

Kells Headband by LFSAlden

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Basics This double-thickness headband is knit in the round along the short dimension, adding rows along the long dimension, joined to the provisional cast-on at the back seam. The stockinette inner surface keeps your ears toasty and the beautiful cables of the outer surface, knit against a reverse stockinette background, are copied from Ireland's great treasure: The Book of Kells.

Yarn Use something smooth and soft in a fingering weight. A single-ply yarn will give you crisp stitch definition and the cables will pop; a color changing yarn will make the cables subtler. I chose Wool Bam Boo from Classic Elite and needed 151 yards.

Needles Long circulars, small size. Gauge is flexible to your taste. I chose 2.75 mm.

Supplies half a meter of smooth scrap yarn
cabling needle or double-point needle
tapestry needle

Skills provisional cast-on
knit
knit through back loop
purl
cabling
Kitchener stitch
Magic Loop or the wherewithal to translate into your circular method of choice.

Gauge Knit a gauge swatch, 30 stitches x 10 rows.
Measure how many centimeters per 20 stitches. That will be the approximate width of the headband..
Adjust your needles until you get the width you want for your finished headband.

Hope you enjoy the project and the finished product! May it keep you and your loved ones toasty warm, My heartfelt thanks to my test knitters and to Ravelry.com.

LFSAlden

The Pattern

Provisionally cast-on 38 with smooth scrap.

Round One: K17, P1, K1tbl¹, P17, K1tbl, P1, join into a round being careful not to twist your work. If you use the Magic Loop method, let your loops lie between the K17s and the Purl stitches which flank them; the loops can hold this position throughout the work.

Repeat Round One for an inch or so.

K17, P1, K1tbl, P2, knit from chart, P2, K1tbl, P1 for every round.

After chart,

K17, P1, K1tbl, P17, K1tbl, P1 enough rows to make your desired length. Go slightly snugly.

Block flat.

Join with the provisionally cast-on rows using Kitchener Stitch².

1. K1tbl = knit one stitch by inserting the needle through the back loop
2. For excellent demonstrations and explanations of the Kitchener Stitch, see
 - a. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ZTxeHz7rtw>
 - b. <http://www.knitty.com/issuesummer04/FEATtheresasum04.html>

Chart Abbreviations

- = Purl

| = Knit

a blank square means that there is no stitch and no open space in your work, stitches will be added in a few rows and the space is being held open in the chart for them.

W = Make one stitch into three by knitting into the front of one stitch without letting the old stitch leave the left needle, then knitting into the back of the same stitch. Now let the old stitch leave the left needle. Look between and below the two new stitches on the right needle, find the short vertical loop and pick it up with your left needle. Knit into that.

M = Make three stitches into one by slipping two stitches onto the right needle purlwise. Lift up the first (rightmost) of those two stitches and cast it off the needle, looping it over its neighbor to the left (which happens to be the center stitch of the chart). Now slip that hardworking center stitch back onto the left needle and cast off its neighbor to the left by looping *that* one over the center stitch. Finally knit that center stitch.

M = Make three stitches into one by slipping two stitches onto the right needle purlwise. Lift up the first (rightmost) of those two stitches and cast it off the needle, looping it over its neighbor to the left. Now slip that center stitch back onto the left needle and cast off its neighbor to the left by looping *that* one over the center stitch. Finally **purl** that center stitch.

RITE = Travel rightward. Slip the next (purl) stitch onto cabling needle, hold in back of your work. Knit the next three knit stitches and then purl the stitch held on the cabling needle.

LEFT = Travel leftward. Slip the next three (knit) stitches onto cabling needle, hold in front of your work. Purl the next (purl) stitch and then knit the stitches held on the cabling needle.

ROVERL = Cable right over left. Slip the first three (knit) stitches onto your cabling needle and hold in front of your work. Knit the next three (knit) stitches across and then knit the stitches held on your cabling needle.

LXSEVEN = Left crosses right involving seven stitches. Slip the first four stitches (3 knits and a purl) onto your cabling needle and hold in back of your work. Knit three across. Slip the purl stitch from your cabling needle back onto the left needle. **Knit** it. Knit the three stitches from the cabling needle.

RXSEVEN = Right crosses left involving seven stitches. Slip the first four stitches (3 knits and a purl) onto your cabling needle and hold in front of your work. Knit three across. Slip the purl stitch from your cabling needle back onto the left needle. **Knit** it. Knit the three stitches from the cabling needle.

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The Magic Bits

The smooth inner surface of the headband will soothe you and the strong knotwork on the outer surface will help block the negative energy of others. The dragon's eye medallion at the center of the work should rest over your Third Eye when you wear this headband.

Choose a yarn that was created in a sustainable manner and which feels comforting to you. Remember your color correspondences.

Bless your needles and fiber before you begin work.

The Jocular Bits

Wool Bam Boo is lovely, sustainable, yadda, yadda, and as slippery as a newborn in a bath. Mistakes come out easily. So does everything else.

I went into a huge description of how to divide what by what from your original swatch to figure out how many repeats of the cable pattern to make and how many extra rows to fit in where to make up distance. It involved multiplying by your ear width. I finally went through these machinations for my own project. One repeat. And so solidly "one repeat" that the only people who could fit two repeats are lace workers or folks with fantastically huge heads, and they can do their own pattern adjustment.

Do not ask your 9 year old to do a crochet chain stitch for the provisional cast on, even though he can do a chain stitch way better than you. Your 9 year old is really proud of his tight, even chain stitches and it takes a nuclear blast to cast into them.

Wool Bam Boo is tougher than iron. You can, to take an example completely at random, rip this stuff out right back to the cast on and re-work it *four times* and it still knits up beautifully. Not that I know anyone who had to rip out to the cast on three times, mind you...

I thought that this would be my pay-very-little-attention-to-it and hold conversations while I knit project. I was wrong.

I have no bloody idea why the edges curl the way they do before blocking. They're not spozed to.

DO NOT PIN THIS PROJECT TO YOUR HEAD TO BLOCK IT. I'm just sayin'.

Sorry about the RITE abbreviation for "Travel Rightward" in the chart. It had to be four letters and RIGT just looked like I can't spell. Besides, I get Pun Points for using RITE in a magical pattern; I also get them for the one in the previous sentence. And, well, RIGH means "king" in Gaelic and we're sort of knitting a crown, so I get more Pun Points, right?