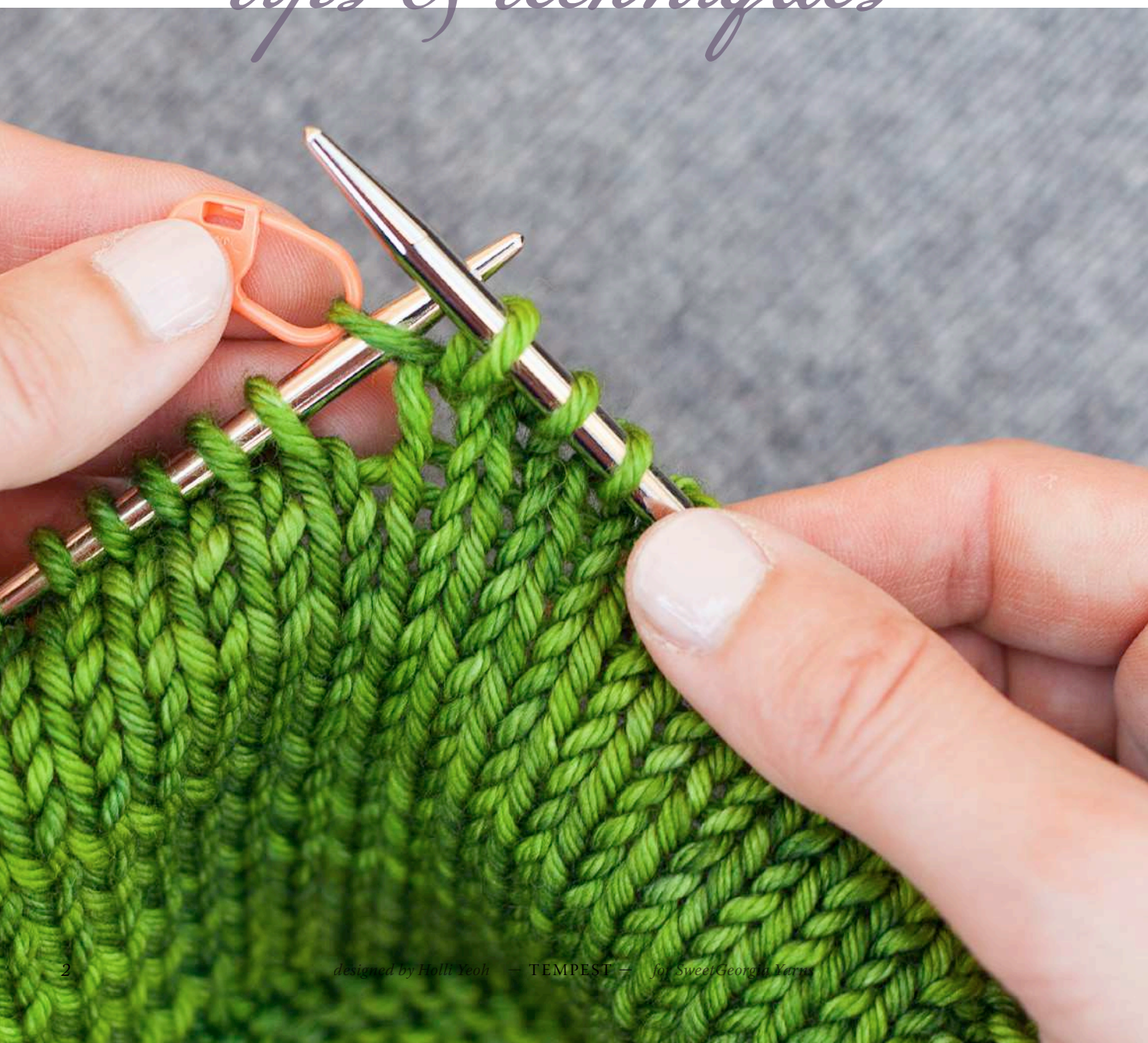
tips & techniques



Care and attention to detail can ensure that the hand-knit garment you make has a polished, professional look. The *Tips & Techniques* here will give you clear guidance to create a garment that you will be proud to wear and that will become a staple of your wardrobe. Video tutorials are available on the book's website, *tempestknit.com*.

UNDERSTANDING EASE

Ease is the difference between actual body measurements and the finished measurements of the garment. For example, oversized sweaters generally have 4" (10 cm) or more of positive ease, meaning the circumference at the bust of the sweater is at least 4" (10 cm) greater than the circumference of your body at the bust.

In knitting patterns, the bust measurement is taken around the fullest part of the breasts. This isn't the same as a bra size, which is measured just underneath the breasts. Have someone help you to determine your accurate bust measurement. The tape measure should be parallel to the floor all the way around and not digging in.

When selecting the size to knit, take into account how you like your clothes to fit. Grab a couple of your favourite sweaters and measure the bust on them as a point of comparison with your bust measurement.

You might be surprised to find that they are smaller or the same size as your physical measurements. This is considered negative and zero ease respectively and it's what you find in fitted sweaters. Socks, hats, gloves and mitts also have negative ease. It's what helps them stay in place.

Regular ease is generally considered to be about 2" (5 cm) of positive ease. Of course, what is considered "regular" changes with the fashions and times and personal taste.

How to use this information when choosing the size to knit

All of the sweater patterns in this collection provide the "to fit" measurements which are actual bust measurements not including ease. The "finished measurements" are exactly that, the finished measurements of the garment. We've also included information on ease and suggested fit to help you choose your desired size and fit.

If you're between sizes, choose the smaller size if you like a form-fitted look or the larger size if you prefer a more generous fit.

WORKING WITH HAND-DYED YARNS

Working with hand-dyed and hand-painted yarns can be tremendously rewarding. It's a joy to see the nuances of colour as the yarn passes through your fingers… However, the nature of hand-dyed yarns is such that when knitting with a multicoloured skein of yarn two areas of the same colour can come into contact with one another on subsequent rows causing pools of colour to form. This pooling effect can be desirable or it may just be distracting causing stripes and unattractive blobs of colour.



Example of Alternating Skeins: alternating between three skeins with a single row per skein (upper half) minimizes the pooling effect that can occur when knitting with a single skein of hand-dyed yarn (lower half).

COMPENSATING FOR POOLING

There are many strategies for working with hand-dyed yarns to help avoid the distraction of uneven colour.

Alternate Skeins

Working with more than one skein at a time will break up the pooling effect. However when two skeins are used, although some pooling will be disturbed, there is still the potential for a striped effect caused by working two rows with skein A alternating with two rows of skein B. Using three skeins further breaks up the pooling by working a single row per skein. The example here shows a striped effect at the bottom which was broken up higher up using the three skeins strategy.

Projects in this book that employed the three skein approach are *Seaswell*, *Stormwatch* and the sleeves on *Eventide*.

Work with a double strand

Holding two strands of a lighter weight yarn together to create a heavier weight fabric can also break up the pooling effect. *Third Beach* and *Haven* are both worked in this manner. If there's a great discrepancy between the skeins in a multi-skein project, then working with strands from two separate skeins is a good way to blend the colour.

GAUGE & STITCH COUNT AFFECT POOLING

Sometimes pooling can appear as a spiral of colour in a piece that is knit in the round. The appearance of the spiral will be affected by the number of stitches (circumference) as well as the gauge at which the stitches are worked. So different-sized pieces (socks, mitts, etc.) will pool differently.

The spiral effect happens when the amount of yarn required to complete the round is slightly more or less than the circumference of the original skein that was hand painted. Each strand

in the skein is a single colour repeat. As each subsequent round is knit, the colours in the repeat stack upon the previous rounds. A colourful stripe that appears to spiral to the right happens when the knitted round takes less yarn than the colour repeat. It will spiral to the left when the knitted round takes more yarn than the colour repeat. The closer the length of the colour repeat is to the amount of yarn in a round, the wider the spiral stripe.

If either the stitch count or the tension changes it will affect the amount of yarn required to complete the round, subsequently changing the effect of the spiral. The *Procella* hat and mitts worked in Amethyst illustrate this principle.

MULTIPLE SKEIN PROJECTS

Sweaters require several skeins in the same colourway. While all skeins might be dyed in the same pot, there will still be variation between and within each skein. For best results, open up all the skeins and examine the colours. Plan out where to use the skeins in the project so you're not left with a jarring colour difference when joining a new skein. We employed this strategy with *Watermark*. The brighter skeins were chosen for the bottom of the front and back. The deeper skeins were used for the upper torso front and back. The sleeves employed a bit of juggling so the raglan shaping matched the deeper colour of the body. The skein that was least like the others could be used in the cowl because it is a stand alone element in the design.

Haven also benefited from this strategy. One of the main colour skeins was lighter than the rest. Since *Haven* was also worked by holding two strands of yarn together throughout the project, the lighter skein was blended in by combining it with a second main colour skein.

JOINING A NEW SKEIN

Blending

Hand-dyed skeins are one-of-a-kind even when they are part of the same dye lot. There can be slight variations between the skeins affecting the overall appearance when knit up. To minimize a distinct line between two skeins, try alternating the two for several rows before working entirely with the second skein. There wasn't much pooling with the *Watermark* design, but there were differences between skeins, which were minimized by alternating.

Desired Pooling

When you have a wonderful pooling effect happening and it's time to join a new skein, disaster can loom! The key is to identify the colour repeat and then find the same location in the repeat in the second skein so you can join at the same place in the repeat. Make sure you haven't reversed the repeat though! You want the colour sequence in the repeat to appear in the same order in the new skein as in the old one. We used these principles when joining skeins for the *Procella* hat and mitts and the *Ebb & Flow* blanket.



Example of gauge affecting pooling: two right *Procella* mitts knit with slightly different tension result in two very different pooling patterns.



Example of a multiple skein project: slight colour differences in hand-dyed skeins are minimized by strategically arranging the skeins within the garment.

JAPANESE SHORT ROWS

There are several ways to work short rows. One of my favourites is the Japanese method. Unlike the more traditional "wrap and turn," stitches at the turning point are not wrapped. This method uses a smaller loop of yarn to help close up the gap created by turning and working in the other direction.

Short rows are a two-part operation. First you work a partial row, then turn and work in the opposite direction. Later the hole caused by turning is closed.

MARKING THE TURNING POINT

Step 1





Work to the turning point; turn.

Step 2



Slip 1 stitch purlwise.

Step 3







Place a self-locking stitch marker around the working strand of yarn. Snug the marker up against your knitting and work the next stitch, trapping the marker in place.

CLOSING THE GAPS

Step 1



On a subsequent row, work up to the gap adjacent to the marked stitch.

Step 2





Grasp the stitch marker and gently pull it to create a small loop of yarn. Place the loop on the left hand needle.

Step 3







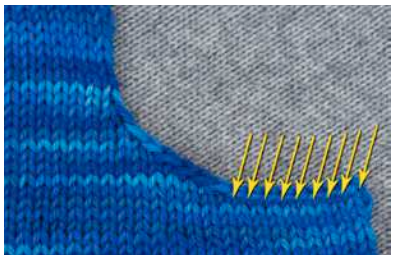
Work the next stitch together with the loop of yarn. Remove the marker and continue.

PICKING UP STITCHES

My preferred method for the *pick up and knit* instruction is to insert the needle into the edge of the knitted fabric, wrap the yarn around the needle and draw a loop through in a knitwise manner. The key to a smooth finish is knowing exactly where to insert the needle. To clarify, throughout this section, I'm using the term "pick up" to mean pick up and knit. My patterns instruct the knitter to pick up and knit.

Generally edgings are worked with a needle one or two sizes smaller than the rest of the project.

Bound off edges

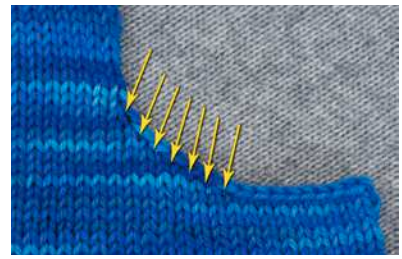






When picking up along a bound off edge, pick up one stitch for every bound off stitch. Insert your needle point into the centre of the stitch below the bound off edge and pick up a new stitch with the yarn held at the back of the work. Don't pick up stitches in the spaces between stitches.

Diagonal edges

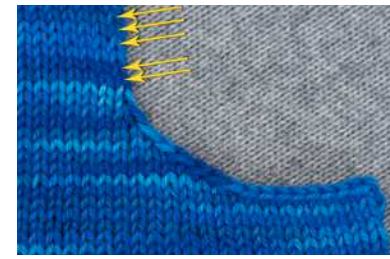




Using the Bias Bind-Off for diagonal edges, as explained on page 10 in *Tips & Techniques*, simplifies where to pick up new stitches. The principle is the same as for regular bound off edges—pick up stitch for stitch. It may be a little more difficult to see the full stitch below the bound off edge. Stretch the knitting out until you see both sides of the v-shaped stitch and insert your needle into the middle to pick up the new stitch.

Don't be tempted to simply slip your needle under the neat and tidy chain stitches that form the bound off edge. If you do that, your knitting will not flow neatly from the main piece onto your applied edging because you'll be picking up between the stitches.

Vertical edges









Vertical edges (cont.)



Knit stitches are wider than they are tall which means that generally you'll need to pick up fewer stitches than there are rows along selvedge edges. I like to pick up at a ratio of 5 stitches for every 7 rows. I insert the needle between the first and second stitch from the edge.

PROBLEM SOLVING

When picking up stitches for an edge treatment, the number of stitches to pick up and knit that are noted in a pattern should be considered a suggestion only. There are variables unique to each knitter that affect gauge. These in turn affect the number of stitches that will fit along an edge without compressing it or stretching it out of shape.

The knitted edging is warped

Even if you're able to pick up the exact number of stitches recommended in a pattern, sometimes the edging doesn't fit the body properly.

If your button band edging pulls up from the bottom and down from the top creating a concave curve along the outer edge, you need to add more stitches or use a larger sized knitting needle.

If your knitted edge bows out, that indicates that too many stitches were picked up for your gauge. You could either try again with fewer stitches or use a smaller needle.

You need a specific number of stitches

Sometimes the number of stitches to pick up is easily changed while at other times the edging requires a specific number of stitches to work the next part of the pattern, whether it's to evenly align the buttonholes or to set up a stitch pattern as in the *Watermark* design. Be sure to read ahead in the pattern to determine whether the stitch count is critical.

There are a couple of approaches for adjusting the edging to work with your gauge.

Option one: If you can't change the number of stitches to pick up, consider changing the needle size as described in *The knitting edging is warped* section above.

Option two: Pick up stitches based on the guidelines above but, in the first row after the pick up row, adjust the number of stitches to match the stitch count in the pattern by increasing or decreasing evenly. Be sure that you've placed your stitches (and increases or decreases) symmetrically so your edging isn't lop-sided.

BIAS BIND-OFF

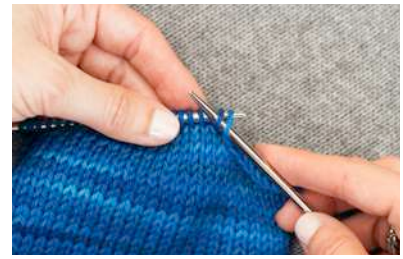
The Bias Bind-Off provides a smooth finished effect for diagonal bind-offs such as on the neckline, but a traditional bind-off will work too. All slip stitches are done as if to purl.

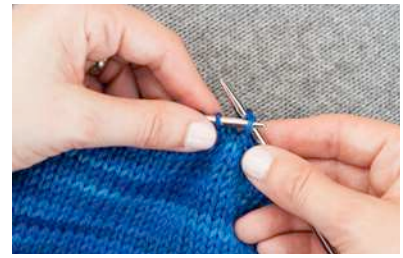
Step 1



Slip the last st in the row *before* the bind off.

Step 2







Turn the work and slip the first 2 sts to the right hand needle, pass first st over 2nd st, bind off remaining sts (if any) in the usual manner.

Finished Result



This method creates a lovely edge that doesn't require any extra finishing; although for many designs, including the ones in this book, you'll need to pick up stitches for an edge treatment.

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SUPPORT

For pattern support, please email *info@holliyeoh.com*.

#TEMPESTKNIT

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Tips & Techniques is an excerpt from Tempest, a collection of 11 handknit patterns
by Vancouver knitwear designer, Holli Yeoh,
for the artisan hand-dyed yarn company, SweetGeorgia Yarns

holliyeoh

sweetgeorgia
passionate + relentless + unapologetic colour