own designs. And knit traditional Danish sweaters of your own!

INTRODUCTION

LEESTRUP SWEATER



Origin: Leestrup, Zealand.
Private ownership.

Measurements: C: 33 in / 84 cm; TL: 14¼ in / 36 cm; SL: 8 in / 20.5 cm.

Color: Red with silk ribbons.

Knitting gauge: 36 sts and 60 rows = 4 x 4 in / 10 x 10 cm.

Patterns: Edge patterns and vertical panels on the body. The shoulder pieces are knitted together with the shoulders stitches from back and front. Traveling stitch and star motifs on the sleeves.



WHAT A NIGHT SWEATER LOOKS LIKE

DAMASK PATTERNS

I have described what night sweaters worn by peasants looked like, but naturally there are many exceptions to the general rule. Knitted night sweaters worn by most people were single-color and usually decorated with ingenious patterns. They were knitted with white wool yarn and then dyed. A characteristic common to all of them was that they were knitted with patterns using knit and purl stitches, or damask knitting, which, as the name implies, was inspired by damask weaving. That weaving technique, similar to knit-and-purl knitted designs, is characterized by its relief work. However, some sweaters had only a few patterns.



Undyed sleeve from South Falster, probably from the end of the 1700s (FMN 1108).



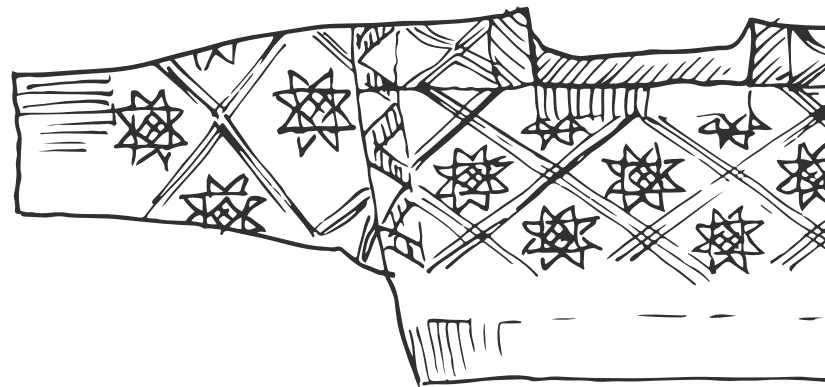
Undyed sweater with a few very unusual and complex patterns (FMN T013).

CONSTRUCTION

A night sweater most likely began with the sleeves, which were typically knitted from the cuff up. An edging was knitted first and then, most often, followed by traveling stitch and star motifs. The pattern repeats on many of the sweaters became wider and higher as they were increased, so there were no visible increases along a “sleeve seam.”

The body was knitted from the bottom up and begun with edge pieces for the front and back, often in a block pattern or ribbing, knitted back and forth on two needles. After that, the two edges were joined and the body was then knitted in the round on anywhere between six and nine double-pointed needles. At the underarm, the piece was divided and the front and back worked separately, back and forth. The front and back necklines were sometimes straight across, sometimes rounded. The shoulders were worked straight up, one at a time and finished by joining with three-needle bind-off. Lastly, the sleeves were sewn in.

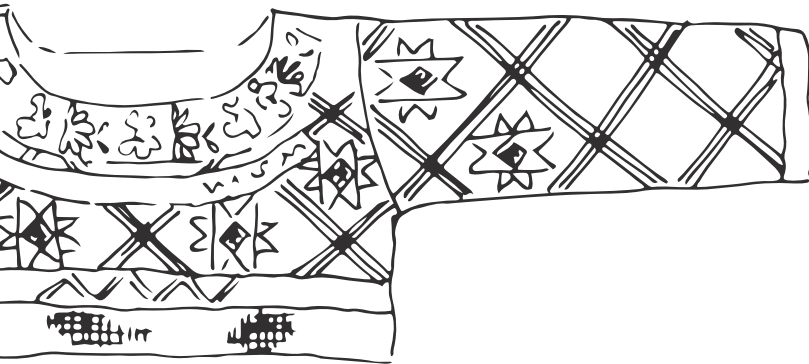
The Falster “shoulder seam” most often sat not directly on the shoulders, but somewhat forward. See, for example, this sweater from Karleby on Falster.



A sweater from Karleby. Here you can see how the front ends at the neck with a seam. (FMN 845/1914).



Here you can clearly see how the neckline continues out into the “shoulder seam” (FMN 845/1914).

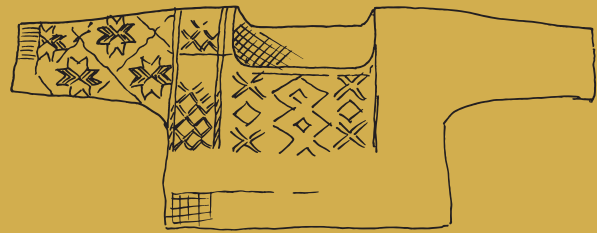


This sweater is 10 in / 25.5 cm long (shorter than a letter-sized piece of paper); the width is 11½ in / 29 cm (the same length as a letter-sized piece of paper).

Most of the sweaters that have been preserved are short (especially those from the beginning of the 19th century), and they’re all very small by today’s standards. The length varies from 9 to 13 in / 23 to 33 cm, and the width from 11¾ to 17¾ in / 30 to 45 cm. The length of the sleeves varies from three-quarters (the majority of the sweaters) to full arm length. Not many of today’s adult women could shimmy their way into one of these sweaters. For the women of that time, however, they were quite practical. The chest was kept warm, and the sweaters could be quickly pushed up over the breast when women needed to breastfeed—not inconsequential for women who were in a constant cycle of giving birth and breastfeeding. People were also smaller in the past; the food was not as rich or varied as it is today.

DANISH NIGHT SWEATERS

SEATTLE SWEATER



Origin: Shoulder seams set at the front, which led me to immediately believe that the sweater was brought to the USA from Falster, Denmark.

Museum number: 2004.13.47.

Conserved in: Nordic Heritage Museum, Seattle, USA.

Measurements: C: 30¾ in / 78 cm; TL: 12¾ in / 32 cm; SL: 8¾ in / 22.5 cm

Color: Green.

Knitting gauge: 38 sts x 70 rows = 4 x 4 in / 10 x 10 cm.

Patterns: Vertical panels and edge patterns on the body. Traveling stitch and star motifs and edge patterns on the sleeves.



REGIONAL DISTINCTIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

Among all the sweaters I researched, 45 came from Falster [1 in Seattle, USA, 11 from Lolland, 17 from various places in Zealand (Sjælland), 5 from Fyn, and 5 from Jutland (Jylland)—as well as 4 with unknown origin].

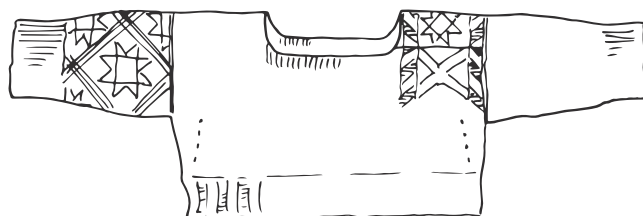
The little information available about any individual sweater usually focuses more on who donated the sweater to the museum than who owned or knitted it. I decided to list the place where a sweater was donated as “place of donation,” unless otherwise stated.

In several parts of the country, very few sweaters have been preserved. There is so little basic information that it would be difficult to determine any regional characteristics. On Lolland-Falster, on the other hand, so many sweaters have been saved that it’s possible to make certain generalizations. Still, no two sweaters are the same.

CHARACTERISTICS OF NIGHT SWEATERS FROM NORTH FALSTER

Here are what these night sweaters can reveal about the knitting process.

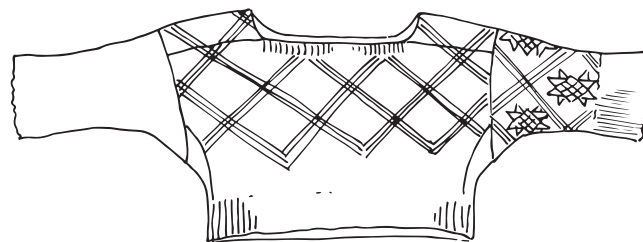
Body: On a typical sweater from the north part of Falster, a braid row is worked immediately after the cast-on (see page 68) and then a “pole” panel (that is, ribbing, most often knit 2, purl 2) was worked back and forth. The two edges were overlapped (see page 77), and the garment then continued in the round in stockinette approximately up to the underarms, sometimes with “random” increases for shaping. After that, the pattern, always symmetrical, is worked. A traveling stitch pattern appears on many of the Falster sweaters, so we can plausibly say it’s a Falster specialty (it’s seen in other areas, too, but much less often). Narrow vertical panels run up the sides and then there’s typically a wide vertical traveling-stitch-and-star panel, ending with a narrow vertical panel and stockinette at the



*A typical sweater from Falster with traveling stitches.
(FMN T071/1913).*

center of the body. The neckline is often squared and made with a narrow ribbing.

The shoulders on the back are longer than the shoulder sections on the front. The shoulders are joined with three-needle bind-off—but not up on the shoulders. Many “shoulder seams” are aligned with the bind-off for the front neck. These sweaters have a small rounding of the front neck and “shoulder seams” directly above the rounding. Perhaps it was considered quite “smart.” I imagine the



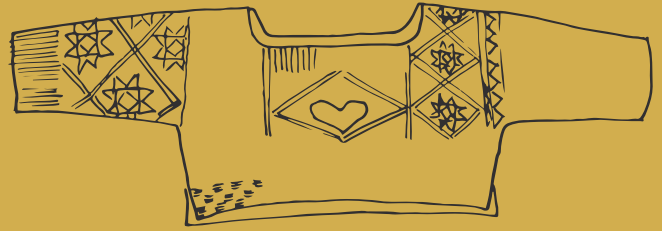
*Shoulder seams align from the front of neck
(MLF 0521 x 001, page 25).*

sleeves were worked first, and then the lower part of the body up to the division of back and front at the under-arms. The front was completed next, and then the back was worked, with the shoulder sections adjusted to be long enough so the sleeves fit into the armholes well.



Birthe Nielsdatter from Hillestrup, Falster, dressed to the nines. Note that only the tops of the night sweater's sleeves are visible. Probably painted by Johannes Zehngraf. Falster's Memories, Museum Lolland-Falster.

STUBBEKØBING SWEATER



Origin: Karlsfeldt, Stubbekøbing, Falster.
Museum number: FMN 3531a/1940.
Conserved in: Museum Lolland-Falster.

Measurements: C: 29¼ in / 74 cm; TL: 9 in / 23 cm; SL: 7 in / 18 cm.

Color: Red.

Knitting gauge: 51 sts and approx. 90 rnds = 4 x 4 in / 10 x 10 cm.

Patterns: A heart at the center front, vertical traveling stitch and star motifs; edge stitch patterning on the body. Traveling stitch and star motifs and edge patterns on the sleeves.



DANISH NIGHT SWEATERS

KNITTING HISTORY

Knitting is relatively new compared to handcrafts like sewing and weaving—only about a thousand years old. We don't know where it originated. There isn't much knowledge about its origins but there are some clues from a few preserved items.

IN EUROPE

The supposition that knitting might have come to Spain via Arabic influence is supported by knitted silk pillows with which the Spanish king Ferdinand de la Cerda was buried in 1275. The pillows are knitted at a gauge of 80 stitches in 4 in / 10 cm. They have Islamic design elements, so one might imagine that they were knitted by a very skillful Arabic knitter. From there, knitted handwork probably continued its wandering up through Europe.

It wasn't long before European bishops began wearing knitted liturgical gloves. These gloves were very artfully worked. The gloves in the picture below were probably from Spain, but more of this type of glove can be found in several European museums.



Liturgical gloves from the sixteenth century, knitted with red silk yarn and gold thread. The top of the hand has about 85 stitches across the front, for a total of 170 sts around, which is an exceedingly fine gauge. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

On several altarpieces, pictures of the Madonna show her not only knitting, but knitting in the round, a concept worth noting. We can conclude that knowledge of circular knitting was already common around the middle of the 14th century, as these paintings show.

In northern Europe, the oldest knitting finds are from Schleswig around 1150. A fragment of a wool mitten or glove in multicolored knitting (white, red, and blue) was found in a grave from about 1300 in Estonia.

The Madonna of Tommaso da Modena, 1325-79.



The altarpiece was painted in about 1345. Note the Madonna knitting in the round.

Pinoteca Nazionale di Bologna (The National Art Gallery of Bologna), Bologna, Italy.

KNITTING GUILDS

Eventually knitting became a profession with master teachers. By 1268, the first guild had been established in Paris. Later, journeymen in Spain, Italy, and Germany organized into guilds and churches, and the nobility could order knitted goods from these master knitters.

Knitting was considered men's work and acquired esteem. After a long training period of 6-7 years, their education was concluded with a professional piece. Once these pieces were approved by the guild's master, the student had completed his training. The Victoria and Albert Museum in London has one such professional piece, a carpet from Strasbourg dated 1781. It was knitted with very fine needles (perhaps on a frame) with many colors, and it's very detailed and rich with motifs.

ELASTIC STOCKINGS

One of the reasons that knitted clothing became so popular was because, in contrast to sewn stockings, knitted stockings were flexible and elastic—which constituted a revolutionary development, for stockings.

At the same time as men's knee breeches came into fashion in the 16th century, knitted stockings also became stylish—or perhaps trousers became shorter in order to show off the stockings. And they were certainly worth showing off, because they were not only attractive but also unbelievably expensive. For example, the fashion-conscious King Erik XIV (1533-77) of Sweden imported silk stockings. The stockings cost him as much as his chamber servants earned in a year (which also tells us how bad conditions were for chamber servants). The cost meant that the stockings were repaired even if owned by men of noble descent.

Elizabeth I, Queen of England from 1558 to 1603, is likely the first woman to have worn knitted stockings. It is worth noting that she made her influence felt so powerfully that knitting became women's work.

(From *Gyldendals Sewing and Knitting Book*, 1940).

KNITTED HANDWORK

KRAGHAVE SWEATER



Origin: Kraghave, Falster
Museum number: FMN 2792/1930.
Conserved in: Museum Lolland-Falster.

Measurements: C: 30¼ in / 77 cm; TL: 11 in / 28 cm; SL: 7 in / 18 cm.

Color: Black.

Knitting gauge: 52 sts and 80 rows = 4 x 4 in / 10 x 10 cm.

Patterns: Traveling stitch and edge patterns on the body and sleeves.



THREE KNITTING METHODS

You can find knitting in many, many places around the world, but knitting methods differ. In Denmark, for the most part, we all knit with the yarn held over the index finger of the left hand: left-hand knitting (L-knitting). In many places, this method is called the “continental method.”

Danish women (at least those of us who are a little older), learned L-knitting thanks to Emilie West (1844-1907). She wrote *The Guidebook to Methodical Instruction in Women's Handwork* in 1889. It was immediately adopted by the schools and so we all learned to knit the same way. It worked so we didn't consider other methods. Because we all knit the same way, discussions about knitting were easier.

But what was the actual situation in the 19th century? From Eilert Sundt, a Norwegian folk life researcher, we find out that there were three different methods for knitting, the current left-hand style and two right-hand methods. He saw all three knitting methods demonstrated at a rectory, by both the priest's wife and daughter, and by a peasant girl who worked there. They each had their own way of holding the yarn and needles. Sundt described the three methods as follows:

1. A RIGHT-HAND METHOD (R-KNITTING)

The servant girl knitted a stitch this way:

She held the lower end of the knitting needle and inserted the tip into the stitch, let go of the needle, and lifted her arm and hand up to bring the yarn around the tip.
(From E. Sundt, 1867).



R-knitting with the yarn in the right hand and a stitch in progress.



Girl from Refsnæs at Kalundborg. She is knitting with the R-knitting method with a stitch in progress. Drawing by Frederik Christian Lund (1826-1901).

2. ANOTHER RIGHT-HAND METHOD (R-KNITTING, THE ENGLISH WAY)

The priest's wife knitting a stitch by the second method:

She held the needle high up and didn't release her hold. With the yarn lying on the index finger of the right hand, she threw it around the needle tip using only the movement of her fingers.

(From E. Sundt, 1867).



R-knitting with the yarn in the right hand, with the yarn remaining in the hand so that one stitch can be knitted after the other without dropping the work.

3. A LEFT-HAND METHOD (L-KNITTING)

The priest's daughter knitted a stitch the third way:

She held the needles as for the previous method but had the yarn lying over the left-hand index finger. She inserted the needle tip through the stitch, caught the yarn from above and then brought it down and through to complete the stitch. (From E. Sundt, 1867).



L-knitting with the yarn over the index finger of the left hand and stitches worked one after the other.



Painting by Julius Exner: An old sailor knitting a stocking—and it looks like he is using this second method, also called R-knitting or the English method. Exhibited at the Charlottenborg Spring Exhibition in 1898. Photographed in connection with the Vilh. Tille.



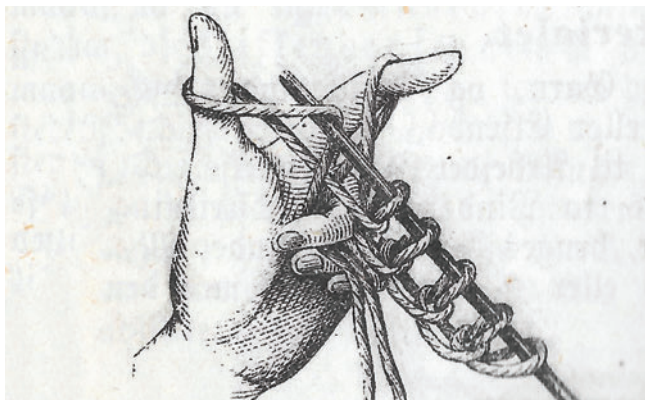
Ane Margrete Hansen (born 1854), Haulund, knitting with the yarn over the left hand's index finger. From the book Old Springs. (E. T. Kristensen 1981.) Danish Folk Memories at the Royal Library.

CAST-ONS

We can't say with any certainty how the stitches were cast on traditional night sweaters. What we can see is the slant of the cast-on loops. Most point up towards the right, like this: ///.

LONG-TAIL CAST-ON ///

This method uses one needle. Calculate how much yarn will be needed for the cast-on and measure the same amount for the length of the yarn end.



Hold the yarn in the left hand with a long yarn end around the thumb and the working yarn around the index finger. Hold the right needle's stitch(es) with the index finger. Insert the needle from below and then up into the thumb loop, catch the yarn on the index finger from above and bring it down through the thumb loop. Release the loop on the thumb and bring the yarn end through.
There is now 1 more stitch on the needle.

Repeat * to * until you have the desired number of stitches.

LOOP CAST-ON ///

This method uses one needle. The first row on this method is quite troublesome, but on the other hand you can control the stitch count along the way. Begin with the end of the yarn. You don't need to calculate a yarn amount.

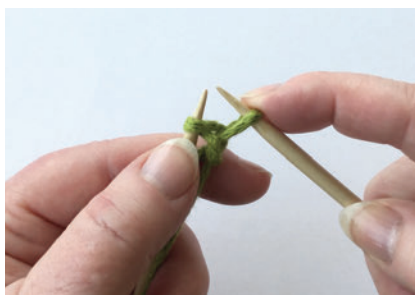


Hold the needle with the beginning stitch(es) in your left hand and wrap the working yarn around the needle clockwise. Knit 1 knit in each "wrap."
TIP: You can also wrap counterclockwise but then you should knit each stitch through the back loop on the first row.

The loop cast-on after 1 row of knitting.

KNITTED CAST-ON (K-CO) \\\

This method takes two needles. Begin with the end of the yarn. You don't need to calculate a yarn amount.



Hold the needle with the beginning stitch(es) in your left hand and the free needle in your right hand. *Knit the previous stitch, but leave the previous stitch on the left needle.



Slightly elongate the new stitch, and place it in a twisted position over the left-hand needle. There is now one more stitch on the needle. Leave the right needle in the stitch and tighten yarn*.



Repeat * to * until you have the desired number of stitches.

GERMAN TWISTED OR OLD NORWEGIAN CAST-ON ///

This method uses one needle. Calculate how much yarn will be needed for the cast-on and measure the same amount for the length of the yarn end.



*Hold the needle as for the long-tail cast-on. Insert the needle below the entire thumb loop.



Bring the needle up and then down into the thumb loop, at the same time, forming an eyelet on the thumb so the loop's back-most strand comes through.



Now shift the needle up around the front strand on the index finger loop and bring the yarn down through the thumb eyelet loop. Release the loop and tighten yarn ends*.



Repeat * to * until you have the desired number of stitches.

STARS

There are stars on 54 of the 87 sweaters I examined, for a total of 34 distinct star designs. One of the sweaters (LFS 7007) even sports 5 different stars (the North Ørslev sweater on page 29). It wouldn't be wrong to say that stars are the most popular motifs for night sweaters. Most of them are presented on the following pages.

CLASSIC STARS

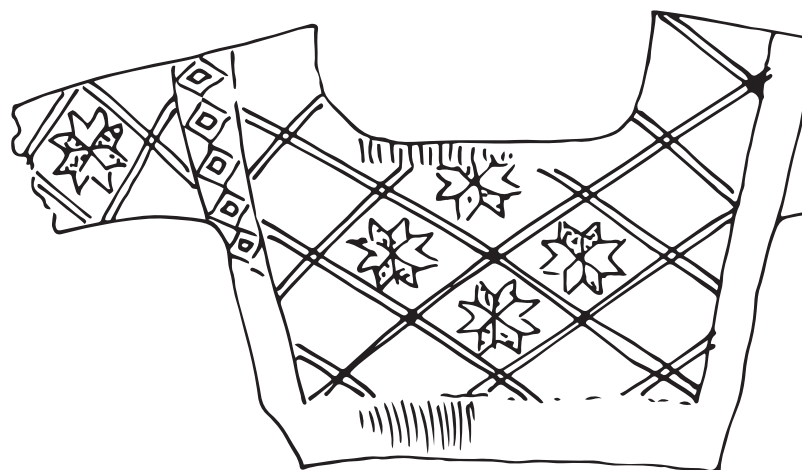
The star most often seen is the absolutely classic simple star with 8 points, knitted in reverse stockinette against a stockinette background and divided by a vertical stockinette or twisted stitch. See, for example, S-1. In general, stars are worked in several sizes on each sweater.

OTHER STARS

Among the many star variations is one with seed stitch diagonal lines (S-9), where two tips (one on each side) point downwards, so the star has what I think of as a wistful expression. This pattern can be found consistently worked over a whole sweater, so we know for sure it wasn't error. There are stars with a purl diamond at the center (S-13) or with 4 seed stitch and 4 purl stitch points (S-11), as on the sweater from Moseby on Falster (LFS 16285) to the right. There are stars with ingenious traveling stitches (S-20 through S-38); many are exquisite with their harmonious designs, such as S-24 from the Seattle sweater (page 23). Finally, some of the sweaters show unusual techniques, as in S-27 and S-28, with a horizontal stockinette stitch (see page 76). I have previously only seen this technique used in Estonia.

TALL STARS

Some of the sweaters have tall, elongated stars. One of these is a sweater from Aastrup on Falster with lovely, tall stars within a netting of traveling stitches centered on the sleeves—for examples, see S-37 and S-38. The stars on the Eskilstrup sweater (pattern instructions on page

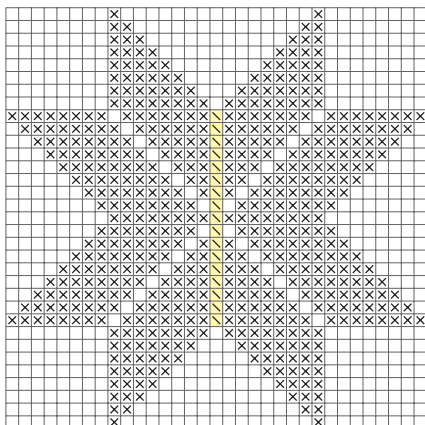


150) are also tall, and worked in reverse stockinette and vertical twisted stitches. Finally, the Lolland sweater LFS 23885a (page 47) has very harmonic, perfectly squared stars which, on closer examination, have more rows than stitches (see S-17 and S-18). In stockinette/damask knitting, a square consists of more rows than stitches, which is the reason why most of the stars are actually wider than they are high.

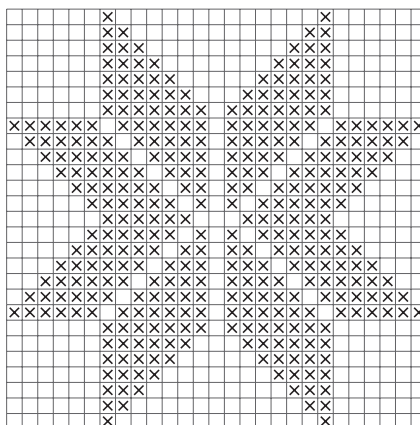
STAR SYMBOLISM

Stars are an entire world to themselves. They're lovely shapes, and in the context of handworked motifs, they're simple and easy to construct. Stars are Christian symbols, of course; a star led the three wise men from the East to the stable where they found Mary and Jesus. But the use of star symbols here also has an element of superstition and serves to provide protection. Night sweaters fitted tightly on the body and were worn day and night, so it must have seemed only natural to knit in protective symbols. I've also been told that the stars are holes in the night sky which lead directly to Heaven. What could be better?

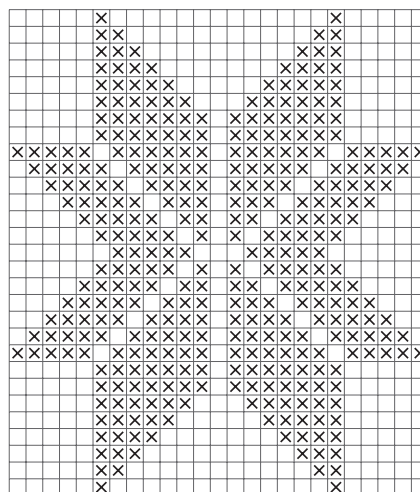
S-1, 33 sts x 33 rows/rnds.



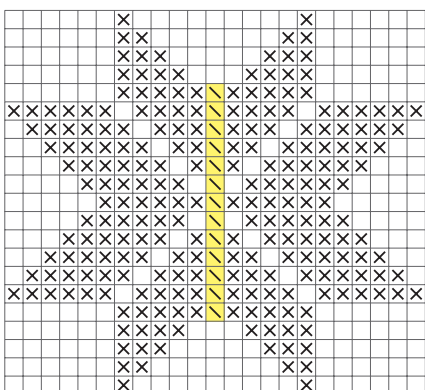
S-2, 27 sts x 27 rows/rnds.



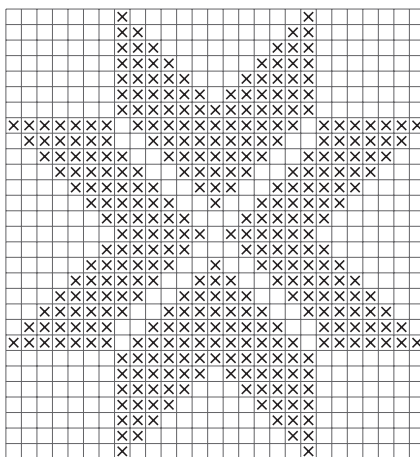
S-3, 25 sts x 29 rows/rnds.



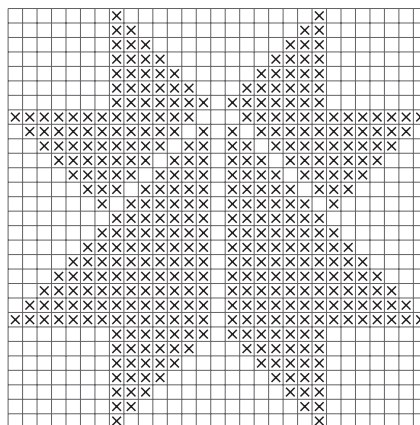
S-4, 23 sts x 21 rows/rnds.



S-5, 27 sts x 29 rows/rnds.



S-6, 29 sts x 29 rows/rnds.

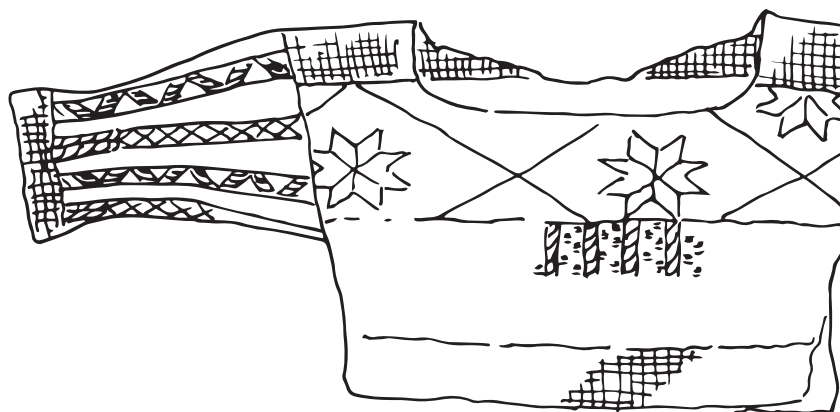


VERTICAL PANELS

Vertical panels often flanked the vertical traveling stitch and star motifs on the body and, in many instances, along the armholes. Sometimes these panels extended all the way down to the lower edge as a sort of side seam or perhaps just as a narrow panel to separate the gusset from the back/front pieces.

Quite a few of the patterns were worked with only knit and purl stitches, while others had more complex traveling stitch patterns, such as V-45 and V-46. Some of the sweaters featured several vertical panels side by side. The sweater from North Ørslev (LFS 7007, page 29) is an absolute masterpiece. Still others repeated the vertical panels up to the underarms, as on the sweater to the right from South Aslev (FMN 1025a).

NOTE: When the twisted knit or traveling stitches are symmetrically arranged (V-59, for instance), I have chosen to work the knits as regular knits and not twisted—even if the stitches are twisted on the original sweater.

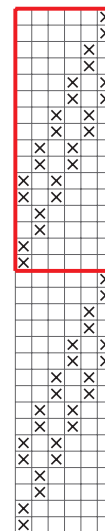
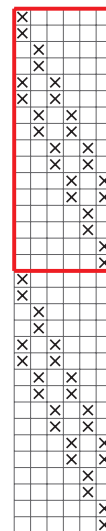
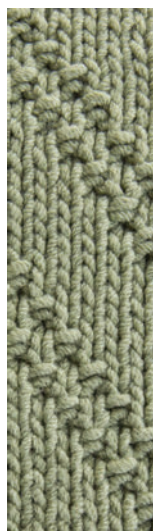


REPEATS

The stitches and rows/rounds surrounded by a red frame can be repeated in height. If you want to repeat them across the width, usually you'll need to add one or more stitches between the vertical panels to separate them.

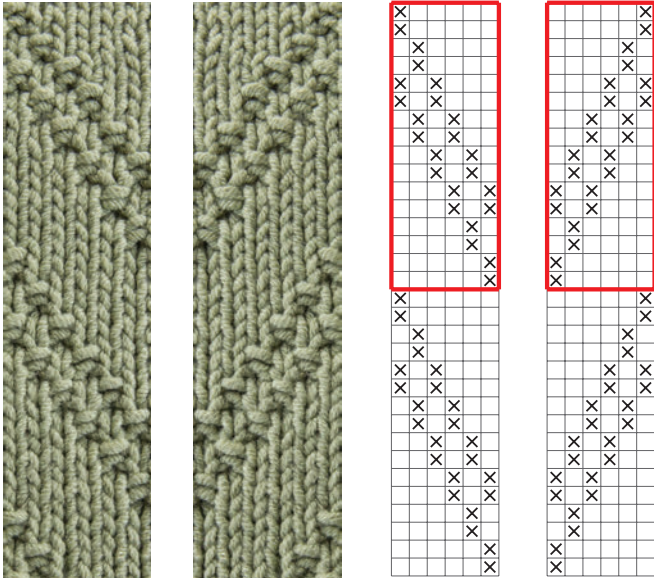
V-1 and V-2

Repeat: 6 sts x 16 rows/rnds.



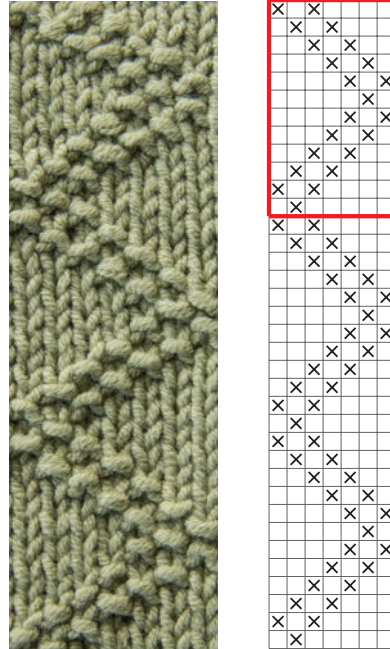
V-3 and V-4

Repeat: 6 sts x 16 rows/rnds.



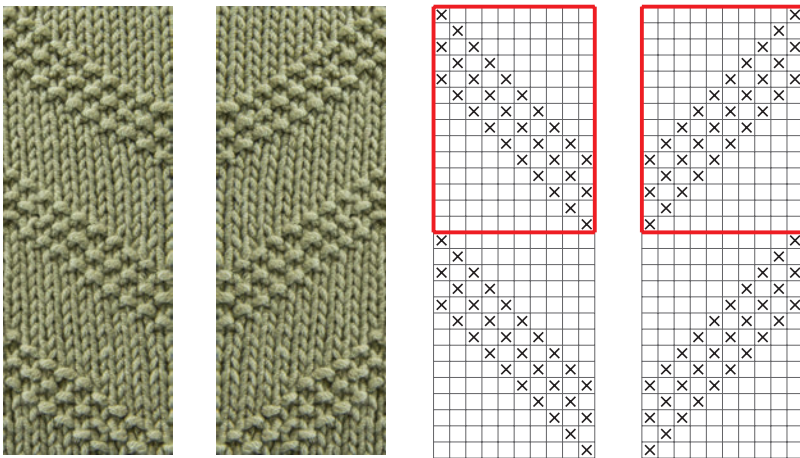
V-5

Repeat: 7 sts x 12 rows/rnds.



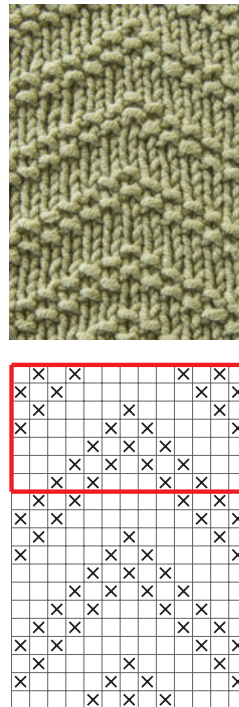
V-6 and V-7

Repeat: 10 sts x 14 rows/rnds.



V-8

Repeat: 13 sts x 7 rows/rnds.



MAIN PATTERNS

A main pattern is, as the phrase suggests, an overall design. These patterns usually consist of a diagonal netting of traveling stitch lines, often surrounding knitted stars.

TRAVELING STITCH AND STAR MOTIFS

Patterns with a diamond-shaped netting of traveling stitches combined with stars appear on both the body and sleeves of garments from around the country—as well as on the oldest knitted silk night shirts. One example is this sweater from Herning (20960, pages 26 and 27).

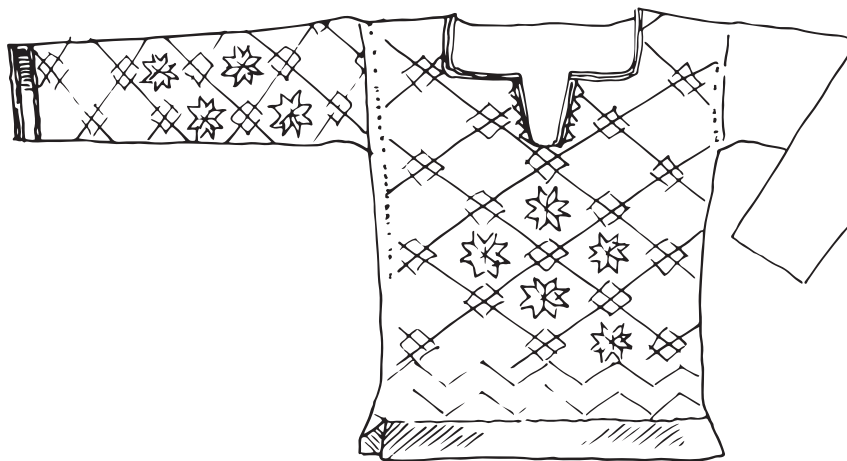
Beloved children have many names, as we say in Denmark, and it's no different with this type of pattern. It is called a *drejlstrikning* (“drill knitting”—likely named after drill weave, with its distinctive diagonal pattern lines) pattern in the Holbæk region, *bunden* (also, *bundet* or *strikket*) *i stjerner* (knitted in stars) in Sorø; in the Hedebo region, these patterns are known as *gramaser*, and on Drejø, they are called *krammønstre* (small patterns). In this book, we refer to them as traveling stitch and star patterns.

TRAVELING STITCHES

On many sweaters, the stars are omitted so the traveling stitches form the netting. I call these patterns traveling stitch designs. The traveling stitches are formed by single, double, or triple stitch lines with 1, 2, or 3 purl stitches or with seed stitch lines. Often the holes or diamonds between the traveling stitches are larger on the body than on the sleeves.

INCREASING WITHIN THE PATTERN

On the sleeves, traveling stitch and star patterns are formed such that the increases can be incorporated into the pattern. Both traveling stitches and stars are simply enlarged by the increases as they go up the sleeves. Increases



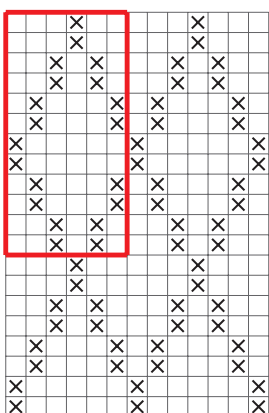
were not added as we do now, up the underarm seam on every 4th or 6th row/round. No, two stitches are increased per traveling stitch line and two stitches per star and, correspondingly, an extra pair of rows are automatically added for each pattern repeat. It's complicated to describe this in a pattern and even more difficult in a chart, but all at once it's very logical if you're looking at your work on your needles.

REPEATS AND SLEEVES

On the traveling stitch and star charts shown here, the repeats are, as usual, framed in red, divided with a vertical dotted line to illustrate how the stitches should be divided over the knitting needles if the pattern is to be used for the sleeves. For a sleeve, when working in the round, place one half of the repeat on Needle 1 (that is, from the red vertical line on the right side of the chart to the dotted line). Place the rest of the repeat on Needle 2. Divide the remaining stitches the same way over Needles 3 and 4.

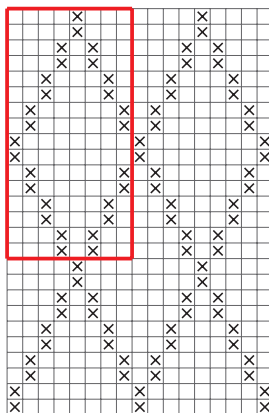
M-1

Place: Idestrup, Falster.
Repeat: 6 sts x 12 rows/rnds.



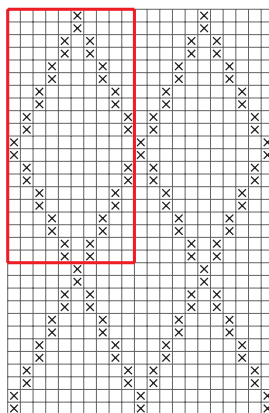
M-2

Place: Unknown.
Repeat: 8 sts x 16 rows/rnds.



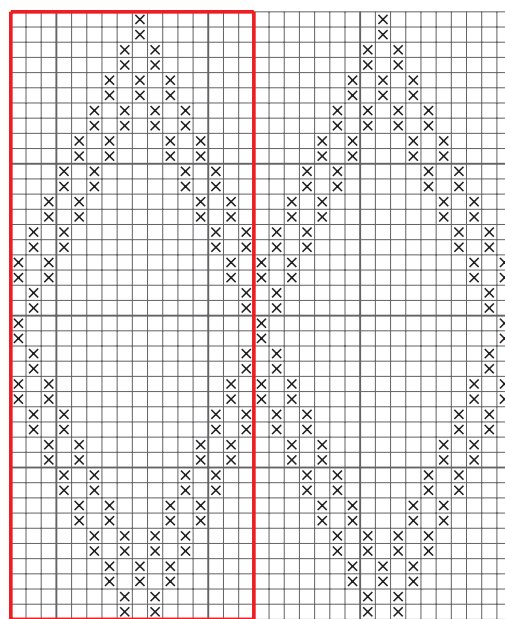
M-3

Place: North Ørslev, Falster.
Repeat: 10 sts x 20 rows/rnds.



M-4

Place: Kraghave, Falster.
Repeat: 16 sts x 40 rows/rnds.



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ANNIE'S SWEATER

Designer: Annie Hansen

Annie began her sweater design with the advice on page 234: She first found a sweater that fitted, measured it, chose the yarn and pattern, knitted swatches and measured the gauge. After that, she calculated the number of stitches and rows, sketched a design and decided how to arrange the patterns. Annie chose to knit her own night sweater and here's her design.

SKILL LEVEL

Intermediate

FINISHED MEASUREMENTS

Circumference: 37¾ in / 96 cm

Total Length: 19 in / 48 cm

Sleeve Length (¾ length sleeves):

15½ in / 39 cm

MATERIALS

Yarn:

CYCA #1 (light fingering), Blackhill Cotton-Wool (50% cotton, 50% Merino wool, 252 yd/230 m / 50 g)

Yarn Color and Amount:

Kiwi Green 15: 5 balls

Needles:

U. S. size 1.5 / 2.5 mm: straight needles; set of 5 dpn; 24 in / 60 cm circular

Gauge:

28 sts and 40 rows in St st = 4 x 4 in / 10 x 10 cm

Adjust needle size to obtain correct gauge if necessary.

CHARTS AND PATTERNS

Sleeves—traveling st pattern, page 180

Edge pattern, page 179

Side seam, page 179

Horizontal panel H-5, page 93.

Vertical panel V-26, page 107

Stars S-1, S-9, S-10, and S-12, pages 83-84

INSTRUCTIONS

Construction: The sleeves and body are worked from the bottom up. The shoulders are joined with **3-needle BO** and then the sleeves are sewn in.

SLEEVES (MAKE 2 ALIKE)

Lower edge: With dpn, CO 60 sts with **German twisted cast-on** (page 65). Divide sts evenly onto 4 dpn. Join, being careful not to twist cast-on row; pm for beginning of rnd. Purl 1 rnd (= ridge on RS).

Work **edge pattern** (see chart on page 179) for 1½ in / 4 cm. End on either Row 4 or Row 8 of pattern.

Purl 1 rnd (= ridge on RS), increasing 1 st at beginning of rnd. This st will be the sleeve “seam” and is worked in St st all the way up.

Main pattern: Work in **traveling st pattern** following the chart for the rest of the sleeve (the chart shows only a half sleeve). *At the same time*, inc 1 st (with M1-loop) before and after the sleeve “seam” on every 8th rnd.

When sleeve is 15½ in / 39 cm long (or desired length), BO.

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STOLE

A totally easy stole with traveling stitch and star patterns bordered by an elegant bias-knit band.

SKILL LEVEL

Beginner

FINISHED MEASUREMENTS

Width: 21 ¾ in / 55 cm

Total Length, Long Side: approx. 86½ in /
220 cm

Total Length, Short Side: approx. 59 in /
150 cm

MATERIALS

Yarn:

CYCA #1 (light fingering), BC Garn Shetlandsuld (Shetland wool) (100% Shetland wool, 492 yd/450 m / 100 g; www.loveknitting.com/us)

Yarn Color and Amount:

White 18: 450 g

Needles:

U. S. size 2.5 / 3 mm: 2 short needles; 32 in / 80 cm circular

Gauge:

24 sts and 42 rows in traveling st and star pattern = 4 x 4 in / 10 x 10 cm.

Adjust needle size to obtain correct gauge if necessary.

CHARTS AND PATTERNS

Traveling st and star pattern, pages 205 and 206

INSTRUCTIONS

Construction: The entire stole is worked from charts. After the body of the stole is complete, a bias-knit band is knitted and sewn on.

STOLE

First triangle: With short straight needles, and using **Knitted CO (K-CO)** method (see page 64), CO 3 sts. Eventually, when sts no longer fit on straight needles, change to circular and work back and forth on it.

Work in **traveling st and star pattern** following instructions below and chart:

Row 1 (RS): K2, p1.

Row 2 (WS): Sl 1 knitwise, p2.

Row 3: K-CO 2 new sts and knit them, k1tbl, p2 = 5 sts.

Row 4: Sl 1 knitwise, p1, k1, p2.

Row 5: K-CO 2 new sts and knit them, k1tbl, p1, k1, p2 = 7 sts.

Row 6: Sl 1 knitwise, p1, k1, p1, k1, p2.

Row 7: K-CO 2 new sts and knit them, k1tbl, p1, k1, p1, k2, p1 = 9 sts.

Row 8: Sl 1 knitwise, p3, k1, p1, k1, p2.

Row 9: K-CO 2 new sts and knit them, k1tbl, p1, k1, p1, k4, p1 = 11 sts.

Row 10: Sl 1 knitwise, p5, k1, p1, k1, p2.

Now continue working from the chart, page 205.

Row 11 begins on the right side at the arrow. After completing all charted rows on page 205, go to bottom chart on page 206, beginning at right side at the arrow.

At 135 sts, the stole is at its widest.



KNIT YOUR OWN NIGHT SWEATER

This is not a specific pattern but rather a collection of advice and suggestions for anyone wanting to design a night sweater using the many motifs in this book. The garment preparation includes 5 steps, starting with: an overview, how the sweater should look, and knitting a gauge swatch. Then you calculate the stitch and row/round counts and the rate of increase. Draw a sketch of the sweater and arrange the patterns as you like. Now you are ready to knit!

PREPARATION

1. Sizing the sweater

Find a sweater in a size and style similar to the one you want to knit and take all the measurements from this. In the example given here, the measurements are taken from Kirsten's Sweater. See also the schematic on the facing page.

2. Models, ideas, thoughts

Look over the old and new sweaters in this book and select a few designs. Think about what you want your sweater to look like. Should it simply copy the old sweaters, or do you want to adapt the patterns in a totally untraditional way? Draw one or more sketches.

3. Patterns

Choose the motifs for your sweater.

4. Yarn

Choose yarn and needles that match for the fabric you want. In the example, we used U. S. size 1.5 / 2.5 mm.

5. Gauge

Determine your gauge by knitting a swatch in the motif you want to use for the main pattern—that is, the most extensive pattern.

CO 40 sts on needles U. S. size 1.5 / 2.5 mm, for example, and knit in pattern for 6 in / 15 cm. Measure a section of the swatch 4 x 4 in / 10 x 10 cm, counting the number of stitches and rows.

Using Kirsten's Sweater as an example:

28 sts and 44 rows = 4 x 4 in / 10 x 10 cm.

Dividing the count by 4 for inches, we get **7 sts and 11 rows per inch**, or, for centimeters, divide by 10 and we have **2.8 sts and 4.4 rows per cm**.

MEASUREMENTS FOR KIRSTEN'S SWEATER

Sleeve width, top (ST): 17¼ in / 44 cm

Sleeve width, above lower edge: 10¾ in / 27 cm

Sleeve width above horizontal panel (SaE)
12¾ in / 32 cm

Sleeve length (SL): 17¼ in / 44 cm

Chest width (half circumference; ½ C):
22¾ in / 58 cm

Total length (TL): 23¾ in / 60 cm

CALCULATIONS

Do not omit measuring and counting before you knit. See the information below.

SLEEVES WITH SEAMS

The following example shows you how to count the number of stitches and rows for sleeves to be worked **back and forth** on two needles, from the bottom up. As you work, increases are worked along the underarm which will become a sort of seam. Finally, the sleeves are sewn together.

Sleeve, lower edge

Usually people prefer the lower edge or cuff of a sleeve to be somewhat snug around the wrist. So, you should count on fewer stitches than above the cuff and, if included, a horizontal panel (SE = sleeve edge). Normally, the cuff is

worked straight up in an elastic pattern, so we have not included the width of the lower sleeves on the schematic.

Horizontal panel

Above the sleeve edge or cuff, night sweaters typically have a horizontal panel. Usually the stitch count needs to be adjusted so the stitch count above the edge fits the count needed for the panel. You might also need to adjust the count by increasing above the horizontal panel so it fits the count for the main pattern on the sleeve.

Calculating the stitch count above the lower edge (and, if included, the horizontal panel):

Multiply the SE measurement by the number of sts per in / cm (7 sts / 2.8 sts):

$12\frac{3}{4}$ in x 7 sts = 89.25, rounded up to 90 sts / 32 cm x 2.8 sts = 89.6 sts, rounded up to 90 sts.

