



Shot in the Dark

I enjoyed playing with the juxtaposition of light and dark in this hat which is shot through with color using a little-known technique called vertical stranding. It's easier — and more fun — than you might think!

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Difficulty Level: Advanced Beginner

Skills/Techniques: Vertical stranding (explained), Italian Tubular Cast-On (optional; video provided)

Yarn: Morehouse Farm Merino Glenleigh Worsted 100% Merino, 140 yards/ 128 m / per 2 oz skein; one skein each in colors 2207 and 2201, or approximately 100 yards of smooth, worsted weight yarn for MC and approximately 40 yards /37 m for CC.

Needles: #6 US (4 mm) 16"/40 cm circular needles, or size to obtain gauge
#6 US (4 mm) dpns, or size to obtain gauge
#5 US (3.75 mm) 16"/40 cm circular needles, or one size smaller than size to obtain gauge

Notions: tapestry needle, scissors, stitch marker

Gauge: 17.5 stitches and 24 rows per 4"/10 cm in stockinette stitch, after blocking

Three Sizes: Adult S, M, L: 18 (20, 22)" / 46 (51, 56) cm circumference. Should be worn with 1-2" / 2.5-5 cm negative ease.

Abbreviations:

BOR: Beginning of round

CC: Contrast Color

CO: Cast on

K: Knit

K2tog: Knit two together

MC: Main Color

P: Purl

PM: Place Marker

Rep: Repeat

Sl: Slip stitch purlwise

Sts: Stitches

Tbl: Through the back loop

Wyif: With yarn in front

Wyib: With yarn in back

Techniques:

Italian Tubular Cast On:

Leaving a tail 3x the length of your cast on edge, make a slip knot and hold the yarn as you would for a long-tail cast-on, with the tail over your thumb.

1.) Bring the needle over the index finger yarn, then under it and back to center.

2.) Bring the needle over the thumb yarn, then under it and back under the index finger yarn. Return to center. One knit stitch created.

3.) Bring the needle over the thumb, then under it and back to center.

2.) Bring the needle over the index finger yarn, then under it and back under the thumb yarn. Return to center. One purl stitch created.

Repeat steps 1-4 until the requisite number of sts have been cast on, not counting the slip knot.

Add an extra twist of the tail around the working yarn after casting on the final st.

To join, cast the slip knot over the final st.

See a video demonstration of this cast on at

<https://bit.ly/ItalianCastOn>.

Vertical stranding uses a single strand of yarn for each vertical (or in this case, diagonal) column knit in that color. The yarn is not carried, rather, it is joined where it is first needed, then dropped until it is needed again in the row above.

In this pattern, you'll use five vertical strands. The first four should be about one yard in length, while the fifth will need to be approximately a yard and a half.

You can make butterflies of the vertical strands to keep them out of the way or you may leave them hanging loosely inside the work and "pull from the tangle" — pulling a bit of the yarn you need when you need it, and letting the rest tangle as they may.

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Pattern:

Cast On:

Using smaller needles and MC, CO 80 (88, 96) sts using the Italian Tubular cast on, or a stretchy cast on of your choice. Join, being careful not to twist. PM for BOR.

Ribbing:

Note: If you worked a non-tubular cast on, for Rounds 1-4 (k1, p1) to end, changing to CC after Round 2.

Round 1: (k1tbl, sl1wyif) to end

Round 2: (sl1 wyib, p1) to end

Break MC yarn, leaving at least 6"/ 15cm tail.

Join CC.

Round 3: (k1, sl1wyif) to end

Round 4: (sl1 wyib, p1) to end

Rounds 5-11: (k1, p1) to end

Round 12: Knit

Break CC yarn, leaving at least 6"/ 15cm tail.

Join MC.

Body of Hat:

Change to larger needles.

Knit 21 (24, 27) rows of Colorwork Chart (pages 5-7), using MC as background color and 5 separate strands of CC, one for each of the vertically stranded columns. (See **Techniques** section for Vertical Stranding instructions.)

Break all strands of CC yarn, leaving at least 6"/ 15cm tails.

Crown:

When circumference gets too small to work comfortably on circular needles, change to dpns.

Working with MC only:

Round 1: Knit

Round 2: (k6, k2tog) to end [70 (77, 84) sts]

Round 3: Knit

Round 4: Knit

Round 5: (k5, k2tog) to end [60 (66, 72) sts]

Round 6: Knit

Round 7: Knit

Round 8: (k4, k2tog) to end [50 (55, 60) sts]

Round 9: Knit

Round 10: (k3, k2tog) to end [40 (44, 48) sts]

Round 11: Knit

Round 12: (k2, k2tog) [30 (33, 36) sts]

Round 13: Knit

Round 14: (k1, k2tog) [20 (22, 24) sts]

Round 15: k2tog to end [10 (11, 12) sts]

Round 16: Sizes S, L: k2tog to end Size M: K1, k2tog to end [5 (6, 6) sts]

Break yarn, leaving at least 6"/ 15cm tail. Thread tail onto tapestry needle and run the yarn through remaining stitches.

Finishing:

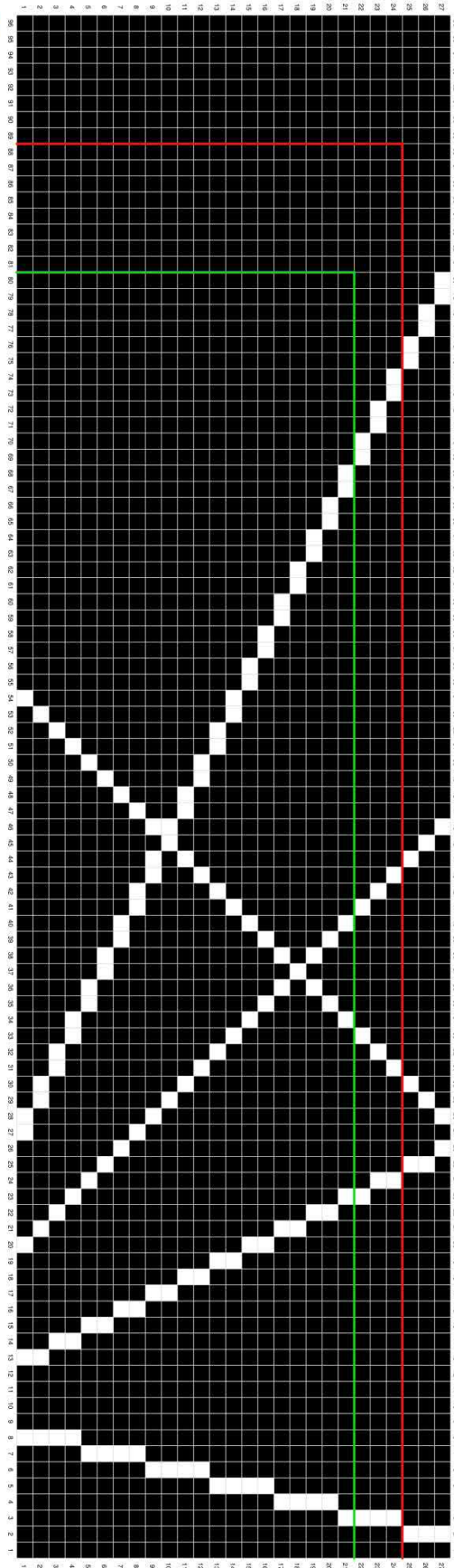
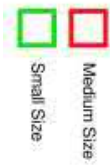
Weave ends.

Block lightly to measurements.



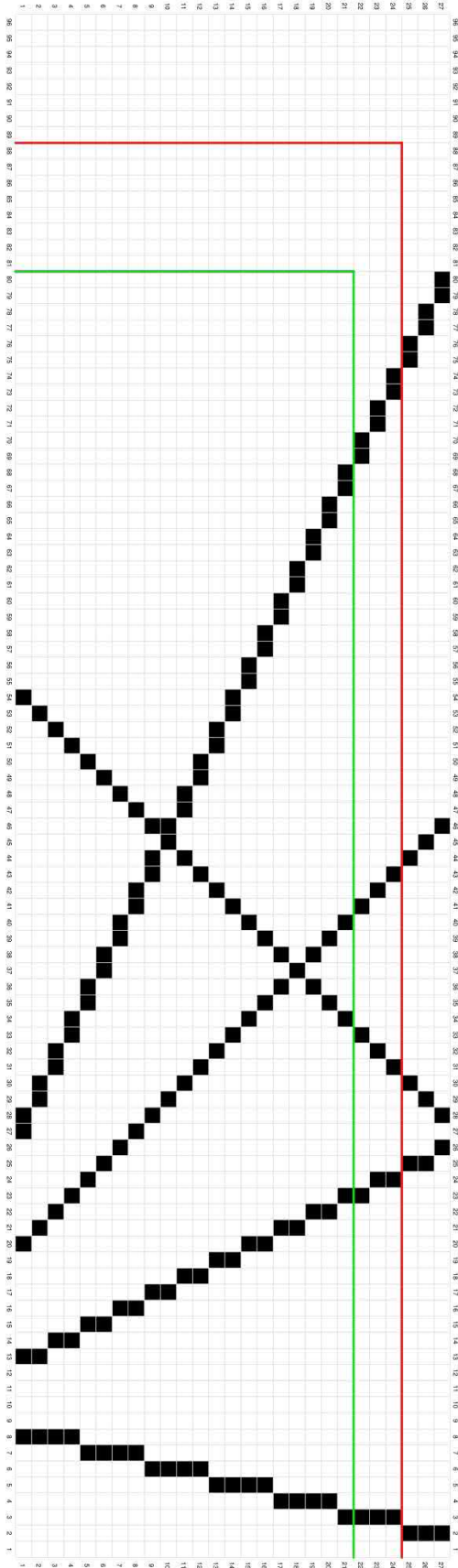
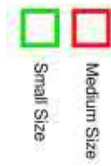
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Colorwork Chart, Light on Dark:



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Colorwork Chart, Dark on Light:



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Colorwork Chart, Written:

Round 1: MC x7, CC x1, MC x4, CC x1, MC x6, CC x1, MC x6, CC x2, MC x25, CC x1, MC x42

Round 2: MC x7, CC x1, MC x4, CC x1, MC x7, CC x1, MC x7, CC x2, MC x22, CC x1, MC x43

Round 3: MC x7, CC x1, MC x5, CC x1, MC x7, CC x1, MC x8, CC x2, MC x19, CC x1, MC x44

Round 4: MC x7, CC x1, MC x5, CC x1, MC x8, CC x1, MC x9, CC x2, MC x16, CC x1, MC x45

Round 5: MC x6, CC x1, MC x7, CC x1, MC x8, CC x1, MC x10, CC x2, MC x13, CC x1, MC x46

Round 6: MC x6, CC x1, MC x7, CC x1, MC x9, CC x1, MC x11, CC x2, MC x10, CC x1, MC x47

Round 7: MC x6, CC x1, MC x8, CC x1, MC x9, CC x1, MC x12, CC x2, MC x7, CC x1, MC x48

Round 8: MC x6, CC x1, MC x8, CC x1, MC x10, CC x1, MC x13, CC x2, MC x4, CC x1, MC x49

Round 9: MC x5, CC x1, MC x10, CC x1, MC x10, CC x1, MC x14, CC x2, MC x1, CC x1, MC x50

Round 10: MC x5, CC x1, MC x10, CC x1, MC x11, CC x1, MC x15, CC x2, MC x50

Round 11: MC x5, CC x1, MC x11, CC x1, MC x11, CC x1, MC x13, CC x1, MC x2, CC x2, MC x48

Round 12: MC x5, CC x1, MC x11, CC x1, MC x12, CC x1, MC x11, CC x1, MC x5, CC x2, MC x46

Round 13: MC x4, CC x1, MC x13, CC x1, MC x12, CC x1, MC x9, CC x1, MC x8, CC x2, MC x44

Round 14: MC x4, CC x1, MC x13, CC x1, MC x13, CC x1, MC x7, CC x1, MC x11, CC x2, MC x42

Round 15: MC x4, CC x1, MC x14, CC x1, MC x13, CC x1, MC x5, CC x1, MC x14, CC x2, MC x40

Round 16: MC x4, CC x1, MC x14, CC x1, MC x14, CC x1, MC x3, CC x1, MC x17, CC x2, MC x38

Round 17: MC x3, CC x1, MC x16, CC x1, MC x14, CC x1, MC x1, CC x1, MC x20, CC x2, MC x36

Round 18: MC x3, CC x1, MC x16, CC x1, MC x15, CC x1, MC x23, CC x2, MC x34

Round 19: MC x3, CC x1, MC x17, CC x1, MC x13, CC x1,

MC x1, CC x1, MC x24, CC x2, MC x32

Round 20: MC x3, CC x1, MC x17, CC x1, MC x12, CC x1, MC x3, CC x1, MC x25, CC x2, MC x30

Round 21: MC x2, CC x1, MC x19, CC x1, MC x10, CC x1, MC x5, CC x1, MC x26, CC x2, MC x28

Round 22: MC x2, CC x1, MC x19, CC x1, MC x9, CC x1, MC x7, CC x1, MC x27, CC x2, MC x26

Round 23: MC x2, CC x1, MC x20, CC x1, MC x7, CC x1, MC x9, CC x1, MC x28, CC x2, MC x24

Round 24: MC x2, CC x1, MC x20, CC x1, MC x6, CC x1, MC x11, CC x1, MC x29, CC x2, MC x22

Round 25: MC x1, CC x1, MC x22, CC x1, MC x4, CC x1, MC x13, CC x1, MC x30, CC x2, MC x20

Round 26: MC x1, CC x1, MC x22, CC x1, MC x3, CC x1, MC x15, CC x1, MC x31, CC x2, MC x18

Round 27: MC x1, CC x1, MC x23, CC x1, MC x1, CC x1, MC x17, CC x1, MC x32, CC x2, MC x16

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October 2022, v1

Model credit: Antara Bhardwaj



Amy Snell is a knitting instructor and designer with an eye for the unusual or unusually captivating. Her designs focus on color, contrast, and texture — often

exploring unusual stitch patterns and clever construction in ways that are interesting but accessible.

Amy loves to help other knitters explore new techniques and expand the way they think about their knitting. Her goal is to make complex concepts accessible and approachable for all knitters, while sharing tips that simplify and improve your process, whether you've been knitting for several weeks or several decades. Amy teaches in person at national events as well as on her website, www.DeviousKnitter.com.