

## Basic Black

by Glenna C (originally published in Magknits November 2007)

### Difficulty level

Intermediate



During the in-between weather of spring and fall I find myself reaching for simple, versatile layers, and basic black is never out of style. I have several plain button cardigans that are extremely practical, but I needed something similar with a bit of shape and flair – enter the Basic Black cardigan! What this sweater lacks in complexity it makes up for in practicality – it is light enough to take away the slight chill that accompanies transitional seasons and late summer evenings, but the subtle waist-shaping, flattering V-neck, and cropped sleeves also take this sweater from daytime to evening in comfort.

## Sizes

Finished bust 31 (35, 39, 43, 47, 51, 55)" [79 (89, 99, 109, 119, 130, 140) cm]

## Materials

8 (9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16) skeins Plymouth Yarn Wildflower DK (51% cotton, 49% acrylic; 137 yds [125 m] per 50 g), color Black

US 4 [3.5 mm] needles

US 6 [4 mm] needles

5 3/4"-inch [19 mm] buttons

tapestry needle

stitch holder

### Yarn substitutes:

A word of warning - Plymouth Wildflower DK can be quite "splitty." Some light-weight substitution candidates are Knitpicks Shine Sport, Rowan Wool Cotton, or Elann Luna. Virtually any DK-weight yarn may be substituted.

## Gauge

22 sts and 28 rows = 4" [10 cm] in stockinette with larger needles

## Stitch Instructions

### 2 x 2 Rib:

Worked over a multiple of 4 sts + 2

Row 1 (WS): P2, \*k2, p2; rep from \* to end.

Row 2 (RS): K2, \*p2, k2; rep from \* to end.

Rep rows 1-2.

SSP: Sl 2 sts kwise one at a time. Return slipped sts to left needle. P2tog tbl.

## Pattern

### Back

With smaller needles, cast on 94 (106, 118, 126, 138, 148, 158) sts.

Work in 2 x 2 Rib until piece measures 4" [10 cm], ending with a WS row.

### Waist shaping:

Change to larger needles and stockinette. Work 2 rows even.

Dec row (RS): K2, k2tog, knit to last 4 sts, ssk, k2—2 sts dec'd.

Work 3 rows even.

Rep last 4 rows 7 (8, 8, 8, 8, 8, 8) times more—78 (88, 100, 108, 120, 130, 140) sts.

Inc row (RS): K2, m1, knit to last 2 sts, m1, k2—2 sts inc'd.

Work 5 rows even.

Rep last 6 rows 4 (4, 4, 5, 5, 5, 6) times more—88 (98, 110, 120, 132, 142, 154) sts.

Work even until piece measures 15 (15.5, 16, 16.5, 17, 17, 17)" [38 (39.5, 40.5, 42, 43, 43, 43) cm] from cast-on edge, ending with a WS row.

### **Armhole shaping:**

BO 3 (4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12) sts at beg of next 2 rows—82 (90, 100, 108, 116, 122, 130) sts.

Dec row (RS): K2, ssk, knit to last 4 sts, k2tog, k2—2 sts dec'd.

Next row (WS): Purl.

Rep last 2 rows 1 (3, 5, 7, 9, 9, 11) times more—78 (82, 88, 92, 96, 102, 106) sts rem.

Work even until armhole measures 7.5 (8, 8, 8.5, 9, 10, 10)" [19 (20.5, 20.5, 21.5, 23, 25.5, 25.5) cm], ending with a WS row.

### **Shoulder shaping:**

Next row: K16 (16, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24) sts and place on a stitch holder for right shoulder. BO center 46 (50, 52, 52, 54, 56, 58) sts, knit to end.

Working on left shoulder only, BO 4 (4, 6, 6, 7, 7, 8) sts at beg of next row (WS). Work 1 row even. BO 6 (6, 6, 7, 7, 8, 8) sts at beg of next row. Work 1 row even. BO rem sts.

Replace held sts on needle and complete right shoulder as for left, reversing shaping.

### **Left Front**

With smaller needles, CO 46 (54, 58, 62, 70, 74, 78) sts.

Work in 2 x 2 Rib until piece measures 4" [10 cm], ending with a WS row.

### **Waist shaping:**

Change to larger needles and stockinette. Work 2 rows even.

Dec row (RS): K2, k2tog, knit to end—1 st dec'd.

Work 3 rows even.

Rep last 4 rows 7 (8, 8, 8, 8, 8, 8) times more—38 (45, 49, 53, 61, 65, 69) sts.

Inc row (RS): K2, m1, knit to end—1 st inc'd.

Work 5 rows even.

Rep last 6 rows 4 (4, 4, 5, 5, 5, 6) times more—43 (50, 54, 59, 67, 71, 76) sts.

Work 1 RS row even.

### **Neck and armhole shaping:**

Read this section through before beginning. Neckline and armhole are shaped simultaneously.

Neck shaping:

Dec row (WS): P2, p2tog, purl to end—1 st dec'd.  
Dec row (RS): Knit to last 4 sts, k2tog, k2—1 st dec'd.  
Rep last 2 rows twice more—37 (44, 48, 53, 61, 65, 70) sts.  
Next row: Purl.

Dec row (RS): Knit to last 4 sts, k2tog, k2—1 st dec'd.  
Rep last 2 rows 8 (11, 11, 12, 15, 16, 15) times more.

Work 3 rows even.

Dec row (RS): Knit to last 4 sts, k2tog, k2—1 st dec'd.  
Rep last 4 rows until 16 (16, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24) sts rem.

**AT THE SAME TIME**, when piece measures 15 (15.5, 16, 16.5, 17, 17, 17)" [38 (39.5, 40.5, 42, 43, 43, 43) cm] from cast-on edge, shape armhole as follows:

BO 3 (4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12) sts at beg of next RS row.

Work 1 row even.

Dec row (RS): K2, ssk, knit to end—1 st dec'd.  
Rep last 2 rows 1 (3, 5, 7, 9, 9, 11) times more.

After both neck and armhole shaping are complete, 16 (16, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24) sts rem. Work even until armhole measures 7.5 (8, 8, 8.5, 9, 10, 10)" [19 (20.5, 20.5, 21.5, 23, 25.5, 25.5) cm], ending with a WS row.

### Shoulder shaping:

BO 4 (4, 6, 6, 7, 7, 8) sts at beg of next row (RS). Work 1 row even. BO 6 (6, 6, 7, 7, 8, 8) sts at beg of next row. Work 1 row even. BO rem sts.

## Right Front

Work as for Left Front, reversing shaping.

## Sleeves

With smaller needles, cast on 62 (62, 66, 66, 70, 70, 74) sts.

Work in 2 x 2 Rib until piece measures 4" [10 cm], ending with a WS row.

Change to larger needles and stockinette. Work 2 rows even.

Inc row (RS): K2, m1, knit to last 2 sts, m1, k2—2 sts inc'd.

Work 5 (5, 5, 5, 5, 3, 3) rows even.

Rep last 6 (6, 6, 6, 6, 4, 4) rows 5 (7, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14) times more—74 (76, 82, 86, 92, 98, 104) sts.

Work even until piece measures 13 (13, 13.5, 14, 14.5, 14.5, 15)" [33 (33, 34.5, 35.5, 37, 37, 38) cm] from cast-on edge, ending with a WS row.

### Cap shaping:

BO 3 (4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12) sts at beg of next 2 rows—68 (68, 72, 74, 76, 78, 80) sts.

Dec row (RS): K2, ssk, knit to last 4 sts, k2tog, k2—2 sts dec'd.

Next row (WS): Purl.

Rep last 2 rows 5 (9, 7, 11, 12, 20, 20) times more—56 (52, 56, 50, 50, 36, 38) sts.  
Dec row (RS): K2, ssk, knit to last 4 sts, k2tog, k2—2 sts dec'd.  
Dec row (WS): P2, p2tog, purl to last 4 sts, ssp, p2—2 sts dec'd.  
Rep last 2 rows until 22 (22, 22, 24, 26, 26, 28) sts rem.  
BO 2 sts at beg of next 4 rows.  
BO rem 14 (14, 14, 16, 18, 18, 20) sts.

## Finishing

Block all pieces according to fiber content.  
Seam shoulders. Set in sleeves. Sew side and sleeve seams.

### Buttonbands and collar:

Mark center of back neck with safety pin or waste yarn. On left side, using smaller needles and with RS facing, pick up and knit sts for buttonband from center back neck to bottom of left front, picking up 4 sts for every 5 rows along the left front edge. Adjust number of sts as necessary to achieve a multiple of 4 sts + 2. Place a marker at the point of the V-neck.

Work 1 row 2 x 2 Rib, increasing 1 st at marker. Work 4 more rows in rib and BO in pattern.

On right side, pick up and knit sts as for left side. Work 1 row 2 x 2 rib, increasing 1 st at marker. On next row, work 5 buttonholes, evenly spaced along front edge.\* Work a total of 5 rows in rib, as for left side, and BO in pattern.

Attach buttons opposite buttonholes. Weave in ends. Block final garment as desired.

\*To make a buttonhole, BO 2 sts. On next row, when you reach a bound-off space, work a double YO. On the following row, work these yarnovers as you would regular stitches.

## Designer

Glenna lives, knits, and attends graduate school in Canada, with a constant wish for more knitting hours in the day. She enjoys working with practical and versatile patterns, and has fantasies about one day knitting all of her stash. [Blog](#) and [email](#).

