

it starts with gauge

Every pattern, unless specifically noted, only uses a FINISHED gauge. This means the item has been washed and blocked to yield the exact measurements for the finished size(s). A WORKING gauge is what your sts/rows add up to WHILE you are actually knitting (before blocking).

TO CHECK WORKING GAUGE

A working gauge keeps you on track since a change in this gauge while knitting WILL cause a change in your finished gauge.

- Cast on at least 5" / 12.5 cm worth of stitches with the recommended needle size. Work in the pattern stitch for at least 5" / 12.5 cm in length.
- Bind off loosely and lay the swatch, public side facing down, on a flat surface. Gently flatten the curled edges and measure 4" / 10 cm worth of stitches in the center.
- Alternatively, you can record your total stitch/row gauge based on the actual width and length of the swatch. ONLY use this method if your edge stitches are in pattern and neatly done:

» $\text{Stitch Count} \div \text{Width Measurement} = \text{Stitches Per Inch}$

» $\text{Row Count} \div \text{Length Measurement} = \text{Rows Per Inch}$

(example: 20 stitches / 4 inches = 5 stitches per inch)

TO CHECK FINISHED GAUGE

Simply wetting and drying the yarn alters the yarn. It could grow while wet, but as it dries, it shrinks smaller than the working size. It might grow and stay large forever. Knowing your final stitch gauge is critical to knowing size.

- Take your working gauge block from before and block according to the yarn care label and how you plan to treat the final pieces.
- After the swatch is dry, lay the swatch, public side facing down, on a flat surface. Measure 4" / 10 cm worth of stitches in the center. If you have more stitches than required, you will need larger needles. If you have less stitches than required, you will need smaller needles.

CALCULATIONS FOR ROW LENGTH

When you read a line that says, "Work until the piece measures X" / X cm:

- To calculate how many rows that means to work, multiply the "length indicated" by the "finished row gauge" to get the number of rows needed to work. So, if they say to knit for 10" and your finished row gauge is 5 rows per inch, then you will work 50 rows.
- If you aren't up to counting all those rows and would rather just pull out the tape measure, you just need to calculate the difference between the working length and the finished length. Divide the "number of finished rows" by the "working row gauge" to get the "working length." If the finished row gauge calls for 50 rows, you divide that by your working row gauge of 4.5 rows per inch, and discover that your "working" piece should measure 11.1 inches in length.

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