



THE FANTASTIC MITTSTER FOX

by Alison Stewart-Guinee



As you may have guessed by its name, the inspiration for this pattern comes from Roald Dahl's classic tale, 'The Fantastic Mister Fox'. This charming story has long been a favorite in our home, and when my youngest began reading on his own, it was our tattered copy of this book that he chose to read over and over again. These mitts are my homage to the wily and loveably imperfect Mr. Fox. As cunning and versatile as Mr. Fox himself, they are designed to be ambidextrous and can be worn with their faces on the palm or facing out on the back of the hand. As an added feature, the face of the mitt is reinforced to offer extra warmth for little fingers.



» model: L » photos: Alison Stewart-Guinee

Sizes

2-4 years [4-7 years, 8 years to women's small].

Finished Measurements

Hand Circumference (not including thumb): 5½ [6, 6½] inches

Length from cuff to fingertips: 5¾-6¼ [7½-8, 8½-9] inches. The length of these mitts can be customized to fit the intended wearer.

Materials

Spud & Chloë™ Fine [80% Wool, 20% Silk, 248 yards/227 meters per 2.29 ounces/65 gram skein];

#7819 Orangutan (MC); 1 hank

#7800 Popcorn (CC); 1 hank

Recommended needle sizes

US #1½/2.50 mm double pointed needles (set of 5)

Do not hesitate to change needle size to obtain correct gauge.

Notions

Stitch Markers- including 1 contrasting marker to designate the beginning of the round

Stitch Holder or 6 inch scrap yarn

Tapestry needle

¼ inch buttons - 4

Sewing thread

Sewing needle

Brown embroidery floss or scrap sock yarn

Gauge

28 sts and 38 rows = 4 inches (10 cm) in Stockinette stitch
Do not hesitate to change needle size to obtain correct gauge.

Pattern Notes

These mittens are made in the round from cuff to fingertips. The ears and paws are worked in the round from picked up stitches along the body. The top of the mitten is closed by knitting the front and back together. The face is knitted from the mitten top and is folded over and sewn to the body. Button eyes and an embroidered nose complete the face. To avoid introducing a choking hazard for very little ones, embroidered eyes are recommended.

Skills Required

Knitting on dpns, picking up stitches, simple embroidery for the nose (satin stitch)

Instructions

Cuff (for both mittens)

Cast on 36 [40, 44] sts. Arrange stitches as evenly as possible on 3 dpns. Place contrasting marker and join work in the round, being careful not to twist sts. Work in k1, p1 ribbing for 1½ [2, 2½] inches.

Hand

Note: These mittens are designed to be worn on either hand. They are mirror images of one another. For this reason, you will need to make one mitten with the fox tail (thumb) to the left of the face and paws and the second mitten with the fox tail to the right of the face and paws. Thus, the thumb placement will be on opposite sides of the two mittens. After the gusset shaping is complete, the two mittens are worked using a single set of pattern instructions.

Set-up round

For Mitten with the Tail (thumb) to the Left of the Face: K18 [20, 22], place marker, m1, place marker, k18 [20, 22], m1, slip contrasting marker—38 [42, 46] sts.

For Mitten with the Tail (thumb) to the Right of the Face: K18 [20, 22], m1, place marker, k18 [20, 22], place a marker, m1, slip contrasting marker: 38 [42, 46] sts.

Gusset Shaping

The single stitch centered between the two markers comprise the thumb gusset. The thumb gusset is shaped by making 2 stitches in this section every 3rd round.

Rnds 1 and 2: Knit around.

For Mitten with the Tail (thumb) to the Left of the Face

Rnd 3: K18 [20, 22], sm, m1L, k to marker, m1R, sm, k19 [21, 23], sm: 40 [44, 48] sts total; 3 thumb gusset sts.

Rnds 4-18(21, 21): Repeat Rnds 1-3, 5 [6-6] times: 50 [56, 60] sts total; 13 [15, 15] thumb gusset sts.



Rnd 19(22, 22): K18 [20, 22], discard marker, place the thumb stitches on a holder or length of scrap yarn, using the backward loop method, cast on one st over the gap where the thumb sts were, sm, knit the remaining 19 [21, 23]

sts of the round—38 [42, 46] sts.

For Mitten with the Tail (thumb) to the Right of the Face

Rnd 3: K19 [21, 23], sm, k18 [20, 22], sm, m1L, k to marker, m1R, sm: 40 [44, 48] sts total; 3 thumb gusset sts.

Rnds 4-18 [21, 21]: Repeat Rnds 1-3, 5 [6-6] times: 50 [56, 60] sts total; 13 [15, 15] thumb gusset sts.

Rnd 19 [22, 22]: K19 [21, 23], sm, k18 [20, 22], discard marker, place the thumb stitches on a holder or length of scrap yarn, using the backward loop method, cast on one st over the gap where the thumb sts were: 38 [42, 46] sts.

The Remaining Instructions are for Both Mittens

Knit the next two rounds plain.

Paw Placement Rnd

In this rnd you will be purling several stitches to mark the placement of the paws. The paws will not be worked at this time. After the mitten is finished, the purl stitches that you make in this row will be picked up and the paws will be worked from them: K4 [4, 5], p4, k3 [5, 5], p4, k4 [4, 5], sm, k19 [21, 23].

Work even in St st for 3-3½ [4-4½, 4½-5] inches or until the mitten reaches the top of the little finger.



Top Shaping

Rnd 1 (Decrease rnd): * Ssk, knit to 2 sts before marker, k2tog; repeat from * once more: 34 [38, 42] sts (4 sts decreased).

Rnd 2: Knit around.

Repeat Rnds 1 and 2, 5 [6, 6] times: 14 [14, 18] sts.

Joining the Mitten Top

To join the front and back of the mitten top together, place the remaining 14 [14, 18] sts onto two separate dpns, with 7 (7, 9) sts for the front of the mitten on one dpn and the 7 (7, 9) sts for the mitten back on the other dpn. Hold the two dpns parallel to one another, with one in front and one in back. You will be "seaming" front and back together by working the stitches on the two dpns together as if they were one.

Insert the working needle into the first stitch on the front and back needles as if to purl. Purl them off together as if they were one stitch. Purl the second stitch on each ndl as you did the first and continue in this way across: 7 (7, 9) sts. Do not cut yarn. The face will be worked from these live stitches.

Face

The face is worked flat and will be folded over the mitten top. After it is complete, the selvages of the face will be stitched to the mitten body.

Row 1 (RS): Turn work so that the back of the mitten is facing you, knit across.

Row 2 and all even rows (WS): Purl across.

Row 3 (Increase row): K1, m1, knit to last st, m1, k1: 9 [9, 11] sts (2 sts increased).

Rows 4-13 (13, 17): Repeat Rows 2 and 3, 5[5, 7] times: 19 [21, 23] sts.

Row 14 (14, 18): Purl across.

Begin Lower Face Shaping

Row 1: With RS facing, * k1, ssk, knit to last 3 sts, k2tog, k1: 17 [19, 21] sts.

Row 2 and all even rows: Purl across.

Rows 3 -6 [8, 10]: Repeat Rows 1 and 2, 2 [3, 4] times: 13 sts.

Break yarn, leaving a long tail for weaving in later.

Snout Shaping

Row 1: With RS facing and using CC, k1, ssk, k2, slip 2 sts, k1, p2sso, k2, k2tog, k1: 9 sts.

Row 2 and all even rows: Purl across.

Row 3: K1, ssk, slip 2, k1, p2sso, k2tog, k1: 5 sts.

Row 5: K1, slip 2, k1, p2sso, k1: 3 sts.

Row 7: Sl 2 sts, k1, p2sso: 1 st. Cut yarn and fasten off remaining stitch.

Fold the fox face down over the top of the mitten so that the knit side is facing out. Pin in place so that the shaping of the top of the mitten and the fox's face line up. Whip stitch the edges of the fox face to the mitten, working from the top of the mitten, down the top shaping of the adjacent side, down along the snout to the tip of the nose, and back up the snout and top shaping of the other side.

Finishing Facial Features

You can wait and do this step at the end of the project, but I find that it's more fun to work on the rest of the mitten once the face is finished.

Sew the eyes to the fox face.

Embroider nose to the tip of the fox face.

Thumb/Tail

Place the thumb gusset stitches onto 3 dpns. Using MC, pick up and knit 1 stitch over the gap, place a marker and join in the round: 14 [16, 16] sts.

Knit all rounds in stockinette stitch until the thumb is 1 [1¼, 1½] inches or until the work reaches the base of the thumb nail. Break yarn.

Shaping the Thumb Top

Join CC and knit 1 round.

Rnd 1: (K2tog, k3) twice, k2tog, end k2 [4, 4]: 11 [13, 13] sts.

Rnd 2 and all even rounds: Knit around.

Rnd 3: [K2tog, k2] twice, k2tog, k1 (3, 3): 8 [10, 10] sts.

Rnd 5: [K2tog, k1] twice, k2tog, k0 (2, 2): 5 [7, 7] sts.

For Sizes 4-7 Years And 8 Years To Women's Small Only

Next Rnd: K2tog 3 times, k1: 4 sts.

All Sizes

Cut yarn; thread tapestry needle with end and weave end through remaining sts, gathering tightly to close.

Ears

Set-up: The ears are worked in the round from stitches picked up along the top shaping on the front and back of the mitten. With the back side of the mitten facing and using MC, pick up and knit 12 [14, 14] sts along the top shaping. Turning work so that the front (fox face) of the mitten is facing, pick up and knit 12 [14, 14] sts along the top shaping of the face: 24 [28, 28] sts.

Divide stitches as evenly as possible onto 3 dpns, placing markers between the mitten front and the back (after the 12th [14th, 14th] sts) and at the end of the round.

Join work in the round.

Rnd 1: Knit around.

Rnd 2: * K1, ssk, k to last 3 sts before marker, k2tog, k1, sm; repeat from * once more: 20 [24, 24] sts.

Rnds 3-6 [8, 8]: Repeat Rnds 1 and 2, 2 [3, 3] times: 12 sts. Break yarn.

Ear Tip

Rnd 1 and all odd rounds: With CC, knit around.

Rnd 2: * K1, ssk, knit to 3 sts before marker, k2tog, k1, sm; repeat from * once more: 8 sts.

Rnd 4: * Ssk, k2tog; repeat from * once more: 4 sts.

Rnd 5: Knit around.

Cut yarn; thread tapestry needle with end and weave end through remaining sts, gathering tightly to close.

Repeat for second ear.

Paws

The paws are fashioned by picking up the purl stitches marking the paw placement. Hold the mitten so that the fox is facing you with his head (the top of the mitten) pointing down.

Using MC, pick up and knit the rightmost purl stitch, using the backward loop method, m1 stitch. Continue in this manner, picking up a purl stitch and making a stitch across all of the purl stitches for the first paw, ending with m1.

You should have 1 newly made stitch for each stitch picked up: 8 sts total.

Rotate the work so that the top of the mitten is pointing up and the working yarn is trailing from the last stitch you made.

Row 1 (worked with the top of the mitten pointing up): * K1, slip next stitch with yarn in front; repeat from * across row, ending with a slipped stitch. This forms the underside of the leg. Rotate work.

Row 2 (worked with the top of the mitten pointing down): Repeat Row 1.

Continue in this manner, alternating Rows 1 & 2, until the paw is ¾ [¾, 1] inches, ending with Row 2. Cut yarn.

Join CC and continue alternating Rows 1 and 2 until the paw is ¼ inches shorter than the desired length, ending with Row 2.

Note: What you are doing here is double knitting. You are creating a little tube of knitting to form the leg. The legs are essentially worked in the round. By double-knitting you avoid having to use more than 2 needles at a time, making the knitting less awkward and faster. If, however, you find this method difficult, you can knit the legs in the round by picking up and knitting 1 stitch for each of the purl placement stitches (4 sts) for one side of the paw. In this case you will not make stitches as instructed above, instead rotate the work and pick up and knit another 4 sts for the underside of the paw. Proceed by knitting in the round. The paws will look exactly the same either way.

Shaping the Paws

Divide the stitches onto 2 separate dpns by putting the every other stitch onto 1 dpn and the remaining stitches onto the second dpn (with the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th stitches on one dpn and the 2nd, 4th, 6th and 8th stitches on the other dpn). With the underside of the paw facing you (and the top of the mitten pointing up), begin knitting in the round.

Rnd 1: Knit around: 8 sts.

Rnd 2: * Ssk, k2tog; repeat from * for stitches on the second needle: 4 sts.

Rnd 3: Knit around.

Cut yarn; thread tapestry needle with end and weave end through remaining sts, gathering tightly to close.

Make second paw.

With embroidery floss, stitch claws on paw tips.

Sew the underside of the legs to the mitten body.

FINISHING

Weave in all ends. Block as desired.

[BACK TO TOP ^](#)

[NEXT >>](#)



Alison is a knitter, weaver and teacher of textile classes and workshops. She has designs published in several knitting collections and is the author of *Fairy Tale Knits: 32 Designs to Knit Happily Ever After*. Currently, she is working on her own line of patterns for knittingbyhand.com. Alison makes her [home](#) in the middle of the midwest along with her yarn tolerant husband, three busy kids, multiple furry friends, and embarrassingly large stash. You can follow her adventures with sticks and string at her blog, and Ravelry.

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