

## VERY EASY PULLOVER

For American Girl or 18" Doll

By Cecelia Riehl

**Yarn:** Baby, Fingering, or sock yarn -- one 50 g. ball or approx. 30 g.

**Needle:** No. 2 knitting needles or size needed to obtain gauge.  
(I prefer a circular knitting needle and knit this entire sweater using one #2 circular needle and one crochet hook.)

**Optional tools:** Extra circular needle or small crochet hook for binding off, stitch markers.

**Notions:** Three very small buttons (3/16").

**Gauge:** 12-14 stitches = 2 inches.

### Checking the gauge:

I used to always make a gauge swatch by casting on about 24 stitches and knitting for about 4 inches. When I'd finished the body of the sweater, the gauge swatch was almost, but not quite the right size for a sleeve. Now I start by making a sleeve. I check the gauge then. If it's acceptable I do the other sleeve and then the body of the sweater. If it's wrong I adjust and try again.

**Sleeve:** Cast on **32** stitches.

Work **4 rows** in knit 1 – purl 1 **ribbing**, increasing **4** stitches evenly spaced along last row to make **36** stitches.

Continue in stockinette stitch increasing **1** stitch at beginning and end of every **8th** row. Continue until sleeve is **5"** long. (You will have about 42 stitches.) Bind off all stitches. (I leave an 18" tail of yarn to use when sewing the sleeve into the armhole.) Cut yarn.

Check gauge.

**Body:** Cast on **86** stitches.

Do **4 rows** of **k1 p1 ribbing**, increasing **6** stitches across last row to make **92** stitches.

Continue in Stockinette stitch until piece measures 2" for a short (waist length) sweater or up to 4" for a longer (below the hip) sweater. 2 ½" – 3" looks nice with a skirt. End with a knit row.

**Back – top half:** Purl half way across (**46 st.**) Place a marker. Turn. Leave the other stitches on the needle. They won't be in the way and you'll get to them soon enough. Continue these 46 stitches in stockinette stitch until armhole measures 2 ½" to 2 ¾" or until back is 2 ½" to 2 ¾" longer than front. This measurement should equal half the width of the top of the sleeve.

End with a knit row.

**Left shoulder button band:** Work **14** stitches in **k1 p1 ribbing**. Turn. Do second row of ribbing. Turn. **Bind off 14** stitches. Cut yarn.

Put the rest of the back (**32** stitches) on the other end of the circular needle.

**Front – top half:** Attach yarn at armhole slit and purl across. Continue front in stockinette stitch until it is 8 rows shorter than back. (approx. 1" shorter than back) End with a **knit** row.

**Shape front neck – right shoulder:** Purl across **18** st. Turn. Slip **1 st. K1**, Pass slipped stitch over. (One st. decreased) Knit across 16 remaining stitches. Purl next row. Continue in stockinette stitch, decreasing **1** st. at neck edge every knit row **3** more times, until **14** st. remain. Front should be same length as back at this point.

**Bind off and join** front and back right shoulder stitches in one step.

To do this you need to fold the circular needle or line up the shoulder stitches on two needles or one needle and a holder, so that the tips of the needles are together and the left shoulder stitches lie on top of each other with the wrong sides (or purl sides) out. Using a crochet hook (or a second knitting needle) and the yarn you have been knitting with, pull a loop of yarn as if to knit through the first stitch on each needle, Drop these two stitches off the needles. Pull the loop so it's not too tight. In the same manner pull a second loop through the next two stitches, one from each needle, then through the first stitch, or if you are using a knitting needle, pull the first stitch over the second. Continue binding off one st. from each needle until all 14 are bound off and seamed together. Make sure you don't pull this too tight. You will have a nice flat shoulder seam. Put the last loop on the needle with the rest of the back stitches. Cut yarn leaving ~10 inches.

Slip **10 center front** stitches onto right needle. Place a marker.

**Left front shoulder:** Attach yarn. Purl across next **18**. Continue right side front same as left side, decreasing **1** st. at neck edge before marker on every knit row, by knitting last 2 st. together, until **14** st. remain. End with a knit row.

### **Left shoulder buttonhole band**

Note: Try pushing the tiny buttons through the ribbing at top of back shoulder. If they go through easily, you don't need to make button holes. If they don't go through, you will need to make 2 button holes on this section of the shoulder and one more in the neck band.

Finish these 14 stitches with **3 rows of p1 k1 ribbing**, (begin with a purl stitch.) ending at **sleeve** edge. **Bind off these 14** stitches. (If you need to make button holes do it in the second row as follows: (\*p1 k1 p1 k1 yo k2tog) repeat from \* p1 k1.) Do not cut yarn.

Now you have **18** back stitches and a loop, **10** center front stitches and another loop on the needle. Let this loop become the first stitch, and keeping the tension even, pick up and knit **2** stitches along side of buttonhole band, then **6** stitches along bound off edge of center front. Knit **10** stitches from center front, pick up and knit **6** st. along other side of front neck, knit across back. Pick up and knit **2** more stitches along edge of shoulder ribbing.

Turn. Work in **k1 p1 ribbing** to end of row. (If you need to make a button hole, make it in the 3<sup>rd</sup> stitch from the front edge in the next row.) Work **3** rows total in k1 p1 ribbing. Turn, bind off all stitches. Cut yarn.

**Finishing seams:** Sew sleeves to armholes, overlapping ribbing at top of left shoulder. Sew underarm seams and one side seam. Weave in yarn ends. Using sewing thread and needle sew buttons on back right shoulder ribbing. Place one button on neck band and two more evenly spaced on shoulder. If you made buttonholes, place the buttons under the buttonholes.

To make a **sleeveless shell**, just ignore the directions for the sleeves. I don't do anything to finish the armhole edges. The stockinet stitch makes the edges curl in slightly which looks fine.

## Very Easy Variations on the Very Easy Pullover

### Stripe it!

You can make this pullover in horizontal stripes by simply changing the yarn color whenever you want a stripe of a different color. Alternate two colors or more doing about 4 rows in each color, or make the stripes different sizes. The sleeves can match or be different. Be creative. It's best to keep all the ribbing in the same color. (Note: If you want to use self-striping sock yarn, it's really best to knit the front and back separately. Otherwise the stripes come out quite narrow and don't match the sleeves.)

### Add a cable stitch in the center front:

A cable stitch is easy to do. You need a cable needle in addition to the knitting needle. For a simple six stitch twisted cable, make the following adjustments in the body of the sweater.

Cast on and work the ribbing for the pull-over. Then:

(1)Next row: **k 18 p2 k6 p2 k6**4.

(The purl stitches set off the cable. The 6 knit stitches between the purls will be the cable stitches.)

(2)Next row: **p6 k2 p6 k2 p18**.

(In other words knit the knits and purl the purls. When you look at a knit stitch from the back it looks like a purl—and is. A purl stitch is just a reverse knit stitch.)

Repeat these two rows once more.

(3)Next row: (Cable row) **k18 p2 slip 3** st onto cable needle, let hang in front of work; **k3**; put 3 st from holder back on left hand needle; **k3 p2 k6**4.

Repeat rows 1 and 2 twice then row 3. Continue until you transfer these stitches to a holder at neck edge.

### Sleeveless shell:

Just ignore the directions for the sleeves. I don't do anything to finish the armhole edges. The stockinet stitch makes the edges curl in slightly which looks fine. If you want the shell to look nice under a cardigan, make it slightly shorter than the cardigan.

