

Needle and Arts

Fine Yarns

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West Coast Thrum Mittens



Pattern is given in Child (4 to 6 years)/Child (8 to 10 years)/Adult Medium/Adult Large. For in-between sizes chose the next size up, but work on smaller sized needles.

Thrum mittens were originally made for fishermen on the East Coast of Canada. The natural fleece inside the mittens felts on exposure to water and wear and provides the warmest mittens imaginable - great for our west coast climate too. Ours have been cross country skiing and winter hiking. Add stripes to the cuffs, use a contrast colour in any round of the pattern or change colour every four rounds for a bit of individuality. Any section of the mittens may be made shorter or longer by deleting or adding pattern repeats or rounds. Originally the mittens were made with the fibre left on the spinning room floor. This was made into fine “smoke rings” which were then knitted into the mittens. Making the individual thrums is a time consuming business. Our method of one long continuous strand of fibres works well and you can use carded wool roving or a single ply loosely spun yarn like Drops Eskimo.

Materials: 50—100 grams worsted weight wool yarn, or aran type wool yarn (Please note the mittens wear best if knitted in a wool yarn that is not too soft) I like LettLopi

Approx. 30 grams carded wool fleece or 50 gr. Drops Snow (previously Eskimo)

1 set each of 3.5 mm (US 4) and 4 mm (US 5) double pointed needles or 2 circs, or 1 long circ. depending on your knitting method.

Small stitch holder (large safety pin will do)

Tension: 9 stitches and 13 rows = 5 cm (2 inches) in thrum pattern on 4 mm needles.

To make Thrums: This is the non traditional way to make thrums, but it is far less time consuming. Pull the fleece into thin strands about 30 inches long and of even thickness (just a little thicker than your yarn when twisted). Twist slightly as you roll the fleece into small balls. You will be knitting in the fleece making a loose loop at back of work and will have a continuous strand of fleece on the inside of the mitten. Join the ends of the fleece as you knit by twisting together and rubbing between your fingers. If you are using Snow, it can be used as is.

Abbreviations:

T	thrum
sl	slip one
pssso	pass slip stitch over
tbl	through the back of the loop
beg	beginning

Pattern:

Row 1 (knit 2, T1) to end of round. Thrum: insert needle into stitch. Loop thrum around needle as if to knit and keep thrum loop to inside. Wrap yarn around needle and draw both thrum and yarn through stitch. (to keep loop fairly uniform, loop the thrum around 1 or 2 fingers before slipping around needle)

Row 2 (knit 2, knit 1 tbl of the T and wrapped stitch) Repeat to end of round.

Rows 3 and 4 Knit

These four rows complete pattern.

LEFT MITTEN

With smaller needles cast on 26/30/36/42. Divide stitches evenly onto three needles. Join, being careful not to twist the stitches. Continue in knit 1, purl 1 rib for 2 inches/2 1/4 inches/2 1/2 inches/3 inches. Increase 4/6/6/6 stitches, evenly spaced on last row. There will be 30/36/42/48 stitches on needles.

Change to larger needles:

All Sizes: Knit 2 rounds.

Repeat the 4 pattern rows 2/3/4/5 times.

All sizes: Repeat rows 1 and 2 of pattern.

Thumb Opening

Knit 1/2/1/2 stitches. Place next 6/7/9/10 stitches on holder, cast on 6/7/9/10 stitches and complete round.

Continue in pattern as set and work a further 20/24/28/31 rounds.

Top Shaping

Knit 5/5/7/8 stitches. Place marker

Knit 1/1/3/4 stitches. Place marker

Knit 14/17/18/20 stitches. Place marker.

Knit 1/1/3/4 stitches. Place marker.

Knit 9/12/11/12 stitches to finish round.

Keeping to pattern, decrease round

Knit 3/3/5/6 stitches, knit 2 together

Knit 1/1/3/4 stitches, s1, knit 1, pss0

Knit 10/13/14/16 stitches, knit 2 together

Knit 1/1/3/4 stitches, s1, knit 1, pss0

Knit 7/10/9/10 stitches to finish round

Continue in this manner decreasing before first marker, after second marker, before third marker and after fourth marker until 10/12/14/16 stitches remain.

Change to smaller needles. Knit 2 together 5/6/7/8 times. Cut yarn leaving approx. 6-8 inch tail. Draw through remaining stitches and pull firmly to close.

Secure well and weave in end.

THUMB Both mittens

Pick up 9/10/11/13 stitches on sides and cast on edge, knit across the 6/7/9/10 stitches from stitch holder, dividing stitches evenly on 3 needles.

Next Round Continuing in pattern, decrease 0/1/1/1 stitch on each side of opening by knitting 2 stitches together. There will be 15/15/18/21 stitches in round. Continue in pattern for 9/13/17/19 more rounds. Knit 1, knit 2 together (2 together will be the 2 stitches between thrums) 5/5/6/7 times. **With smaller needles**, knit 2 together 5/5/6/7 times. Cut yarn leaving approx. 6-8 inch tail. Draw through remaining stitches and pull firmly to close. Secure well and weave in end

RIGHT MITTEN

Work the same as left mitten to thumb opening.

Knit round to last 8/10/11/13 stitches. Place next 6/7/9/10 stitches on holder and cast on 6/7/9/10 stitches. Continue as for left mitten until top shaping

Knit 8/11/10/11 stitches. Place marker

Knit 1/1/3/4 stitches. Place marker

Knit 14/17/18/20 stitches. Place marker

Knit 1/1/3/4 stitches. Place marker

Knit 6/9/8/9 stitches to finish round.

Decrease before and after markers as for left mitten and finish off the same.

When mittens are finished, turn inside out and gently pull on thrums to tighten.

After mittens are worn a few times, some pilling of the fleece may occur on outside of mitten. Cut the pills off with a sharp pair of scissors.

Mittens may be hand washed in cool water. Rinse well and leave flat to dry.