

PONCHO WITH FLOWING COLLAR

A CAT BORDHI DESIGN

This quick and easy poncho - with its mesmerizing currents of ocean colors and a collar that flows like sea foam - reflects the Nova Scotia birthplace of the Fleece Artist yarns that inspired it. Imagine it in other colors - autumn colors, mossy greens, or opalescent abalone shells. The collar may be worked in the same colorway as the body of the poncho (there will be enough yarn) if you like. Although this white collar appears lacy and intricate, it is ordinary stockinette, transformed into a magical mesh of bubbles by the exuberant loops of soft bouclé yarn.



Yarn: Fleece Artist Hand Dyed Dreadlocks (78% mohair, 13% wool, 9% nylon; 250 g/180 m), 2 skeins. For a collar in a contrasting color, you'll need about 40 meters.

Needles: (you may require a different size to get correct gauge) size 15 (10mm) circular, length 16" and 29"

Notions: tapestry needle, 4 stitch markers

Gauge: 8 sts = 4" (10 cm)

Finished size: Front neck to tip of hem 30", bottom edge 100", collar 4" high, 9" at front point, 24" around. If you'd like a larger poncho, continue increasing at shoulders for more than 7", then continue with front and back increases until poncho reaches desired length. You may require additional yarn.

A summary in plain English . . .

Beginning at the neck, cast on, join, and begin knitting. Four markers identify the center front, center back, and shoulders. Increase before and after each marker every other round until the knitting reaches past your shoulders, then continue with alternate round increases just in the front and back until you nearly reach the hem. Two rounds of knit 1, purl 1 keep the edge from curling before you bind off with applied I-cord. After picking up stitches around the neck, knit for several inches, then form the collar point by working back and forth over fourteen stitches,

decreasing until just one stitch remains. Work applied I-cord around collar edge, and you're done!

Starting at the neck

Note: Switch to the longer circular needle when your stitches become too crowded on the 16" needle.

With 16" needle and main color, loosely cast on 36 sts. Join, being careful not to twist sts. Knit 1 round, placing a marker every 9 sts. Increase round: *Knit 1, k1f&b (k into front and back of same st), k until 1 st remains before marker, k1f&b, repeat from * three more times. Knit 1 round. Repeat last 2 rounds (an increase round followed by a plain round) until section in between markers measures 7" from cast-on to needle (width at markers will be larger). Remove second and fourth markers (shoulder markers). Increase round: *Knit 1, k1f&b, k until 1 st before marker, k1f&b, repeat from * once more. Knit 1 round. Repeat last 2 rounds until area in between markers measures 24" from cast-on to needle. Stop increasing, and work 2 rounds of k1p1.

If you've never worked applied I-cord before, you are about to learn a wonderful binding off technique, first introduced by Elizabeth Zimmermann. Because the bouclé yarn is so fluffy, you'll be working I-cord with just 2 sts (it's commonly worked with 3 sts). It makes a lovely rounded edge, useful for finishing cuffs, necks, blankets, scarves, almost anything. Additional rounds of free I-cord give the hems of the poncho and collar more elasticity.

I-cord bind-off

You will use both applied and free I-cord:

Applied I-cord: *Knit 1, k next 2 sts together. Slip the 2 sts from the right needle to the left needle. (This is 1 round of applied I-cord.)

Free I-cord: Knit 2, slip both sts back to left needle. (This is 1 round of free I-cord.)

Cast on 2 sts using knitted cast-on (*knit 1 st, but do not move to right needle. Instead place on left needle. Make second st by knitting into this new st and placing on left needle*). *Work 3 rounds applied I-cord, then 1 round free I-cord. Repeat from * until you reach marker at other increase point. Work 2 rounds of free I-cord at point, then continue working 3 rounds applied I-cord followed by 1 round free I-cord until you meet start of I-cord. Work 2 rounds free I-cord and bind off, using tail to weave beginning and end of I-cord together.

Collar

With 16" needle and main color (or contrast color, if desired), pick up and knit 36 sts around neck edge, placing a marker at poncho's center front (choose either side as the front). Knit 11 rounds, then k 7 sts past marker. Turn work around, and p back 14 sts (7 past marker). Turn work, k 14. Turn work, p2tog, p 12. Turn work, k2tog, k 11. Continue working a decrease at the beginning of each short row until 1 st remains. Cut tail and weave in end.



When the collar flows down, the reverse stockinette side shows, emphasizing the curly bouclé loops and giving an impression of lacy seafoam.

Finishing

Beginning at one end of remaining stitches, pick up and k (*pick up a loop and k into it*) 14 sts evenly distributed between here and collar tip. Pick up and k 2 at collar tip, then another 14 sts evenly distributed up to other end of remaining stitches. Begin I-cord bind-off: work 3 rounds applied I-cord, then 1 round free I-cord until you meet start of I-cord. Bind off, leaving a tail to weave beginning and end of I-cord together. Weave in all ends.

Another way to begin poncho

Try using a provisional cast-on to start the neck, so these stitches are ready to knit the collar (instead of having to pick up stitches at the cast-on edge).

Fleece Artist Yarns are available on-line at www.colorsongyarn.com

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