Free knitting pattern for the Cactus Tee

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This minimalistic t-shirt is knitted top down, with raglan stitching. It has a cactus-inspired pattern across the chest. The pattern is worked according to the diagram and is rectangular in 8(h)x6(w) stitches. The T-shirt has a loose fit and you can easily shorten the body to make it a crop top. *Note - if you want the cactus pattern higher up, you can start on the diagram earlier and just knit it on the front and back.

Size:

S (M) L (XL)

Overwidth:

S: approx. 95 cm

M: approx. 102 cm

L: approx. 110 cm

XL: approx. 115 cm

Materials:

Yarn: Shamrock Yarns, Mercerised Cotton – colour 140 mint green

Knitting needle: circular knitting needle size 3 (40 cm)

Knitting needle: circular knitting needle size 3.5 (40 cm, 60 cm and 80 cm)

Yarn consumption:

6 skeins of Shamrock Yarns, Mercerised Cotton for size S

6 skeins of Shamrock Yarns, Mercerised Cotton for size M

7 skeins of Shamrock Yarns, Mercerised Cotton for size L

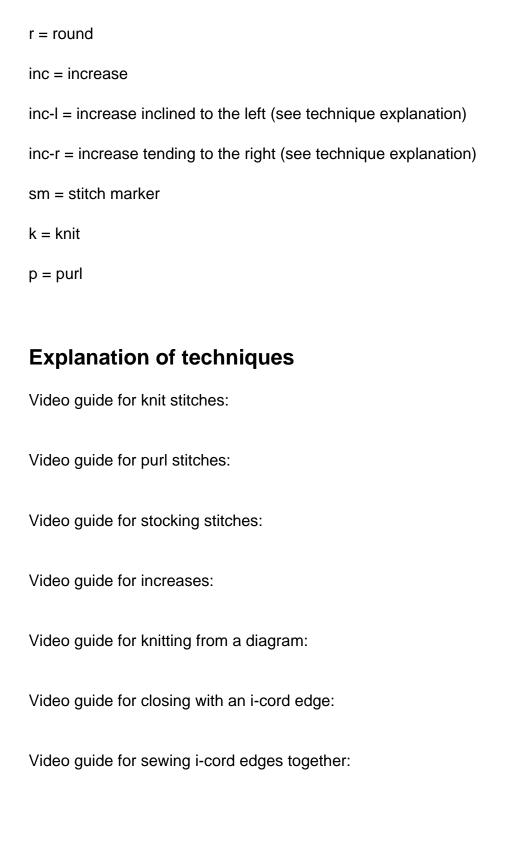7 skeins of Shamrock Yarns, Mercerised Cotton for size XL

Knitting tension:

23s x 32r on needle size 3.5 mm (in pattern)

26s x 32r on needle size 3.5 mm in stocking stitches

Abbreviations

st = stitch

r = round

inc = increase

inc-l = increase inclined to the left (see technique explanation)

inc-r = increase tending to the right (see technique explanation)

sm = stitch marker

k = knit

p = purl

Explanation of techniques

Video guide for knit stitches:

Video guide for purl stitches:

Video guide for stocking stitches:

Video guide for increases:

Video guide for knitting from a diagram:

Video guide for closing with an i-cord edge:

Video guide for sewing i-cord edges together:

Instructions

Diagram (see alternative diagram at the end of the pattern):

Square = knit

Circle = purl

START:

Cast on 104 (110) 116 (122) sts on circular needle size 3 mm. Work 5 rounds in the round in rib (1 k, 1 p). This is the neck edge.

Switch to needle size 3.5 mm.

Now divide the piece into back piece, front piece and sleeves while working in stocking stitch in the round.

It is divided as follows:

Knit 21 (22) 23 (25) sts, put in a sm, knit 3 sts (raglan), put in a sm, knit 6 (6) 6 (6) sts (left shoulder), put in a sm, knit 3 sts (raglan), put in a sm, knit 40 (43) 46 (49) sts (front), put in a sm, knit 3 sts (raglan), put in a sm, knit 6 (6) 6 (6) sts (right shoulder), put in a sm, knit 3 sts (raglan), put in a sm, knit the remaining 19 (21) 23 (24) sts.

RAGLAN INCREASES:

Now knit yoke the piece where raglan increases are made. To do this, work inc on each side of the raglan markers on every other row. At the same time, work pearl rib between the raglan markers.

It is done as follows:

*Knit until first sm, make an inc-r, move sm, knit 1k, 1p, 1k, move sm, make an inc-l, knit until third sm, make an inc-r, move sm, knit 1k, 1p, 1k, move sm, make an inc-l, knit until fifth sm. Make an inc-r, move sm, knit 1k, 1p, 1k, move sm, make an inc-l, knit until seventh sm, make an inc-r, move sm, knit 1k, 1p, 1k, move sm, make an inc-l, knit k until the stitch marker.

Knit one round k (where all 3 raglan sts are also k).* Repeat *-* 29 (32) 35 (38) times in total.

You now have 336 (366) 396 (426) sts.

Now put the sleeve stitches to rest, making up the 64 (70) 76 (82) stitches between the 2 raglan pieces on each side, the raglan pieces are part of the body. Start at the stitch marker and knit to second sm (remove the first sm along the way), remove the sm and rest the next 64 (70) 76 (82) sts. Cast on 4 sts under sleeve, remove third sm. Knit r to sixth sm (remove 4 and 5 sm along the way), remove sm and rest also these 64 (70) 76 (82) sts, cast on 4 sts under armhole and remove the seventh sm. Knit k to the beginning of the round (removing the eighth sm along the way).

The body now has 216 (234) 252 (270) sts.

BODY:

Knit one round p.

Now work in the round following the diagram (beg in bottom right corner) for 10 (10) 12 (12) cm, or until you have the desired length of the pattern. Be sure to finish so that the cacti are "whole".

Now work in stocking stitches in the round until the sweater has a length of approx. 50 (52) 54 (57) cm measured from the beginning of the stocking stitches at the neck, or until the t-shirt has the desired length.
Finish with an i-cord edge consisting of 4 sts. The i-cord edge is worked by casting on 4 sts, * knit 3 k, and knit the next 2 sts together in turned k, move the 4 knitted sts back to the left needle* repeat *-* the round out. See technique explanation above if necessary.

SLEEVES:

Pick up the 64 (70) 76 (82) sts you put to rest earlier. Finish the edge with an i-cord as described above, the sts should not be picked up under the sleeve. The stitches under the armhole are left "unknitted" so that the i-cord edge creates a sort of arch above.

ASSEMBLY/FINISHING:

Fasten all loose ends and wash the t-shirt. Please share photos of your work on Instagram with #cactustee #ritokrea @krea_lea @ritohobby.co.uk

ALTERNATIVE DIAGRAM:

While testing the pattern, Malou (@malouskrea) came up with an alternative diagram that allows more air between the cacti.

If you want to work this diagram, cast on a different number of sts under the sleeves. Cast on 4 (3) 6 (5) sts under sleeve.

Knit a row of p before starting the diagram.

Design: @krea_lea (Lea Hansen)