

**\*Basic Hat Formula\***

as told by : Noro Silk Garden

suggested gauge : 4.5 stitches per inch on size U.S. 7 double pointed needles

:: i-cord topknot ::

Cast on 4 stitches. Knit one row. \*Do not turn. Instead, slide the stitches to the right end of needle and knit them by bringing the working yarn up behind them. Repeating from\* over and over will create a tube of knitted stitches. At first you may notice a ladder of yarn across the backside but after a few rows, pulling down on the cord will make the ladder disappear. Make a 3 inch length. Don't try knotting this piece till a bit further along when the extra fabric makes it easier to snug the knot.

:: crown increases ::

next row : Beginning as if to create another i-cord row, knit in front & back of next 3 stitches, knit last stitch. You now have 7 stitches. Separate onto 4 needles, 2 stitches on 3 needles, 1 on fourth.

Join into round being sure not to twist stitches. To be a reminder that you have come full around again, place a marker between the 1st and 2nd stitches on first needle. This keeps the marker from sliding off the needle, but you must remember it is the stitch before the marker which is the beginning of new round .

Knit once around. Always take a moment during the first stitch on each needle to pull that stitch tight from the last stitch on the previous needle in this manner: when starting a new needle, knit the first stitch, place the working needle into the 2nd stitch ready to knit, then pull gently on the working yarn to snug up the first stitch with the last one from the previous needle.

next round :: \*Knit front and back of each stitch (14 stitches now, 4 on three needles, 2 on the fourth)

Knit once around. From this point alternate between increase and plain rounds, knitting one plain round between each increase round.

next round (an increase round) :: \*knit 2 , m1\* repeat \* around

next increase round :: \* knit 3 , m1 \* repeat \* around

Continue in this method of adding one more knit stitch before m1 in each increase round. You will begin to see the crown growing in 7 sections. I like to add working needles so that each increase section has its own needle. When work becomes big enough to fit onto a 16 inch circular needle it makes a comfortable change. You can then move the marker to before the first stitch.

:: math moment ::

To find the number of stitches you need, multiply the number of stitches per inch (including half stitches) by the width of the hat's intended head. For example, since I am knitting this particular hat for my 23 inch head, and am knitting 4.5 stitches per inch the math comes to 103 1/2 stitches. I like hats to be loose fitting, so I usually add an inch to the width for ease, which would bring us to 108.

When the number is not divisible by the increase row amount (in this case 7) take the remaining number of stitches needed and add them on one final increase round. In the above example there will be 3 stitches still needed when there are 15 stitches in each of the 7 sections. Increase by m1 stitch in every other section (2,4,& 6th section) .

:: brow & headband ::

When you have reached the desired width, continue knitting around without further increases until you have reached the desired length (for me that is 10 1/2 inches). The last inch of fabric will curl upwards so take that into account.

Then: bind off loosely

:: notes ::

m1 by lifting the strand between the stitches on previous row and knit a stitch there.

:: variation ::

m1 by lifting the strand between the stitches on the previous row with right hand needle from back to front, slip left needle in front of the right and knit a stitch. This pulls the stitch tight, where the previous method leaves an open hole (which I find decorative)

:: double roll band ::

When you have reached the length that you would bind off in the original pattern, purl for one inch and then bind off loosely, which creates a double rolling band. For my head, this meant knitting till hat measured 10 1/2 inches from topknot along its curved edge, then purling for one inch before binding off loosely.

Alternately, instead of purling, you can turn the hat and knit for the final inch, but a gap forms where you turn, so when you reach this gap, pick up a stitch and knit it together with the following stitch.

