
How to Knit Dishcloths with Wendy Bernard

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview

(upbeat instrumental music) - Hi, I'm Wendy Bernard. I'm an author and a knitware designer. I've written the Custom Knits series and Up, Down, All-Around Stitch Dictionary. I love, love knitting with linen. Using linen is perfect for making washcloths. It's durable and it gets softer and softer as you knit with it and as you wash it. Essentially they're just giant swatches and they're a perfect reason to practice new stitch patterns. And they turn out so nicely and knitting them is like giving a gift to yourself.

Chapter 2 - Materials

Materials

- Here are the materials for the class your printed pattern, skein of linen yarn, circular or straight needles, double-pointed needles, tapestry needle, stitch markers, and a pair of scissors.

Chapter 3 - Knitting a Linen Dishcloth

How to knit dishcloths with i-cord loop

- While gauge is not super important in this project, if you want all of your washcloths to be the same size, then you need to pay attention to it a little bit. In this pattern, for all the stitch patterns of different variations that I have, we have seven stitches per inch, or 28 stitches for four inches. The reason why I did that is I wanted them all to be approximately 10 by 10. And also, gauge is kind of an important thing because you want your fabric to drape the way you want it to drape. A washcloth should be sort of semi-loosely knit and drapery when you hang it. You don't want it to be stiff. So in my world, I would prefer that people always, always do gauge swatches. You can see that I have two edge stitches here so that it keeps it from rolling, and I also have two rows of garter, also keeps it from rolling. My goal was to have a four inch swatch that measures across four inches, which it does. This is 28 stitches that I cast on here, and you can see I perfectly got gauge. So now I know that I will come up with a 10 by 10 washcloth. Then then I also can test how it drapes, and I like the way it drapes. It's kind of semi-loose, and as it gets washed it's going to continue to soften. If you look through your patterns, you'll notice that of the four that I give you, the four variations, they all have a cast on number of around 60 stitches. So for this easy garter stitch version, I'm going to cast on 60 stitches, and that way I'll come out with about a 10 by 10 washcloth. Make a loop to cast on. I'm using a long tail cast on. You could use any kind of cast on you like. I like long tail. And I'm going to begin with two edge stitches. This will keep the washcloth from rolling. So there are the two, I'm going to place a marker. Now, these two stitches will always be knit, as will the center stitches, because this is garter stitch, but in your other patterns you might be directed to do other stitches after you've done a non rolling edge. So here we go, I'm going to cast on those 60 stitches. The nice thing about starting out with garter stitch is that it sort of sets you up for trying out the other stitch patterns. There's 60 stitches now on my needle, and I'll place the marker for the edge stitches, and then I'll add the two final stitches. I have a little bit extra tail that I don't really want hanging there. So I'm going to ahead and snip it, but I have to leave enough to weave in later, so I'm not gonna make it too short. With garter stitch, you just knit every row, and what's really nice is that it'll give you a chance to work with linen and learn its characteristics. It's a lot different from working with,

say, wool or alpaca. On the next row I'm going to change colors, and I'll show you how to do it. And I'm not going to cut this gray color, I'm just going to let it sit here. So when I turn, I introduce the next color of the sequence, and in my case, I've chosen it to be yellow. Give a little bit of a tail for weaving in later, and I just simply start knitting with the yellow. And the first stitch is always loose, you can tighten that up later. Let me just fix this guy. Slip your marker. Go ahead and work two rows of the second color, add a third color, and do two rows of that. I'm already almost there, and I'm going to show you how to carry up the first color up the side of the work so that you don't have to keep cutting yarn as you go. I'm using three colors, you could use more if you want. Or you could use two colors. All right, okay, so I'm going to turn the work and I'm going to kind of get the other tails out of the way and I'm just going to carry up the working side of the gray yarn along the side of the work right here, and I'm just going to continue to knit. Every time I add a new row, at least on this side, I just continue to take down the working one and pull up another color along the side. And it makes the side really nice and neat, and it also makes it so that you don't have to weave in so many ends. Let me just knit this and fix this guy right here. Do it again. All right. Continue knitting until your washcloth measures about 10 inches, and then you can bind off. So I'm nearly here on this last stitch before binding off, but before I do bind off, I want to show you how the yarn carries up the side. I mean, imagine with all these rows of color, different color changes, if you had to weave in each end. So carrying up the previous color, or at least two colors down, in my case, up the side creates sort of a banded ropey effect, and it doesn't curl. You know, garter stitch, like I said, doesn't really roll, but it's very neat, and it's not obvious when you lay it out that only one side is carried up. Binding off in garter stitch is because garter stitch is just knitting, means you just knit all the stitches that you bind off. So I'm going to bind off all of the stitches except for the three last stitches. When I get there, I'm going to show you how to create an i cord loop at the end, so you can hang your washcloth on a hook. Check the tension of your bind off so that it matches your cast on, 'cause you don't want your bind off to make your washcloth skinnier on one end than the other. I've found with linen, because it's not stretchy, that you need a looser bind off than with other fibers. I'm going to take my double point needle and I'm going to thread the stitches onto it and then take away the other needle. I'm going to scoot the stitches to the front and taking my second double point, I'm transferring the first stitch back to the double point on the right, and I'm going to knit to the end. And this is where we begin the i cord. Without turning, you scoot this back to the front, you pull the working yarn behind it to behind the first stitch, and you knit these three stitches. Scoot them to the front without turning and knit. Repeat. Pull it. Scoot it. Continue working your i cord until it's your desired length, then go ahead and fasten it off and leave about a six inch tail. As you can see, this is my i cord and I'm going to make a loop. I bound off those three stitches, fastened it off, and put the tail on a tapestry needle. There is a right side and a wrong side to this, although both sides look really good. So it's important that when I weave it in you can't really see this, the gray stitches, so what I'm going to do is kind of carefully weave in the ends and fasten this down to the gray part. See what I mean? Like right here. So I'll pick a place. I'll just pull it tight. And I think what I'm going to do to make the loop together like that, I'll probably just take a stitch in to there and there. Sew it together, see? Maybe do it one more time. Okay, it still needs to be a little tighter. So I might even come through another way. There we go. When you're working with it on your own, you'll see what you need to do to make it fasten down correctly. That's better. All right, so I'm just going to find the gray nubs and just... One thing that I do want to say though, is that you can't just weave in ends with linen and cut the yarn. You really should make a knot. So, I'm going to make a knot. In fact, I'm gonna do a double knot. And then you'll have a washcloth, just like this. In your pdf pattern, I give

you four variations, four options to practice other stitch patterns. This right here, the gray one, is called checks, and you can see that it has some yarn overs in it yet it's closed enough that you can use it as a washcloth. This one's called basket weave, and you can see it has a nice texture, it's a little nubby. This is double moss, and this is granite stitch. Linen washcloths, they're so easy to make and they're really, really elegant. You can even go beyond the pdf pattern that I've given you, find a stitch pattern book, and go to town.