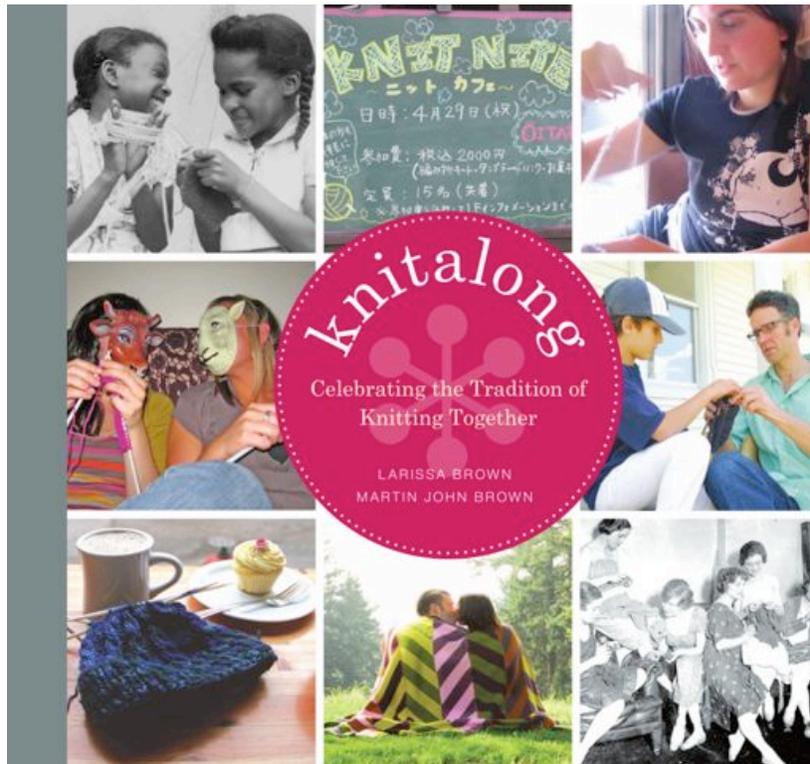


KNITALONG KIT



Celebrating the Tradition of Knitting Together

STC Craft | A Melanie Falick Book



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Dear KNITALONG Campaign Participant,

Welcome to the STC Craft community knitting campaign. In this packet you will find guidelines and information to help you create and host your own successful KAL (Knit-A-Long).

So grab your favorite knitting needles and yarn, and cast on!

In this kit you'll find:

PAGES 3-4: “What exactly is a KNITALONG?” AND OTHER FAQs

PAGE 5: KNITTERS UNITE! IDEAS FOR RECRUITING YOUR OWN KNITALONG TEAM

PAGE 6: KNITALONGS FOR OTHERS

PAGES 7-8: SPREADING THE WORD

PAGE 9: NETWORKING WITH KNITTERS—NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY

We're online, too! In addition to this kit, you can find lots more information at the knitalong.net website, which provides up-to-the-minute news, photos of the 20 projects in the KNITALONG book, plus additional photos that didn't make it into the book, and tips for joining and starting knitalongs yourself.

**LEARN MORE AT:
KNITALONG.NET AND MELANIEFALICKBOOKS.COM**

FAQ'S

What exactly is a Knitalong?

A knitalong is any event where people knit together for a common purpose. Knitalongs might be as casual as three friends who meet every week and catch up with each other while they knit, or as complex as a collaboration of hundreds around the world for charity or art.

While the word knitalong is new—it seems to have emerged out of the knitting blog scene just a few years ago—the activity is not. People have been knitting together for probably as long as they've had two sticks and a string.

There are thousands of such events going on every day. To name a few:

- *Knitters meeting in a yarn shop or café, talking and working on whatever projects they want
- *Hundreds of people knitting the same hat pattern and posting pictures of their work on the internet in a friendly competition to show the wittiest and wildest embellishment
- *Knitters from around the country working on entries for their own county and state fairs and reporting progress on their personal blogs
- *Knitters and activists collaborating internationally on a massive project to draw attention to their environmental concerns
- *Knitters collaborating via the postal service to construct blankets made out of knitted squares for survivors of war and disaster

Why should I host a knitalong?

Knitalongs are extremely popular, inspiring people to knit more with one another than they ever would alone. Most knitters love to join in and perhaps do something good for the community at the same time. Like book clubs, a knitalong offers its members a weekly or monthly excuse to get together and treat themselves to good company and good crafting. Plus, knitalongs provide a much needed break from busy schedules.

What kinds of knitalongs might I host?

Knitalongs can happen in person--at a home, yarn shop, café, or other gathering place--or online, or both. Each one has a focus, such as a single pattern, a type of yarn, a season, or a particular joint project like an afghan. A good example is the State Fair Knitalong profiled in the book [KNITALONG](#). The authors hosted it together with a yarn shop and it drew together dozens of participants each week, who in turn received discounts on yarn purchased for the KAL.

Are there more knitalong opportunities if I have Internet access?

Definitely. While it's certainly not a requirement for joining or hosting a knitalong, the Internet considerably broadens your choices and your reach. Even in the case of an in-person KAL, it's a useful tool for promoting and organizing.

Aside from our knitting supplies, what else do I need?

Knitalongs offer participants not only a way to knit together, but also a way to celebrate a mutual love of their craft. So make it a party with food and music. To get you started, check out the great cookie recipe and a sample playlist from the [KNITALONG](#) authors below.

Knitalong Almond Thumbprint Cookies

These rich nutty cookies with a tiny zing of pepper jelly in the center—a new twist on the classic thumbprint cookie—go well with cold chocolate milk or a hoppy beer.

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 1/4 cups roasted almond butter
- 3/4 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 teaspoon almond extract
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 2 1/4 cups unbleached flour
- 3 tablespoons haba ero pepper jelly, or a milder jelly, as desired

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Line one or two cookie sheets with parchment paper or foil. Using a hand-held electric mixer, cream together the butter, almond butter, and brown and white sugars. Beat in the eggs and almond extract. In a separate bowl, combine the baking soda, baking powder, and flour. Add to the almond butter mixture and combine thoroughly. Drop rounded teaspoonfuls onto cookie sheets. Using a 1/8 teaspoon, make a slight depression in the center of each cookie. Fill each depression with 1/8 teaspoon of pepper jelly. Bake for 10-12 minutes, or until edges are slightly brown. Let sit on the cookie sheet for a minute or two before moving to a plate or rack to cool.

Makes approximately 72 small cookies.

Knitalong Playlist

When preparing a playlist for a knitalong, look for music that brings energy to the room without overpowering conversation. Here are albums from each of the past five decades that might fit the bill. 1961: Bill Evans, *At the Village Vanguard*—exquisite, melodic jazz piano. 1976: Joni Mitchell, *Hejira*—pulsing with sounds and stories. 1987: Prince, *Sign 'O' The Times*—the sonic diary of a five-foot genius; 1998: Fat Boy Slim, *You've Come a Long Way Baby*—happily compulsive hooks and beats; 2005: Sharon Jones & The Dap Kings, *Naturally*—an electric return to soul.

KNITTERS UNITE!

Here are some tips on organizing your very own knitalong:

- *Check out **KNITALONG: CELEBRATING THE TRADITION OF KNITTING TOGETHER** by Larissa Brown and Martin John Brown to see potential projects and to read stories about knitalongs past and present. The book is in stores now, wherever books are sold.
- *Choose a theme, such as a particular project, yarn, or cause.
- *Choose a convenient meeting day and time and decide how frequently you'd like to meet—once a month, twice a month, once a week, etc.
- *Announce your knitalong with signs on your blog or website, and in community forums such as local knitters' Yahoo groups and ravelry.com groups. If your knitalong is local, post signs in public places like libraries, cafes, etc.
- *Expand your reach by announcing your knitalong to other knitting groups:
 - The Knitting Guild Association (www.tkga.com) has online message boards and a search function to locate knitting guilds and clubs across the United States.
 - Stitch 'n Bitch groups and informal meet-ups can be located via Stitchnbitch.org, on individual city- and state-level discussion groups at yahoogroups.com, and also under the discussion forums at www.craftster.org and www.knittyboard.com.
 - Ravelry (www.ravelry.com) is a new online community for knitters and crocheters with more than 100,000 members. Join to begin your own membership, and then you can join or create your own knitalong groups.
 - The Church of Craft (www.churchofcraft.org) is not exclusively focused on knitting but all its meetings are knitter-friendly.
- *Tell us about your knitalong, and we'll send you a free tote bag (while supplies last). Just email us at stccraft@hnabooks.com with the following information: your name, a description of your knitalong, photos if you have them, and your mailing address. We also have some handy postcards that are perfect for reminding your group about the next meeting time; let us know if you'd like some.

KNITTING FOR OTHERS

Knitalongs have always included collaborative projects to help those in need. Here are some tips for starting a knitalong to benefit others:

- *Consider what group of people you might be interested in serving with your knitting. Premature babies, children, elderly people, homeless families, people with AIDS, and teenage mothers may all benefit from knitted items.
- *The most important key is that you're knitting for someone who genuinely needs handknits. Do some research on groups in your community that may need such items. You may start by contacting the Salvation Army, the Red Cross, or a local hospital. Or, utilize your community network. Friends involved in volunteer activities, leaders at your place of worship, and school teachers are keenly aware of community members in need.
- *Consider collecting items yourself, then sending them to an online charity such as afghans for Afghans or The Dulaan Project. Use an online search engine to find these and more.
- *Contact the facility you're interested in supporting, and verify that they would welcome knit items and which items, in particular, are most needed. Ask for guidelines on sizes and materials, as well as any other restrictions. Identify the best way to deliver the goods (many shelters, especially, have confidentiality requirements) and plan your knitting drives around times of the year when your efforts are most needed.
- *Encourage non-knitters to join your great cause! Easy (charity) knitting projects, such as scarves and hats, are wonderful tools for teaching others to knit. Visit www.learntoknit.com, the Craft Yarn Council of America's website, for help.
- *Before your knitalong results are ready for delivery, display some of them in a public place. For example, if you are collecting hats for preemie babies, you may want to ask your local library if you can display several on a ribbon across a window, so that every knitter who walks in will be tempted to ask questions about the knitalong.
- *Schools offer a great knitalong opportunity. The next time the PTA needs a school fundraiser, consider forming a knitalong and then auctioning off or selling the projects. Get students involved by offering them lessons and before you know it, they may be initiating knitalongs on their own
- *For more information about knitting for others, see *Knitting for Peace: Make the World a Better Place One Stitch at a Time* by Betty Christiansen (STC, 2006).

SPREADING THE WORD

Once your KNITALONG group is organized, and especially if you are knitting for a cause, you might consider alerting members of the local press about your initiatives. Their coverage could bring both funding and/or donated materials as well as new members to your knitalong.

On the following page, you will find a template of a KNITALONG press release. Please fill in specific information about your knitalong in the designated spots (highlighted in red).

*Please note paragraph five. This is your opportunity to highlight your efforts to your local community and to draw in more KNITALONG participants! Feel free to share whatever information you like, but please keep it to 3-4 sentences.

When you have filled out all of the information, make copies of your press release and send it to all of the local media outlets that you think might be interested. Consider city, town, and community newspapers and flyers, local television and radio stations, websites, etc.

Please see the official press release created by STC Craft for more inspiration.

Spread the word – you deserve it!

NETWORKING WITH KNITTERS – NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY

By typing “knitalong” into your favorite Internet search engine, you’ll discover more ways to knit with others than you could accomplish in a lifetime. Browse through your search results, and you’ll immediately understand why the knitalong movement is growing so quickly.

Knitalong.net is a website created by the authors of [KNITALONG](#). The site’s project page features [KNITALONG’S](#) 20 projects, and links to online photo galleries of everyday knitters’ results. Encourage your group members to add their photographs as you all knitalong together.

Besides knitalong.net, there are countless websites where you can find out about different knitalongs:

- *Knitalongs.xaviermusketeer.com hosts a frequently updated list of knitalongs
- *Ravelry.com is a very active, new knitting and crocheting community. Free membership is required to gain access, then you’ll find dozens of knitalong “groups” and their pictures and thoughts.
- *Knittyboard.com is a highly popular discussion forum associated with the online magazine knitty.com.

Here are some examples of public knitting events:

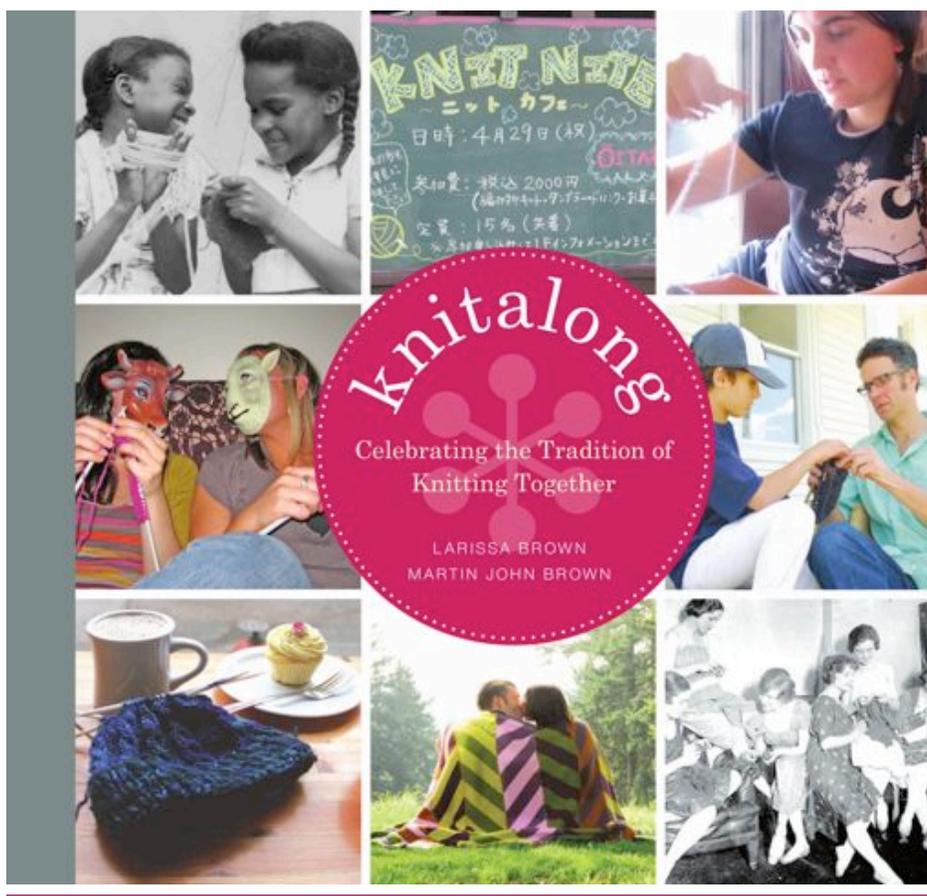
- *Stitch n’ Pitch, a program of The National Needle Arts Association, www.stitchnpitch.com
- *World Wide Knit in Public Day, informally coordinated by Danielle Landes, www.wkipday.com
- *Cast Off: The Knitting Club for Boys and Girls, www.castoff.info
- *Cast Off’s knitted wedding, www.castoff.info/wedding.asp, complete with free patterns for knitted candles, doves, and sandwiches, and photo galleries of the original event.

Share your KNITALONG photos and stories!

Learn more at:

Knitalong.net and melaniefalickbooks.com

Log-on to share your own knitalong experiences through links from knitalong.net and melaniefalickbooks.com—tell us what your group is knitting—Ask fellow campaign participants questions—Post pictures—Celebrate your efforts!



If you are unable to post your updates, remarks, pictures, and stories for any reason but still want to share them, email ladams@hnabooks.com and we will gladly help you!

We applaud you for joining the KNITALONG campaign, and for taking the time to celebrate the tradition of knitting together. We look forward to hearing about your progress!