



Easy any-size beginner hat recipe

This is knitted flat. The bottom of the hat will curl up to make a nice rolled brim (and hide any messy cast-ons). The instructions below give rules of thumb for any size of hat using any weight of yarn.

You start at the bottom of the hat and work your way to the top. The bottom of the hat is just a rectangle, once it is long enough you decrease several times, then cut your yarn, pull through the stitches left on the needle to secure them, then sew up the sides. That's it.

Pick your size, pick your yarn, then look at the tables to find out how much yarn you need, how many stitches to cast on and how long to knit for before beginning your decreases.

Pattern

Cast on your stitches, number given in table 1, loosely – if they are tight, your brim will be very tight on the forehead. You can cast on over two needles to stop this. Any cast on method can be used. Use the knitting needle size recommended on the yarn ballband (you may need to change needle size to match the gauge given in table 1).

Knit in stocking stitch for the number of inches specified in table 2. Stocking stitch is when you knit every odd row, purl every even row. The cast on edge will roll up when it's actually worn – the measurement in the table are with it unrolled. If possible, wrap it around the intended's head – the decrease rows quickly narrow down the hat so once it covers to the top of the head it's long enough.

Then begin decreases:

Row 1: K1,*K4, K2tog*, repeat from * to * across row, then K1. The very first and last stitch on all rows are called the selvedge – they are used to sew up the seam neatly and do not contribute to the width of the hat.

All even rows: Purl.

Row 3: K1,*K3, K2tog*, K1 across row.

Row 5: K1,*K2, K2tog*, K1 across row.

Row 7: K1,*K1, K2tog*, K1 across row.

Row 9: K1,*K2tog*, K1 across row.





Row 11: If you have more than 10 stitches left, do an extra row of *K2tog* across row – if there is an odd number, just knit the last stitch (and ignore the two edge stitches).

Break the yarn, leaving a tail about three times longer than the length of your hat. With a large needle, thread this strand of yarn through the remaining loops on the needle, and to stop a hole from forming at the top, thread it round a second time. Sew the sides of the hat together, starting with the top – the neatest way is to use mattress stitch, with the right side (smooth side) facing outwards. When you get to the rolled up bit, switch sides and mattress stitch on the inside (as the inside will be the outside when the brim rolls up). Weave in the ends of the yarn on the inside of the rolled up brim.

Handwash your hat and if possible dry it over a balloon or round icecream tub – it will look even better.



To convert to knitting in the round

Minus two from the cast on number in table 1, as you won't need to sew a seam.

Instead of purling the even rows, knit them.

If the hat is bigger than 40cm/16", you can knit the bottom part of the hat on a 40cm circular needle. You'll need to switch to double pointed needles for the top of the hat when the stitches have been decreased enough that you can't stretch the stitches around the circle.

Table 1 - Stitches to cast on

		Actual head circumference						
		13.5"	15.5"	19"	19.75"	21.25"	22.25"	23.25"
		Newborn	Baby	Toddler	Child 3-10	Teen	Woman	Man
Weight of yarn	4ply 28st / 4"	86	104	122	128	140	146	152
	Sport 25st/ 4"	80	92	110	116	122	128	134
	DK 22st/ 4"	68	80	98	104	110	116	122
	Worsted 20st/ 4"	62	74	86	92	98	104	110
	Aran 18st/ 4"	56	68	80	86	92	92	98
	Chunky 13st/ 4"	44	50	56	62	68	68	74



Table 2 - Length to knit before decreases

	Newborn	Baby	Toddler	Child 3-10	Teen	Woman	Man
Inches before decreases	4.0	4.5	5.5	6.0	6.5	7.0	7.5

Some of the teen/woman and woman/man sizes have the same number of cast on stitches, but the head size table recommends you knit for different lengths - you basically get the same hat which is longer or shorter. This is due to choosing to base decreases on a multiple of six stitches for the first decrease row, and when using thicker yarn there's only so many multiple of six you need to fit a head. Because the brim rolls, it doesn't matter much if you decide to make it a bit longer or shorter before starting your decreases.

Table 3 - How much yarn you need in yards/metres

	Newborn	Baby	Toddler	Child 3-10	Teen	Woman	Man
4ply	76/70	98/90	146/133	166/152	206/188	219/200	240/219
Sport	68/62	88/80	132/121	149/136	185/169	197/180	216/197
DK	62/57	80/73	120/110	136/124	169/154	179/164	197/180
Worsted	58/53	75/69	113/103	130/119	158/144	169/154	185/169
Aran	50/46	64/59	97/89	109/100	136/124	144/132	158/144
Chunky	39/36	51/47	76/69	86/79	103/94	118/108	129/118

10% error margin included to account for errors in gauge, short balls and allowance for sewing up.

The theory

The hat circumference should be 5-10% smaller than their actual forehead circumference, so the hat is stretched a bit so it clings to the head.

The number of stitches to cast on is figured out by (circumference of head x 0.925 x number of stitches you get in 4")/4.

Round this figure up or down to get a whole number divisible by 6, then add 2 for the selvedge.

This hat has a smooth spiral pattern at the top when it is sewn up. If you start your decreases spaced further apart (i.e. begin with K10, K2tog, then do K9, K2tog, etc) you'll get a long pointy hat. If you're making a pointy hat, keep decreasing until you have only a couple of stitches left, for maximum pointiness. If you start them closer together (K1, K2tog, then do K2tog) you'll finish the hat sooner and have a gathered-in top.