

RANDOM HOUSE  BOOKS



Easy Knits

Debbie Bliss



CONTENTS

[Cover](#)

[About the Book](#)

[About the Author](#)

[Title Page](#)

[Dedication](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Basic information](#)

[Baby's Jacket with Tie Bow and Bootees](#)

[Double-breasted Moss Stitch Jacket and Hat](#)

[Striped Scarf](#)

[Dress with Fair Isle Border](#)

[Fair Isle Jacket](#)

[Longline Belted Cardigan and Hat](#)

[Baby Crossover Top and Bootees](#)

[Man's Guernsey-style Sweater](#)

[Mohair Cushion](#)

[Mohair Throw](#)

[Moss Stitch Top](#)

[Raglan Sweater](#)

[Ribbed Sweater](#)

[Shirt-style Cardigan](#)

[Simple Top and Socks with Contrast Stripe](#)

[Stocking Stitch Sweater](#)

[Woman's Alpaca Wrap-around Cardigan](#)

[Hooded Jacket](#)

[Striped Bag](#)

[Striped Garter Stitch Jacket](#)

[Striped Sweater](#)

[Woman's Alpaca Polo Neck](#)

[Jacket with Fair Isle Border](#)

[Zippered Scottie Dog Jacket](#)

[Striped Silk Top](#)

[Yarn Suppliers](#)

[Acknowledgments](#)

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About the Book

Knitting is enjoying an enormous boom, with everyone from Julia Roberts to Zoe Ball now known to be fans. Many of these new people coming to knitting want simple, quick designs that look great but which will not take them weeks to make. *Easy Knits* has over 25 irresistible designs that are straightforward and quick to knit – but which look fabulous. It includes plenty of ideas for new babies, from simple wraps to socks and scarves; sweaters, cardigans and jackets for toddlers and older children; and ideas for adults that range from a Guernsey-style sweater to an alpaca polo neck.

About the Author

Debbie Bliss is one of today's best-known knitwear designers. With a string of bestselling titles to her name, she regularly tours the US, Canada and other countries, giving lectures and doing workshops. In the UK, she is the knitting editor of a leading women's magazine, she designs for Rowan yarns, and has her own shop in Islington, north London, where she also takes knitting courses. Debbie lives in London with her husband and two children.

debbie bliss



EASY KNITS

Over 25 simple designs for babies,
children and adults



EBURY PRESS
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Dedication:

For Lynda, John, Edward, David, Rob and Mia.

Introduction

Easy Knits is a collection of simple hand knits for adults and children: easy knitting, easy wearing, easy living. From soft, draped cardigans to crisp cotton styles, the accent here is on the detailing – a flash of bright colour in a Fair Isle band or neat moss stitch collar and cuffs. Most of the designs in Easy Knits are within the grasp of the fairly inexperienced knitter, even the colourwork is kept as uncomplicated as possible and I have used good quality yarns that show and emphasize stitch detail in a variety of beautiful shades from neutrals to brights. For the perfect antidote to the stresses of modern life, first choose your style, then pick up your needles and relax.

Basic information

FOLLOWING PATTERN INSTRUCTIONS

Figures for larger sizes are given in round () brackets. Where only one figure appears, this applies to all sizes. Work figures given in square [] brackets the number of times stated afterwards. Where 0 appears, no stitches or rows are worked for this size. As you follow the pattern, make sure that you are consistently using the right stitches for your size – it is only too easy to switch sizes inside the brackets. One way to avoid this is to go through the instructions first and mark the size you are knitting with a coloured pen or highlighter.

The quantities of yarn quoted in the instructions are based on the yarn used by the knitter for the original garment and amounts should therefore be considered approximate. A slight variation in tension can make the difference between using less or more yarn than that stated in the pattern. Before buying yarn, look at the measurements on the knitting instructions to be sure what size you want to knit. My patterns quote the actual finished knitted size of the garment rather than just the bust/chest measurements of the wearer. The actual measurements will tell you the width around the whole garment and this will tell you how much ease a garment has; whether it is a generous, baggy style or slim fitting. If you wish to make up the design with less or more ease, you may just need to knit the size smaller or larger size quoted. If you are unsure, measure an existing garment. The length of the garment is usually taken from the shoulder shaping to the cast-on edge.

TENSION

Each pattern in this book specifies a tension – the number of stitches and rows per centimetre/inch that should be obtained with the given needles, yarn and stitch pattern. Check your tension carefully before commencing work.

Use the same yarn, needles and stitch pattern as those to be used for the main work and knit a sample at least 12.5cm/5in square. Smooth out the finished sample on a flat surface, but do not stretch it. To check the tension, place a ruler horizontally on the sample and mark 10cm/4in across with pins. Count the number of stitches between the pins. To check the row tension, place a ruler vertically on the sample and mark 10cm/4in with pins. Count the number of rows between the pins. If the number of stitches and rows is greater than specified, try again using larger needles; if less, use smaller needles. The stitch tension is the most important element to get right.

BUYING YARN FOR A KNITTING PATTERN

Always try to buy the yarn specified in your knitting pattern; however, if you use a substitute, buy a yarn that is the same weight and has the same tension and, where possible, the same fibre content. If you use a synthetic yarn instead of a natural fibre, or even wool where cotton had been originally used, the stitch patterns may appear softer and less delineated. Synthetics can also appear limp, which means that the crispness of the original garment will have been lost. It is essential to check metreage or yardage. Yarn that weighs the same may have different lengths, and you may need to buy more or less yarn.

Check the ball band on the yarn. Most yarn labels now carry all the information you need about fibre content, washing instructions, weight and metreage or yardage. Some of them will tell you the knitting needle sizes to use and the standard tension (or stitch size) these create.

It is essential to check the dye lot number on the yarn label. Yarns are dyed in batches or lots, which can sometimes vary quite considerably. Your retailer may not have the same dye lot later on, so try and buy all your yarn for a project at the same time. If you know that sometimes you require extra yarn to that quoted in a pattern, buy more. If it is not possible to buy the amount you need all in one dye lot, work the borders on the lower edges or the neckband in the odd one, since the colour change is less likely to show here.

The following descriptions of the yarns used in the book are guides to the yarn weights and types:

Debbie Bliss merino double knitting: a 100% merino wool in a double knitting weight. Approximately 110m/50g ball.

Debbie Bliss merino aran: a 100% merino wool in an aran or fisherman yarn. Approximately 78m/50g ball.

Debbie Bliss wool/cotton: a 50% merino wool, 50% cotton lightweight yarn. Approximately 107m/50g ball.

Novita Mohair: an 80% kid mohair, 20% polyamide double knitting yarn. Approximately 200m/50g ball.

Novita Isoveli: a 75% wool, 25% polyamide chunky weight yarn. Approximately 130m/100g ball.

Novita Alpaca: a 100% alpaca double knitting weight yarn. Approximately 103m/50g ball.

Jaeger Cashmina 4 ply: a 4-ply, 80% cashmere, 20% extra-fine merino. Approximately 125m/25g ball.

Jaeger Silk 4 ply: a 4-ply, 100% silk yarn. Approximately 186m/50g ball.

Rowan Spun Double Knitting: a 100% wool double knitting weight. Approximately 200m/50g hank.

WASHING AND DRYING YOUR KNITTING

Check the ball band on your yarn for washing instructions. Many yarns can now be machine washed on a delicate wool

cycle. You may find it helpful to make a note of the measurements of the garment, such as the width and length, prior to washing. After washing, lay the garment flat and check the measurements again to see if they are the same. If not, smooth and pat it back into shape.

Natural fibres are usually best hand washed, even if the ball band says otherwise. I find that after successive machine washes, cotton in particular can become rather hard. Use soap flakes specially created for hand knits, and warm rather than hot water. Handle the knits gently in the water – do not rub or wring because this can felt the fabric. Rinse well to get rid of any soap, and squeeze out excess water. You may need to get rid of more water by rolling the garment in a towel, or you can use the delicate spin cycle of the washing machine. Dry the garment by laying it out flat on top of a towel to absorb moisture, smooth and pat into shape. Do not dry knits near direct heat such as a radiator.

Store your knits loosely folded to allow the air to circulate.

KNITTING TERMS

A few specific knitting terms may be unfamiliar to some readers. The list below explains the abbreviations used in this book to help the reader understand how to follow the various stitches and stages.

alt = alternate

beg = begin(ning)

cont = continu(e)(ing)

cm = centimetre(s)

dec = decrease(e)(ing)

foll = follow(ing)

g = gram(mes)

in = inch(es)

inc = increas(e)(ing)

inc one = increase one st by working into the front and back of the stitch
k = knit
m1 = make one by picking up the loop lying between the stitch just worked and next stitch and working into the back of it
mm = millimetre(s)
patt = pattern
p = purl
psso = pass slipped stitch over
rem = remain(ing)
rep = repeat(ing)
skpo = slip one, knit one, pass slipped stitch over
sl = slip
st(s) = stitch(es)
st st = stocking stitch
tbl = through back of loop(s)
tog = together
yb = yarn back
yf = yarn forward
yon = yarn over needle
yrn = yarn around needle

The following terms may be unfamiliar to US readers

UK terms		US terms
Aran wool		'fisherman' yarn
ball band		yarn wrapper
cast off		bind off
DK wool		a yarn between sport and worsted
make up (garment)		finish (garment)
moss stitch		seed stitch
rib		ribbing

stocking stitch

tension

welt

stockinette stitch

gauge

lower borders on sweater front
and back

Baby's Cotton Jacket with Tie Bow and Bootees

MATERIALS

Jacket 4(4:5) 50g balls of Debbie Bliss wool/cotton.

Bootees One 50g ball of Debbie Bliss wool/cotton.

Pair each of 3mm (No 11/US 2) and 3¼mm (No 10/US 3) knitting needles.

1 button.

MEASUREMENTS

To fit age	3-6	6-9	9-12	months
Actual chest measurement	60	63	66	cm
	23½	25	26	in
Length	24	26	28	cm
	9½	10 ¼	11	in
Sleeve length	14	16	18	cm
	5½	6¼	7	in

TENSION

25 sts and 34 rows to 10cm/4in square over st st on 3¼mm (No 10/US 3) needles.

ABBREVIATIONS

See [here](#).

Jacket

BACK AND FRONTS

With 3mm (No 11/US 2) needles cast on 153(161:169) sts.

Moss st row K1, * p1, k1; rep from * to end.

Rep last row 5 times more.

Change to 3¼mm (No 10/US 3) needles.

Next row Moss st 5, k to last 5 sts, moss st 5.

Next row Moss st 5, p to last 5 sts, moss st 5.

Cont in st st with moss st borders until work measures 13(14:15)cm/5¼(5½:5¾)in from beg, ending with a k row.

Left Front

Next row Moss st 5, p34(36:38), turn.

Work on this set of sts only until left front measures 20(22:23)cm/8(8¾:9)in from beg, ending at front edge.

Shape Neck

Next row Moss st 5, p4, leave these sts on a safety pin, p to end. 30(32:34) sts.

Dec one st at neck edge on every row until 22(23:24) sts rem.

Cont straight until work measures 24(26:28)cm/9½(10¼:11)in from beg, ending at armhole edge.

Shape Shoulder

Cast off 11(11:12) sts at beg of next row.

Work 1 row.

Cast off rem 11(12:12) sts.

BACK

With wrong side facing, join on yarn, p75(79:83), turn.

Work on this set of sts only until back measures same as left front to shoulder shaping, ending with a p row.

Shape Shoulders

Cast off 11(11:12) sts at beg of next 2 rows and 11(12:12) sts at beg of foll 2 rows.

Leave rem 31(33:35) sts on a holder.

Right Front

With wrong side facing, rejoin yarn to rem sts, p to last 5 sts, moss st 5. 39(41:43) sts.

Complete to match left front.