
Top-Down Sweater Knitting: A 4-Part Series with Wendy Bernard

Chapter 1 - Top-Down Sweater Knitting: Custom-Fit Raglan Sweater

Part 1 Overview

(ocean waves crashing) (upbeat music) - Hi, my name is Wendy, and I am a knitwear designer, and I write books about knitting, the Custom Knits series and also a stitch dictionary, called Up, Down, All-Around Stich Dictionary, that teaches knitters how to knit in pretty much any direction they want and also in the round. I like to knit top-down because it allows a knitter to basically try on as they go and pretty much get a custom fit. Top-down feels like I'm starting somewhere, and I'm gonna end up somewhere. (upbeat music) But for me, knitting is such a process and such a place to go that the journey of starting in one place and finishing it all at once and not having to sew stuff together is kind of magical. Over the next four weeks, I am going to relieve you of your dependence on knitting patterns. What we're going to do is start out with a top-down raglan and a top-down, set-in sleeve. You can knit either of these sweaters for pretty much anybody, a baby, child, your husband, your boyfriend, a good friend, or yourself. All you're gonna do is start out with a few simple measurements, do a tiny bit of math, which is not scary at all, it's gonna be great, and then you just sort of cast on and go. (upbeat music) (ocean waves crashing) (tonal music)

Introduction to raglans

(pleasant music) - One of my goals as a knitwear designer and author is to empower knitters to kind of move beyond the pattern. We're gonna start with our top down raglan, the raglan has this raglan line you call it, which is diagonal. You can see that we're going to also do a v-neck. You literally start from the top. And as you continue to work down, you will at some point separate these sleeves from the body and then you'll continue just working the bottom down to the hem. I like to knit top down because it allows a knitter to basically try on as they go and pretty much get a custom fit and it's gonna be a lot of fun. (pleasant music)

Materials

- We're gonna start with the top-down raglan sweater and you're just going to need a few materials. First, we're going to need some yarn. And the neat thing about this course is that you can use any yarn and any needles and any gauge you like, but I have selected the Blue Sky Alpacas Suri Merino. It's really squishy and it drapes really, really nice and it's fun to knit with. You're going to need some circular needles. The thing about circular needles is that they come in different lengths, so you want to choose of the length of the circular that is long enough to hold all the stitches that will be on the sweater at once. So it needs to be long enough to go around your chest, but not too short. You'll also might need double pointed needles. They're helpful in working sleeves and things like that. Now you'll want to know how many skeins of yarn that you're going to need to buy. You can either get one of these yarn requirements guides, this one's by Ann Budd and I use it a lot because it gives you yardages for different items and for various gauges. And it's a really, really good guide. Another thing you can do is go to your local yarn store and ask for advice on how much yarn that you need to buy. It's always a really good idea, however, to find out what the return policy is on that yarn and possibly not have it all balled up so that you can return it if you need to. Another thing that you can do is look through your knitting patterns that you currently have or maybe go to the library and see the yardages that are required for a similar sweater that you want to make. You'll also need some

stitch markers, a tapestry needle, a pair of scissors, some waist yarn, this is my favorite waist yarn, and as you can see it's almost gone. A calculator, this one has literally been around the world with me. It's fantastic and it's ancient, but I love it. And then you'll need a measuring tape. And lastly, you'll need this week's handout, which is a PDF download and a pen or a pencil.

Swatching and measuring

- Before we dive in, I want to talk a little bit about the raglan sweater and what makes a raglan a raglan. As you can see here, we have these sort of diagonal lines that kind of form around the sleeve. This is actually all knit in one piece, but a raglan has this raglan line we call it, which is diagonal. You can see that we're going to also do a V-neck today. When you're knitting a top-down raglan, you literally start from the top. And so you start here. As you can see, I've cast on here, and as you work down, you're working upside down, you add stitches to form these lines and also to increase for the sleeves. You can see that the sleeves are literally worked along with the body. And as you continue to work down, you'll, at some point, separate these sleeves from the body by placing them on that waste yarn that I showed you earlier, and then you'll continue just working the bottom down to the hem. After that is all done, you'll then pick up the sleeves again from the waste yarn, place them on needles, and you can knit your sleeves in the round all the way down to the cuff. This is a time when you can use your double-pointed needles if you have to, or you can use two circulars, or one longer circular for a magic loop. That's what we call it. And then after you're done with both of the sleeves, you're going to pick up stitches around this V-neck, and you're going to work ribbing flat, and at the very end, tack it down here to make that pretty little V-neck. So why top down? I really, really like knitting from the top because, well, first of all, you can try on as you go. And, I mean, that's a really, really fun thing to do. And since you're knitting from the top down, you start at your shoulders. Imagine if you were knitting in pieces like most people do, or at least a lot of people do, imagine trying to hold up a front on your body or hold up a back or hold up a sleeve that's just all flat. It's nearly impossible to make it work. So if you're knitting from the top and in the round, it's generally in one piece, and there are different stages where you can drape the yoke, let's say, on your body to see if the V-neck is becoming too deep or too short. You can try it on after you've separated the sleeve stitches from the body stitches to make sure that it reaches around your chest, and you can also try it on as you do your waist shaping or to see how long you want it to be and how deep you want your hem to be. You can also try on your sleeves as you knit them. Remember, this is completely seamless. And when you have finally placed your sleeve stitches back on the needles and you begin to knit down, you can stick your arm through the sleeve stitches to get the perfect length. And then you add your cuff. Then you repeat on the other side, and you bind off, and you're literally done. This is completely seamless. There's no seams to seam up with the tapestry needle. It's lots of fun. So we're starting with the gauge swatch. It's absolutely important to make a gauge swatch because this pattern, although it's not really a pattern per se, but the way we knit this sweater is based on the measurements that you get from your own gauge swatch with your own yarn and your own needles. So this is something that you can't skip. So what you do is you make your gauge swatch, and the way you do it is you select the needles and the yarn that want to use together, and you create a swatch, and I like them to be at least four inches square. Sometimes you'll find that you won't like the drape of your swatch. It might be too loose, it might be too tight, and you might make some adjustments as you go. So what I do is I cast on enough stitches that I know will yield me about four inches, and I do maybe a couple rows of garter stitch. That means you knit each row. Then I move on to a stockinette. Typically, you'll always use the same

stitch pattern that you're going to use in your sweater. In this case, we're making a V-neck that is all stockinette, so, of course, you make your gauge swatch also in stockinette. What I've done is I added a couple of stitches at the beginning and the ending of just plain old garter, and that way it won't roll up. Another thing that you want to do is wash and block your swatch, once you like it, that is. What you're gonna do is go ahead and make your gauge swatch, and if your swatch seems a little bit too tight and doesn't have the drape that you like, you'll go up a needle size. If it's too loose, you'll go down a needle size. In this case, I selected a U.S. seven needle, and to remind myself of the size of the needle, what I like to do is actually make knots in the tail of the yarn. And I made seven knots, so if I put the swatch away and I forgot about it and I wanted to refer back to it, I would be able to know what size needle that I used to yield this particular swatch. The next thing that we're going to do is measure our swatch. Like I said, I like to have a swatch that yields about four inches square. In this case you can see I am at about four inches, but I was a little short in the height. But that's okay 'cause we can make our stitch count based on two inches and doubling it for four inches. You'll see what I mean in a second. So what I'm going to do is lay down my measuring tape and count the number of stitches per inch. What you want to do is go ahead and count as many as you can. So I'll count two inches, and I get 10 stitches for two inches. So that would mean that I have five stitches per inch in this case. Rows, the same idea. You're going to lay down your tape measure, and you're going to count the number of rows that you get per inch. And I counted earlier, and I get six rows per inch. So the next thing I'm going to do is take a look at this handout. It's the PDF that you downloaded. And in the Week One, Getting Started section, you can fill in your stitches per inch, and I get five. And now I'm going to write down the rows per inch. I have six. Before you wash and block your swatch, go ahead and take the measurements of the pre-washed swatch and record them and put them aside. You're going to go ahead and use your after-washing measurements on your worksheet, but you'll want your pre-washed measurements so that you can check your progress as you knit because, remember, you're knitting an unwashed sweater. Let's take our first measurement. We have to take off the sweater first. The first measurement with this particular sweater is the back-of-the-neck measurement. That literally is back of the neck. These measurements range anywhere from maybe two inches for a really tiny baby, three inches for most kids up to, let's say, 10, 12, and then they're about four inches, and then maybe plus size is around five inches, or men, usually five inches. But if you have the recipient here, all you do, take the back-of-the-neck measurement. And as I said, with most women's sizes, this is a size 10 mannequin, it's about four inches. Now, there might be times when you might want something that rests a little lower on the back of the neck. So you might add an inch, and the reason for this is that if you made a higher, let's say, ridge or edge for the back neck or that comes around to the front, you don't want it to go too high up the back of the neck. So, you literally just kinda eyeball it, and then knowing where you want to go, you might add an extra inch to give yourself a little ease there. Now, ease is just simply the difference between an actual measurement and how the garment fits. So when we talk about ease, that's all I mean, is if it's positive ease, it's bigger, and if it's negative ease, it's smaller. But for now, the back of the neck measurement is where we're gonna start. For this top-down V-neck sweater, we're going to start out with a four-inch desired neck measurement. So I wrote that down. We know that we have five stitches per inch, and so we're just going to go ahead and write down that five in the stitch gauge there. Then to the next step. It's actually part of step two still. We're going to go ahead and put these numbers in and just do a little bit of the simple math that I told you about. Our desired neck measurement is four, our stitch gauge is five, so we multiply those two numbers, and if you need to use your calculator, you can, but I know that four

times five is 20, so that back neck will require 20 stitches. If you happen to end up with a number that's uneven, like 23 or 27, it's perfectly okay to round to the closest even number. If you're using something with a really big stitch gauge, like three stitches per inch, it's probably wiser to go down a stitch, because otherwise you might end up with a sweater that's too big. But most times, you just go ahead and round to whatever round number that you like. I have a nice, even number of 20 for my neck cast on, so now I need to determine how many sleeve stitches to cast on for the sleeve tops. So all I'm going to do is to divide three into 20, and as you can see, I get 6.66666. I am going to choose to go ahead and round down to six. Now that you've determined how many stitches you're going to cast on, it's time to start knitting.

Casting on

- Right before we start knitting, we need to transfer some of the numbers that we have on our worksheet into the step four, where we're adding stitches for our fronts and casting on. So what I'm going to do is fill in the number. It starts with the front. We automatically always add one stitch for the front. It's in your worksheet. The next thing I'm going to do is take that number six and put it in my first sleeve section. Then we have the stitches for the back neck. Remember there are 20 of them, put them there. Then of course we have another sleeve, which is six. And then I've already added this one for you for the front. So this is the sequence that you will cast on your stitches. I'm starting with the slipknot. I'm going to use a long tail cast-on, but you can use any method that you like. So this is my first stitch for the front. After I place that stitch I'm going to place a marker. So now I'm going to cast on my six sleeve stitches. One, two, three, four, five, six. I'm placing another marker. And then I'm casting on for the back stitches. Remember there are 20. One... Four, five, six. Now, remember you don't want your cast-on to be too tight because that's the section on the back neck where you want it to stretch and give a little bit. That makes 20. Placing another marker For my sleeve now, six stitches. And then, finally, place the marker. And then one stitch for the front. So let's look at it. As you can see I have one stitch for the first front. This works out to be the right front. I have six stitches now here between these two markers that are the top of my right sleeve. I have 20 stitches for my back neck. I have six stitches for the left sleeve. And I finally have one stitch for the left front. We're going to start with the first row, which is a wrong side row. Since this is a stockinette stitch sweater, we always are going to purl on the wrong side and knit on the right side, at least while we're knitting back and forth. Because at one point, you are going to join and start working in the round, and when you knit stockinette in the round, you knit all rounds. So I'll begin with my wrong side row, purling. And then you slip all your markers as if, well, you don't do anything to them, just slip them to the next needle. You'll see that I'm knitting continental style, which means I hold my yarn in my left hand. You don't have to knit this way, just knit any way that's comfortable for you. This first row sometimes is a little slower going, but I'll get to the end. What's interesting about these raglans is that you start out with a relatively short piece of knitting and you can't imagine how it's ever going to become a sweater that's large enough to actually fit your body, but because you increase on every right side row along these markers, you will begin to see the shape that it takes, and it happens relatively quickly. So what you see right now is sort of deceiving. So now we have our right side row, and we begin to make increases at these markers. Before we move on, I want to show you the different kinds of increases that you can make. There are three types of increases that are pretty typical. We have a yarn over. We have a knit front and back, which I'm using for this sweater. And we have a make one. On this sweater behind me, I have the knit front and backs, and this is what they look like. I have some examples here. As I was saying, we have the

knit front and back on the sample, but you can also use a yarn over if you like something that's more decorative. It kind of creates holes along this raglan line. As you can see, there are two stitches that create this plain stockinette column and the stitch marker was between those two plain stitches, and what I did was I made yarn overs prior to the plain stitch that flanked the marker here. This is more decorative. You see the holes there? So be sure that if you're working the yarn overs that you know that there will be holes there and maybe an undergarment might show if they're along the sleeve line there. You can also do a make one increase. You'll notice that this make one increase looks an awful lot like the knit front and back. Knit front and back tends to be my go-to increase, but a lot of people do like make one increases. The thing is, as you're knitting your sweater, keep in mind that you want to be consistent with your increases. For example, if you have knit front and back along the raglan line, you'll probably want to use a knit front and back for increases that you use elsewhere in the sweater. There's one exception, though. If you're using your yarn over along the raglan line, you probably don't want to use your yarn over for any other increases on your sweater unless you want intentional holes. We're on our first increase row and each right side row is an increase row. I'm going to first demonstrate how to do a yarn over. Knit one stitch, just to anchor it. A yarn over is simply that, yarn over the needle. And then you go ahead and knit your next stitch. As you can see, there is an extra stitch there. Now I'm going to unknit this and demonstrate a make one. So I knit the first stitch. A make one is a lifted bar increase where you literally pick up that stitch, place it on your left-hand needle, and knit it. As you can see, this is an added stitch. It's a make one increase. Now I'll unknit that make one increase and start over and show you the type of increase I used in this sweater sample. Because there isn't anything for me to knit into, I'm going to use the knit front and back on the very first stitch. You literally knit into that stitch and then again into the same stitch into the back. And look, now we have two stitches. We're starting with your first increase row. This happens on every right side row. And until we begin adding neck stitches, we will be adding eight stitches for each increase row. Later, as we build enough stitches into the front section, we will begin adding neckline stitches, the ones that form the V-neck, on every sixth row. So let's start with our first increase row where we begin adding eight stitches per row. This is all in your handout. I've done this first knit front and back where you can see I've already added an extra stitch to the front section. I'm slipping my marker. My plan is to go ahead and do increases one stitch beyond each marker. In other words, we are going to create a ridge line of stockinette stitches along these markers, so that's a plain stitch there. Then I'm knitting front and back. There's that first increase for that first sleeve. Then what I'm going to do is knit each stitch until I'm one stitch beyond that next marker. See, that one's going to create that line of stockinette stitches. Do my knit front and back there. I'm going to continue across this row having one plain stitch on either side of the marker doing my knit front and back and that next stitch. Now I'm going to knit across my back stitches. Then when I get to one stitch away from the next marker in the row I knit front and back. I'm going to knit that plain stitch, slip that marker, knit my plain stitch, knit front and back. What you're going to find as you build your yoke is it becomes kind of like a dance and it will all be so much fun and you'll do it without thinking. But remember I have that one plain stitch before I reach the final front, and I only have one stitch available, so I'm just going to go ahead and increase it to that. Pretty soon we'll have enough stitches in there to start building our V-neck. Just continue knitting back and forth and on the right side rows, add those eight stitches by increasing, either yarn over, knit front and back, or make one, until you've completed five rows, not including your cast-on row, and you will end with the wrong side row. Next, you will be doing your neck shaping.

Shaping the raglan

- Now you've knit your five rows increasing on your right side rows for your front, your sleeve, and your back. As you can see here, I've knit more than those five rows. The reason why I knit more is because I wanted to be able to point out the various parts of the yolk so that this front shaping that we're going to be able to start doing or neck shaping rather is visible. I'm gonna lay it out here. You've got your front. This is your left front, your left sleeve stitches, your back stitches, your sleeve stitches for the right, and your right front. In the instructions, I tell you that you can work your V neck shaping beginning on your sixth row for the type of V neck that you see in the sample. And you can see that on the sixth row, I placed a marker here, and you can do that too to remind you where you did your increases. Here's the sixth row and now I've worked enough rows that on the following sixth row counted from the last increase for the neck shaping, that I'm ready to do another one. Now this shaping is different from the shaping that happens on each right side row. On those right side rows, you're adding eight stitches. But every sixth row on this first stitch and this last stitch, you will knit front and back, probably not do a yarn over, but you knit front and back, or you can knit one and make one to add the stitch to this neck edge only. As a side note, if you want a shallower neckline, men especially would probably prefer a shallower neckline or maybe a child's sweater you'd want a shorter neckline, you could do these increases on every fourth row right side row at this very neck edge. This is the ladies version. It's a ladies version and it has a lower neckline. But like I said, every four rows for neckline shaping only you can do and end up with a shallower neckline. Let me demonstrate some neckline shaping. Remember you're doing two things at once. You're always keeping track every right side row of doing your eight added stitches or eight increases and every sixth row in this case, I'm adding an extra neckline shaping stitch. So I'm using knit front and back. So in the very first stitch, I knit front and back. I'm adding for that. If you wanna keep track, you can place this marker and move it down to the stitch just so you can refer back. You can also use one of those row counters if that makes sense to you. Some people will keep a pad of paper next to them and just literally put down little marks. So you see how I'm doing the shaping now for the sleeve. I keep that stockinette stitch next to the marker. And then when I get to the very end, I will do another neck shaping increase and knit front and back. And on this particular row, I'm adding 10 stitches instead of eight stitches. Right now, you're probably not going to be making a lot of calculations in terms of how wide your sleeves are going to be, but in a little bit, you're going to start counting and looking at your gauge and determining how wide your sleeve is or how your back is progressing. These types of sweaters are a lot of fun because honestly, if I've got some time on my hands and I'm able to sit for a while, I can get an entire yolk finished in about a day and so knitting this type of sweater from the top and in the round and seamless, it's so much fun because there's not... I mean, there's thinking involved, but it's fun thinking. It's not like I have to refer to a pattern all the time or keep checking stitch counts and trying to be, I don't know, just always following the rule. This way, I can knit freely and enjoy myself. So now I'm getting close to the last stitch on this one neck shaping row. This is the sixth row after my last neck shaping that I did. And I'll just continue on to the very last stitch. And remember, on this row I'm adding 10 stitches. So if you're keeping track and counting, you can add 10 instead of eight. And there we go, there's the last one. Now I'm ready for my wrong side row and then I'll continue with my regular set of increases on the right side rows until it's ready for my next neck shaping increment. So we're going to continue knitting, increasing every other row or every right side row, your eight stitches along the markers as set. And every sixth row, you're going to add one stitch to each end of the needle to the first and last stitch of the needle on every sixth row. And we're going to continue on like that for a little while,

but then we're gonna have to do some checking in.

Separating sleeves and joining in the round

- So you're probably wondering when it's going to be time to check in, sort of see how many stitches you have on the needles and how your sweater is shaping up. Well there's a lot of things going on at once in this sweater, so there are a number of things that you could check. There are two scenarios that I cover in your handout and those two scenarios will tell you when it's time to separate your sleeves from the body or to join in the round. A scenario where you will be separating your sleeve stitches from the body stitches, this is the body, these are the two fronts, are when the number of your body stitches, your back stitches, rather, equal the sum of the two fronts, not including the sleeves. The other scenario that your going to look for, at the same time, because remember, you're going to separate the sleeves from the body at one of two times. The other time that you might want to separate your sleeves from the body, is when the depth of the armhole is the right length and what I'm talking about is the measurement from the top of the shoulder down to the bottom of the armpit. And if you like, you can honestly, let's say it's you in the mirror or if you happen to have a dress form, or the person you're knitting for nearby, you can hold it up and you can stretch it to see if it's the right depth. Remember that knitting has weight to it and it will stretch. There's also a step that's coming up where we're adding some extra stitches at the underarm here, so that will also create more depth. So always err on the side of too short other than too long. Another thing you can do is go ahead and grab one of your favorite sweaters or you know, whoever you're knitting for if they have a favorite sweater, or a sweatshirt or something that's knit that they like to wear and you can measure the depth of the armhole, on that as well. So I've the decision to go ahead and separate the sleeves from the body. I counted my back stitches and in this example I'm making a pretty small sweater, it's for a young person with a chest circumference of about 24, 25 inches. So I've counted my back stitches, these are the center ones, right here. There are 50 and then in each of the front sections there's 25, so now I've got the sum of the two fronts matching the back. Now it's time for me to separate, but when I do the count of stitches, the fronts and the back, I get a hundred stitches, at five stitches per inch that will yield me only a 20 inch circumference sweater in the chest. My recipient has maybe a 24 or 25 inch circumference, or at least that's what they want, so in order to make the body be the right size as I separate the sleeve stitches I'm going to cast on stitches at the underarm, right here, and that will make a body that's the correct circumference. I also need to kind of think ahead too, about my sleeves. When you're separating, before you do that you also want to keep track of how many sleeve stitches you have in your sleeve sections, because notice whenever you're adding stitches to the body, you are adding circumference, stitches, to your sleeves, as well. The reason why I say this is because when I separate the sleeve stitches from the body stitches, you're going to have a gap where you've cast on for the body and so what you need to do is pick up stitches from that section. I'll show you how to do it later, but this is something that you need to, kind of, know ahead of time, that anytime you add stitches to the body, you're essentially adding circumference to the sleeves. I have determined that it's time for me to go ahead and remove the sleeve stitches from the body stitches and I'm going to demonstrate how to do this. One thing I want to tell you though, is that there will be a time when you want a deeper neckline and it's perfectly find to go ahead and separate your sleeve stitches and continue knitting back and forth, and do some more shaping increments before joining the body in the round. But do know, that when you are adding stitches like this, you are going to increase your circumference, specifically in your fronts, which really doesn't make that much of a

difference and you can make up for it by, let's say, adding fewer stitches at the underarms, but I just want to let you know that. If you're going to wait until you join your fronts and your back in the round, that you will be adding some extra stitches and thereby effecting the size of your sleeve. So the thing I want to do is go ahead and knit all the way to the first marker, that's my first marker that separates the left front that you see right in front of me, from my left sleeve. Now remember I said that I wanted to add about two inches extra width to the body circumference. This is where I'm going to do it, at this point, at the underarm. What I need also is a tapestry needle, threaded, with some waste yarn or scrap yarn. Now, it's really important that you choose the right type of scrap yarn. I'm going to stop here at this marker and I'm going to show you this scrap yarn. This is cotton yarn and it's a little slippery, notice it's not furry, but yet this alpaca is furry. For example, if I use this wool yarn, in a different color but the same wool, type of wool, as my scrap yarn, and I threw it in my bag, like a lot of people do and it gets jumbled up, it'll stick to itself and it'll be really, really hard to pull out later when I'm ready to pick up the sweater again. So always have a slippery yarn in a contrasting color, that is easy to see, to use as your scrap yarn. Even if you're knitting with cotton, on your sweater, you can also use a cotton yarn, like so it won't stick, like the wool will, just make sure it's a contrast color. So it's always good to have something like this on hand. So I have my tapestry needle, threaded with enough of the yarn and I've reached the first marker. This first marker starts the beginning of the sleeve stitches. I'll take out this marker and I'll kind of tug this up a little bit. I'll take this needle and I'm literally going to thread this on. And I teach a lot of these classes or workshops, on how to put sleeve stitches or reserve stitches onto scrap yarn, and you'd be surprised that some people when they read instructions for certain things, that when I show them how I do this, you get this light bulb moment, they go, oh, so that's how you get that scrap yarn in there. That's literally all I do, is thread it on like that and sew. You're going to see that I'm going to reach that next marker, which ends that sleeve section, that left sleeve section. So you can see how this comes alive, see it's like a triangular shape? See these diagonal lines, that's the raglan, right there. Coming alive in front of your eyes. So okay, I've reached the end, so now what's next? I'm pulling it through. I'll take off this marker and then what I do is I take my scissors, cut off the needle, then I maybe take off, you know, one of the tickles, here, and I make a tiny, little pouch like thing. It's tying together all nice and tidy, see? And this will save those stitches for later. So this is the underarm that I was talking about, see the gap? I've decided to add two inches worth of stitches to the underarm and the body, right here, which is ten stitches. Now this is my left-hand side and when I'm working in rounds, I usually have that as my, either, beginning of round, end of round, same difference, but I want to have a different color marker, so those were green markers and because I want to have a special color marker to denote the end of the round, I'm going to use the purple marker, but I'm going to wait to put it in the center of these added stitches. I'm using the backward loop method. I'm going to first cast on five with that method, there's two, three, four, five, and then I'm going to put my special color on, marker, another five, one, two, three, four, five. Now don't do this too tight because you'll find that it makes for a sort of a stiff underarm and you want it to drape like the rest of your knitting. So then all I do is now connect to the back stitches. You see this coming together, look. You've got your reserved sleeve stitches and now you've created an underarm, and from here you're going to be knitting down, which will start your body. So let me knit now across my backstitches. And so what my goal is is to get to the next marker, which will start my other sleeve. Remember I used that purple marker, there, when I cast on those ten stitches, I'm going to use the green marker. And I always, kind of, think of green means go, so I just continue through it, and purple to me means stop, which means I've got to remember that this is the end of

the round. So if I decide to do body shaping, which I'll show you how to do later, we will be doing shaping at these markers, these underarm makers that separate the front stitches from the back stitches. I'm almost there, to my green means go marker and that separates the right sleeve stitches, okay I put this down, take out my maker and put it to the side, get my favorite yarn and give myself a healthy amount, and then do exactly what I did for the left sleeve and thread it on. If this the first time that you've placed sleeve stitches or live stitches on waste yarn, it might take you a little bit longer then it takes me to do it, but I've had lots and lots of practice, and I'm able to move pretty quickly. Just make sure that you thread it to carefully and if it's a type of yarn, like this is, which is a single ply, and it's loosely spun, that you get the entire stitch onto your tapestry needle, otherwise if you get, let's say, just a couple hairs on it, that you might end up dropping a stitch or two and although dropped stitches aren't the end of the world, sometimes they can be a little tricky to get back up and running. I'm done now with these, again, I go ahead and put that marker down and just clip this. Take my favorite waste yarn, tie a nice little knot and make your pocket, your sleeve pouch, nice pretty bow, kind of get that out of the way. Remember we were casting on 10 stitches in two sets of five, backward loop, so I'll do it again. One, two, three, four, there's the fifth one. I'm going to use a green marker, green means go. One, two, three, four, five and as you can see I have that final front section, the right front connecting the two, by just continuing to knit. You want to pull this a little tight, cause see you can have a potential gap there. I'm getting ready to now join in the round, but there's one thing, if you would rather have a cardigan instead of a pullover, like we're knitting today, you don't have to join it in the round. You can literally just continue knitting right sides and wrong sides, with no neck shaping, until you have the length that you want. But I'm going to knit it in the round, so I'm joining here at the v-neck. This is the center of the v, so you want to make sure that the first stitch, that you make from the other side, or to the other side, rather, is nice and tight, so I pull it tight right there. If it happens to end being a little bit loose, you're going to be able to correct that, later at the very end when you add your v-neck edging. So now, I'm just going to knitting in the round. Now remember, that this first marker, right here, we're going to call our end of round, so I might have one portion of an extra row but you will never, ever, ever notice. So the official beginning of the round will always be after this marker. Well now you're just knitting in the round, you're knitting stockinette in the round, so that means you knit every round. If you decided to make that cardigan, you will be knitting stockinette with a right side row and a wrong side row. That means you'll purl on the wrong side rows and knit on the right side rows.

Start thinking about body shaping and edgings

- This is the pullover that's now in one piece. What I did is I untied the bows that were holding the scrap yarn that was holding the sleeve stitches and I laid it flat. I also knit a couple rounds so that I could put the body stitches also on scrap yarn because this would be a perfect time to go ahead and start trying it on. You can see that the neckline stitches are rolling a little bit, but don't worry about that. You're going to go ahead and pick up stitches along this line when you finish your neckline at the very end. But this is laying flat. And if you want to, you can continue working the body straight, especially if you're working one for a child. Those sweaters typically don't have any body shaping. This sweater does because this is a woman's sweater. See how it curves right in here? That gives you a much better fitted sweater. But if you want to knit it straight for yourself, which is perfectly fine, or you're knitting for a child or a man, typically, there's no shaping in the body. Like this one, this is a child's cardigan that I made. You can see that there isn't any shaping along the body with this child's cardigan, or along the sleeve here. I added a mock rib edging from my book,

Up, Down, All-Around Stitch Dictionary, at the cuff here and at the hems. There will be times when you have to count your stitches and make sure that your upcoming stitch pattern, the one that you wanna use, can be made with the correct multiples. So you might have to make some tiny adjustments. With this cardigan, I used kind of a fancier edging, but if you wanna go ahead and keep it simple, like this one here, I just have a two by two edging. So for the rest of this class, you can continue with your body all the way down with no shaping, or you can maybe knit an inch or two of the body and then we'll meet up next week, week two, and I'll teach you everything there is to know about shaping your body, shaping your sleeves to make them taper, and adding on your final V-neck edging. (upbeat music) This week, we're going to cover a little bit more about working your hem. We're also going to talk about how to pick up sleeve stitches from your waste yarn and work your sleeves down to the cuff, adding shaping as you go. And lastly, we're going to talk about your V-neck, how to finish it. You know, pick up stitches around the edge there, work your ribbing, and then tack down the little bottom of the V to make it look nice and neat.

Chapter 2 - Top-Down Sweater Knitting: Finishing Your Raglan Sweater

Part 2 Overview

(happy, upbeat music) - Welcome to week two. Last week we talked about starting out your yo casting on, and picking a few measurements. Some of you may have only worked an inch or two below the arm pits, and some of you might have already finished your whole body. This week, we're going to talk about finishing your body by adding optional waist shaping, and working your hem. We're also going to talk about, how to pick up sleeve stitches from your waste yarn, and work your sleeves down to the cuff, adding shaping as you go. And lastly, we're going to talk about your v-neck. How to finish it. You know, pick up stitches around the edge there, work your ribbing, and then tack down the little bottom of the V to make it look nice and neat. (happy, upbeat music)

Calculate body shaping

- This week we're going to be doing body shaping and sleeve shaping, but let's back up just a little bit to last week's discussion about raglan shaping. Raglan shaping is increasing. So, remember we have these increases that we did on every other right side row or when you were in the round, you might be doing them every other row. That consists of your increases. Remember with body shaping's a little bit different because we are making an hourglass shape in many cases. For the first part of your body shaping, you're actually going to be working decreases. Then for your hips, most people's hips round out a little bit. You're going to use increases to shape that part of the body. With the sleeves, most likely, at least for this class, you'll be working decreases. Now, remember with our raglan increase, we did a knit front and back. We did a make one, and we did maybe a yarn over it. Those were the ones that created the little holes. I would probably suggest that you don't use your yarn over for your body shaping because then you'll have a set of holes that run alongside of the sweater. If you like that for a design element, more power to you. Go ahead and do that. But, it's probably best if you go ahead and stick with either your make one or your knit front and back. That's with your increase portion. For decreases, you'll probably always use a knit two together and a slip slip knit. They're paired. We'll talk about that in a little bit. Remember the worksheet that you filled out in week one? Go ahead and refer to that and then transfer a couple of your stitch gauge and row gauge measurements to this portion of your worksheet. Remember my sweater? Well, I had a stitch gauge per inch of five stitches per inch, and I had a row gauge of six stitches per inch. The gauge for per inch goes across. The row gauge goes vertical. So, for this part of the class, we will

pay most attention to the row gauge of six stitches per inch. What is body shaping? Well, everybody has their own personal body shape. Some people are wider at the bust and smaller at the hips. Some people have a nice hourglass. Some people actually wanna make more room for a little bit of a belly. So, this is the place where you're going to completely customize the shape of the body of your sweater. To make it easiest though, we're going to take a look at probably the most typical situation, which would be this mannequin right here. Notice that she has a bust here. She has a waist that's a little bit smaller than her bust. Then, her hips flare out. So, our body shaping on this sweater will take place pretty much from here, the largest part and then kind of scooch in a little bit at the waist, and then flare out again at the hips. But, the key that we need to figure out is what amount of space we have in which to do our body shaping. Remember, we are going to decrease. We're working straight, and then we're going to increase. But, how much space or how many rows do we have to do this? The first thing that I like to do on a friend or whoever is going to be wearing this sweater or maybe on a mannequin or maybe even looking at my favorite sweater; is to figure out where the waist is. The smallest part of the waist. So on your own body or on your own friend or whatever, you can go ahead and start with a bust measurement, the smallest part of your waist measurement, and the widest part of your hip measurement. Write these three things down somewhere. Then, from that point where you're going to calculate how many rows we have available on our own personal sweater with our own yarn and needles. And, figure out where all of the different measurements have to match. One other thing. There's this thing called ease. That is the difference between the body and the size of the sweater. If you're wearing a sweater or making a sweater that's a little bit larger than your body and you wanna keep it that way, you're going to have to add that number of inches to your final piece. Some people want their sweater to fit smaller than their body so it stretches. That's completely up to you. I know that I happen to like a lot of my sweaters to fit tighter and some of my sweaters I do want to fit a little larger. So, the best thing for you to do is like I said before, go ahead and take out a favorite sweater or favorite fitting knit item and take those measurements. You might be surprised that you were looking for a sweater with negative ease, meaning it is smaller than your actual body size. This next part of the class, what we're going to do is plot the number of shaping increments we have to do in order to achieve the shaping that we want. The thing is is that we have to know our row gauge. My row gauge is six rows per inch. So, in other words, from here to about here. This is about an inch. I have six rows. Let's say I wanted to start my shaping at the widest point, which would probably be the bust. Like, right here. And I wanna end my decreases, this would be the inward slope of the waist, at the smallest part right here and right here. That would mean I'd have to figure out how many inches I want to subtract from one point to the next point. That's number one. Number two, I would need to find out how much space I have in order to do that maneuver. So, we're gonna take a look at our worksheet now and fill in a few things. Then, everybody will have a personal blueprint of how they're going to do that first set of body shaping increments. The first thing that we're going to do is working downward in this case, we will write down the circumference or width of the point at which we want to begin our shaping. Let's pretend we have a 42 inch bust that we want to achieve. Or at least start with. Let's say that. The next step is to write down the circumference or width that we want to end our shaping. So, let's say we want to have a 39 inch waist at the smallest part. This is a difference of three inches. This means that I want to write down in the third part here three inches. This is the number of inches that I want to decrease out of the total body circumference. So, we're multiplying that three inches by my stitch gauge. That is five stitches per inch. That makes it 15, but take a look. It's an odd number. That's perfectly fine because I'll show you in a little bit how you can make odd

numbers work in this situation. But, I'm going to go ahead and round it up to a nice sweet 16. The reason why 16 is a really nice number for working our waist shaping is that each round we are making two decreases on either side of the body at one time. So, that is four stitches decreased per round. I call these shaping increments. So, if we have sets of four, it works perfectly and it's nice and symmetrical. Let's keep it simple. A nice sweet 16 works for me. In this exercise, we will be taking out or adding a set of four stitches per round. This is with the body. So, I'm going to go ahead and write four in here. I'm also mentioning in this step five that when you do sleeves, you typically take out or add sets of two. In this body shaping example, we are decreasing or adding sets of four. So, we have a total of 16 stitches that we are decreasing as we go into the waist. So, we're dividing that sixteen by four. That means that we are going to complete a set of four shaping increments in this sample sweater. These are decreases. So, we're talking about knit together and SSK, slip slip knit, which I will demonstrate for you. Then, the waist line usually depends upon your body. It might be an only inch or so of straightness. Those rounds we knit even. Then, we will do the exact opposite of what we did before and instead of decreasing, we are going to be working increases. These increases are called shaping increments at least in my vernacular. So, in this situation, you are going to be adding sets of four stitches. You'll work then those shaping increments. And then work your hem and bind off and finish your body. The last thing that we have to do before we actually start knitting is to plot our shaping. We already know that we need to remove 16 stitches in sets of four shaping increments. In this case, we start with our decreasing. The first thing to do is decide how much space in inches we have in which to do our shaping. We're going to do that on our mannequin in a moment. Then what we're going to do is multiply our row or round gauge by the number of inches to find out how many rounds that we have available to complete these decreases. The next step is to divide the number of planned increments, we know that there are four, by the rounds available. Then, we'll come up with our "nth" round. So, let's take a look at our mannequin and decide how much space we have in which to do our decreases. I'm going to go ahead and start the measurement here. You can start wherever your body actually starts curving in. Usually, it's a little bit below the arm hole. I'm getting about four inches. I'm ending this four inch mark above the smallest part of the waist. So, right as it just becomes the smallest. Because in most bodies, not all of them, but in most bodies you are going to get this kind of shape. You might have certain situations where you're getting bigger. We can talk about that in a little bit, but for now let's just take a look at our four inches. This is what we have. I know I have a row gauge of six rows per inch. Using my favorite calculator, I'll just times that four inches by six rows. I have 24 rows. Now, what I need to do is do four sets of these decreases. So, 24 divided by those four sets yields me six rows. So that means I'm going to work a decrease round every six rounds.

Work decreases for waist shaping

- I'm now ready to get started with my decreasing. This is the sample sweater that I had from week one. Remember how I had it laid out with the scrap yarn in it so that you could see the shape of it? For the sake of making it nice and neat again I went ahead and I tied the sleeve stitches that are on hold back into their little pouches, and I placed the reserved body stitches, that I had put on waste yarn, back onto my needles so that I can knit again. The thing about doing your decreases at your markers is that it's always nicest, and it looks prettier if you do mirrored decreases. That means that when you are next to a marker and you're working a decrease, you want your decrease to lean toward the decrease, or toward the marker, rather. So I have two markers, they're on either side of the body, they separate the front from the back that we did last week, and what I'm going to do is,

beginning in rounds, on every sixth round, as we just determined, I will work a set of decreases. This purple marker is my end of round marker. What I'm going to do is go ahead and knit up to that marker. Since this is the end of round marker, the very first stitch after that marker begins my new round. So in order to get started, I'll complete the round that I was working on, and just go ahead and get beyond my end of round, and then I'll begin my decreases. Remember each set of decreases are a decrease of four stitches total. I want to go ahead, here's my end of round, I've just slipped it, I want to knit one pretty plain stitch after it, then what I want to do is have a decrease that actually leans toward it, that would be a knit two together. So let's go ahead and knit two together to decrease one stitch on this particular round. There we go, see how it leans toward that marker? My next step to complete this decrease increment, the shaping increment, is to continue knitting all the way around until I reach the next marker. This next marker will also need to have a set of decreases flanking it, and again I need my decreases to mirror, but once I get there I'll show you why I will need to use a slip slip knit, or a left-leaning decrease, to make it nice and pretty, and symmetrical. This next marker is my other color of marker, my green means go marker. I only do that for my own memory, and all that tells me is that I'm going to keep going, that's not the end of the round. Then I'll demonstrate a slip slip knit, or left-leaning decrease. Now we are three stitches away from this marker. The reason why we do this three stitches away is because once I slip, slip, and knit these two stitches together for my decrease, you'll see how it leans left, and now I have just one plain stitch, and then I hit my marker, then I knit one plain stitch, I do my right-leaning, or knit two together decrease. Let me show you. See these two decrease stitches? One leans left, one leans right, they each have a nice, plain stockinette stitch in between, and I only have one more decrease to complete, and then I've completed my set of four decreases for this one shaping round, or increment. Okay, now you see this end of round marker that I'm approaching. I'm going to get within three stitches of where I want to be. This is the very end, and my last four decreases. As you can see, we need it to lean to the left, so I'm going to slip, slip, knit, knit two together, got it, we're going to knit that plain stitch. This completes my first set of decreases, so I've now taken away four stitches. I have three more shaping increments to complete. I'm doing this on every sixth round, so that means only three more sets of decreases need to be done, and then I will have completed my waist shaping in terms of the decrease section. Go ahead and complete your sets of decreases for your own custom sweater, and then do some straight knitting in the round, that's just knit all rounds, for me it's usually about an inch, and then we're going to set started on our waist shaping, but the increase portion of it, and work toward the hips.

Finish waist shaping and add ribbing

- I've completed by decreases and I've worked several rounds of plain knitting the appropriate number for this size sweater. What I need to do is get to my end of round, which is this marker here, and work my first set of increases for the hips. I want to work the same increase that I did on my raglan shaping, which were knit front and backs. What I wanna do is, like I did with the raglan, work these knit front and backs one stitch away from the marker. So on this new round, my increase round, I knit one stitch, I knit front and back, and then I continue across this back. Notice, it's not really a leaning increase. You'll see that little leg there, the thing is that I want it to match the shaping on the raglan, which is that shaping along the sleeves. The decreases do lean but the knit front and back looks just fine in the sweater, especially with this yarn because the yarn is fluffy. Most yarns that you work with will look really, really nice and as long as you match your same shaping on your increases to the increases that you had on the raglan section, it will look great. Again, not sure

if you wanna use your yarn over here. You might want to, if you used a yarn over on your raglan shaping, maybe substitute a different increase for your hip shaping. Remember, we have four stitches that are being increased per shaping round in this section. And we are working these knit front and backs one stitch away from the marker. In between these shaping increments, I will be knitting plain rounds. And for each person, that number is determined by the number of rows that you have available and we figured all that out earlier, so we just stick with that. I'm coming around to my marker and I'm one stitch away now from that marker so I'm knitting front and back. I'm knitting one plain stitch. I'm slipping the marker. I'm knitting one plain stitch again and knitting front and back. That completes three increases. So now I just have one more increase to do on this shaping round. I'm one stitch away at that plain stitch. I'm going to knit front and back. I'm going to knit that one plain stitch and then continue knitting until it's time to work one more increase round. You'll continue working your increases as you've already determined and probably do some straight knitting in rounds for up to an inch or so, maybe even longer depending upon the length of the sweater that you want. This is a completed body that I have right here. You can see that my sleeve stitches are still on this scrap yarn here and tied very nicely. We're gonna get to that next. And you can also see that I knit straight a little bit. Then I did some decreases down to the waist. I knit straight. Then I did some increases. And then I worked straight. This body is ready for a hem. Now, make sure that only knit to the point where you wanna add your hem. Let's say that you want a sweater that hits you right at your hips and you want a three-inch hem, then knit to three inches before you should begin your hem so that once you finished your hem and you've bound off, it hits you just where you want it to hit. In this sample, I am working a two-by-two rib, which means knit knit purl purl. Notice with the knit knit purl purl when working in the round, you're going to need a multiple of four stitches. So on the round before you begin your hem, you need to count your stitches and make sure that you can accommodate your chosen stitch pattern for the number of stitches you have on your needle. Let's say you have one stitch too many. I'll pretend that I have one stitch too many. I figure that since I'm on the back section, see, this is the back, that if I do a stealth decrease, like I do here, I decrease, just knit two together. Nobody's going to be the wiser. If I needed to take away more than that, I would go ahead and space them out so that they aren't placed right next to each other. I could even, if I need to take away more than, let's say, an inch's worth of stitches and this hits at your hip, then instead of taking away stitches, I might add to opt to add stitches because remember, your ribbing sometimes pulls in. With this particular ribbing, I'm working the two-by-two rib, like I said, I need a multiple of four stitches and I will be fine once I get here to my beginning, right here. This is end of round. This is beginning of round. Let's say I wanted a hem that is, blouson I guess I could say, where it will pull in and maybe give a little blowsy effect, I would go down a needle size. In this case with this particular sweater, the drape of this yarn, this Merino, is so nice the way it is. I'm just going to go ahead and continue with my same size needle. I'm almost there. I'll get ready to do my two-by-two rib. Like I said before, if you want to substitute a different stitch pattern like I did with the children's cardigan from last week, you can do that too. But it's probably the best idea to go ahead and echo that same stitch pattern on the hems of your sleeves or rather, your cuffs. So here we go. I'm just finishing this last round where I did a stealth decrease and I'm going to knit two, purl two. Knit two. Purl two. Knit two. Purl two. So you'll continue knitting your either one-by-one or two-by-two rib or any other stitch pattern that you've selected until it reaches the desired length. And go ahead and bind off in pattern and then your body will be complete.

Working the sleeves

- We're gonna work our sleeves now. There are a few items that you will need to have ready to get started. You will want a circular needle that's pretty long if you plan on using a technique like magic loop. That's the technique that I like to use. You can also use a much shorter circular needle. Check the number of stitches that you have ready to go and count them, figure out what your circumference is and make sure that that circular is not too long. You can also use a set of double pointed needles. You might also want to use a stitch marker. The first step that I need to do is release these stitches from the waste yarn. I also call it scrap yarn, if you haven't noticed. So I'm going to go ahead and untie the bow that I made and I'm going to select my choice of needles. I'm gonna point out a few things to you. This is the underarm. Remember the body where we cast on 10 stitches here in the gap to make the circumference of the body the correct circumference? Well, these stitches here, right here, you are going to actually be picking up and knitting stitches along this here to form your underarm of your entire sleeve, see? Now, one quick tip. If you count your stitches and you count how many stitches that you are likely to pick up in the underarm and do a quick calculation of the circumference and decide that the sleeve, if you pick up all the stitches that you cast on will be too big, when you get to this section, pick up fewer stitches. On the other hand, if you decide that this sleeve will be too small, go ahead and as I show you, I'll show you, you're going to put your stitches back on your needle, pick up stitches along this edge again but instead of picking up fewer, like in another scenario, or the same number in the original scenario, you can pick up more. And that way, gain some extra circumference. So the first thing I'm going to do is take my needle. Notice that it's a really long circular. I use magic loop alternatively or on the other hand, you can use double points or that smaller or shorter circular needle. Of course you'll want to use the same size needle that you are using for the rest of your sweater. You'll also notice that I'm using the sample sweater, the unfinished sweater that I was working earlier and is not yet complete, at least the body isn't complete. Notice how I'm pulling it out halfway through. Just let it lay there. Turn the sweater around. Continue putting my needle but leaving my waste yarn in there through the live stitches and then you're gonna see what happens. It's kind of like magic. Getting the last couple stitches here. I'm going to pull this through to make sure that my coil is all the way on and see the scrap yarn, my favorite stuff, I'm gonna slip it right out. Ta-da! And now all the stitches are nice and safe on my needle. Let me just point out a couple things again. All the stitches that were reserved from before are on the needle. We have an underarm. The next step that we're going to do is take our new ball of yarn. It could be just a leftover from the last part. And I'm going to reattach it. And I do a magic loop. Like I said before, you can use any method for working in around that you like. I do have a marker here. I'm not going to use a marker because with this method, I will be able to keep track of the center on the underarm. But if you're using one short circular, you will definitely wanna use a marker to mark that center here. This is the center of the body. So what I'll do, reattach my yarn and just start knitting. I'll knit all the way around these live stitches to the end and then I will be ready to pick up stitches from that underarm and if you're working from a short circular, you will place a marker. And depending upon how you put your double pointed needles into the stitches, you might also use a marker. As you're working at the very beginning before your sleeve gets too long, what you'll want to do, instead of flipping to work around and around, it can be kind of cumbersome, is to flip it this way, flip it that way. Flip it this way, flip it that way. And then when the sleeve gets nice and long, you can lay it down in your lap and work it this way, that way, this way, that way, you'll see it, instead of round and round and round. That makes life a lot easier when working sweaters all in one piece. I'm finishing the other side of the sleeve and when I get to the

end, it will be time for me to pick up stitches at the underarm. And then it will all come together and it will make complete sense. And now, I'm at the end. I'll show you. I'm here at the gap now. I originally cast on 10 stitches for the body and I plan on keeping the circumference of the sleeve. I'm very happy with it. I'm not going to make any adjustments. So I am going to first pick up five to the center of the body and right here, you might end up with a small hole. This can be darned in at the very end if you like it or if you'd like to do that of if you're unhappy with how it looks. Generally speaking, if you knit tight enough, you're not going to have any visible hole. So there's one pick up. There's a second stitch that I'm picking up. Here's a third. Here's a fourth. And a fifth. And if you're using that shorter circular or if you have placed your double points as such, you can choose to go ahead and put your stitch marker here to show the center of the underarm. This marker will alert you when it is time to make sleeve shaping increments. But for now, since I'm using magic loop, I am just going to go ahead and pick up the remaining five stitches at the underarm and then connect to the rest of the sleeve. I'm using this side of the circular to do it. So remember, your marker would be here if you're using a regular circular. Let's pick up the rest of the five stitches. That's one. Two. Three. Four. And there's this last one to make five. You're going to knit in the round for about an inch. That's the general rule of thumb for most sweaters, most adult sweaters. I've knit about an inch now in the round of the sleeve without doing any shaping but I wanna back up a bit because this is time to do a little bit of calculation to see how you want your sweater sleeve to begin and end. In this case, I know that I'm beginning with about a 14-inch circumference for the upper arm and I know that I wanna end up with about an eight-inch cuff. So in order to do that, I need to decrease a proper amount of stitches so that I end up with that eight inches. So 14 minus eight, eight, nine, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 is six inches and I know that I have five stitches per inch as a gauge, so six times five is 30. I need to decrease 30 stitches but how do I know how many increments I need to do? Well, with the sleeves, instead of decreasing four stitches per round, we decrease two. So that means I'm going to do 15 sets of shaping intervals from the larger to the smaller. And I'm gonna show you on our current class sample where they are and how they look, and then I'm going to demonstrate how you do it on this sample here. So this is the class sample and this is the sleeve. I now determined my beginning circumference and I know my ending circumference. And I also have knit about an inch already, even, on the other sample and on this sample, I did the same thing. So with my tape measure, I'm gonna lay out how far I want my decreases to last or the duration of them before I wanna begin knitting straight because typically, you wanna knit straight for a little bit at the underarm unless you have a really too big sweater sleeve but usually, it's about an inch. And you will usually wanna end your shaping a little before you begin your ribbing. That kind of always works out well. So looking at it with my tape measure, I think 10 inches works out just about right. We've got an inch on either end for your knitting. So let's go to our calculator, my favorite one, and let's see. Using my row gauge of six rows per inch times 10 inches space to do my decreases, I get 60 rows. That means I have to perform my decreases in that 60-row space. I also know that I want to do 15 sets of decreases with two decrease stitches on each of those rounds. So 60 divided by those 15, shaping increments gives me four, which is an nth of four. So that means I knit for an inch and then beginning after that, every fourth round, I do a set of two decreases which will bring me down to the proper circumference then I'll knit about an inch. I can stick my arm through and see if it's the right length. If I have to, I can go ahead and knit a little bit more until it's just time to do my cuff. I can even rib back a little bit if it's a little bit too long, it's all good. You're gonna end up with a sweater that you love. The key is that you need to keep a pen and paper, a piece of paper near you, and make some notes, because you wanna repeat the same thing for the other sleeve. I'm ready to

now make my first set of paired decreases. These are just like the ones on the waist where they will both lean into the marker. I'm using magic loop with one long circular so I don't have a marker, but I do know that this is the center because I'm using the method of magic loop and I begin and end my rounds here. Other people using a short circular will know that it's the center because they will have placed a marker here. Again, with these paired decreases that mirror the centerline, I will place the decreases one stitch away from the center just like we did with the waist shaping. So to begin, I'm going to knit one plain stitch. And then remember, we are going to lean the decrease toward the center, so we need to use a right leaning decrease, which a knit two together is a right leaning decrease. And again, I'll point out, you can see how it's leaning toward the right. I'm going to continue this round and at the end, one stitch away from the last stitch, I will work a slip slip knit, which is a left leaning decrease. And what I will do is get to three stitches before the very end of that round to make that maneuver. And that will then allow me to knit one plain stitch. And then knit however many rounds I need to before I do my next set of decreases. I'm working my decreases on this sleeve every fourth round. And just to remind you, in the beginning, you're going to be working with this blob. It's best if you don't go round and round, but instead go back and forth, and that will save you from any confusion about where you are on the sweater and save you from having tangles or anything like that. Almost to the end of this round. We're doing our left leaning decrease. These are the last stitches before my end of round. See, we have the center right here but with a slip slip knit or an SSK. We need to do them on the last two stitches before our plain stitch. So again, we slip two stitches as if to knit them. Then we go ahead and knit them together. We knit our plain stitch. Left leaning decrease. I've just finished my first set of decreases and just like my waist decreasing but at the interval that you've decided is right for your sweater until you've reached all of your decreases or until it fits. You can stick your arm through if you like to or you can measure it if you're making it for somebody else. Work some rounds, plain, and then if you have to make an adjustment for your multiple of stitches required for your rib, in this case, with two by two, you need a multiple of four. In the case of one by one, we need a multiple of two or an even number. And you work that for however long you want it to and then bind off in pattern so it's nice and stretchy. What I mean to in pattern is that sometimes when you bind off, all you do is knit and bind off. When you knit in pattern or bind off in pattern rather, you knit a stitch, you knit another stitch and you bind off, but once you reach a purl stitch, like the one here, you'll purl it before you bind it off. That's what binding off in pattern means. And that, like I said, makes some nice stretchy finish. After you've done that and made whatever decisions you've wanted along the way and kept notes on 'em so you can repeat for the other sleeve, you're going to work the other sleeve just like you did this one. And then what you're going to do is pick up stitches around your V neck along these shaping lines here, and then you're going to finish this off and I'm going to show you how to do that next.

Finishing the neckline

- Before we move on to the neck line, I just wanna give you a few tips about shaping. We don't always have to do a classic sleeve like we did on the sample. We also don't always have to do hour glass shaping that we did on the sample. In your class notes, I outline different ways of how to achieve a few different effects. Say you wanted to work some bell sleeves, these are sleeves that are decreased until you reach about elbow length, and then slowly increase so that they drape at your wrist. In order to do that, you're going to follow the same shaping principles that are in your class notes. In other words, you're going to measure from one circumference to the next circumference,

figure out how you want to decrease, let's say to your elbow in that case, and then figure out your starting circumference, and your ending circumference, and figure out how you need to add your increases so that you have a wider circumference there at the wrist. For a cap sleeve, you're placing your stitches back onto the needles as you did with the sample sweater, and you'll just work a round or two, and then do some decreases there at the the underarm. Kind of test it out. Like I said before, put your arm through, see, pinch it together to see how it will fit, and when you're happy you'll go ahead and do your ribbing, maybe a much smaller ribbing, and maybe go down a needle size for this type of ribbing. And then maybe do an inch, and then bind off. You've done this all before. You know how to do it. It's outlined in your notes. One last body shape that I wanna point out. Not everybody has an hour glass shape, or maybe you wanna make an A-line sweater. These are nice swingy sweaters, and they're really popular, and they're really fun to do. Instead of going from, you know, going from a certain circumference and going in, and then back out, you're simply going to have a start, and then slowly increase your stitches to a final stitch count at the hip. This again, you've done before when you were working your hip increases. Instead, with that situation, an A-line shaped sweater, you'll start right under the arms after you've knit, and then just sew straight. The great thing about these simple principles and this type of knitting, these increases, and these decreases to make these shapes, is that you can pretty much make any style sleeve or body that you want. It's just a lot of fun. So now let's do our neckline. I'm going to start at the base of the v-neck. You can see that the stitches might be a little bit loose there, but it's not a big deal. Because when you are knitting back and forth, you can knit little tighter at that spot. You also have the option of later going in and tidying up the area. The type of v-neck that I have in this class sample, is an overlapped v-neck. And what's going to happen is that there will be two sides that are overlapped, and this section will be hidden. We're starting at the base of the v-neck here. I will reattach the yarn, give myself a bit of a tail. And I'm going to start about here; it looks like it's a sturdy spot, and bring up a loop. Sometimes this takes a couple bit of tries for me. Let's see if I can do it on my first try. Ta-da! And then I'm going to work my way up the v-neck. Remember when you were working on your way down, actually top down, and you were adding stitches to the neck line to create your v? Well, you have a shaped edge and your goal is, when you pick up these neck line stitches, is that you're nice and neat as you do so. And once we get to that edge, one of those shaped edges, I'll point it out. The other thing to keep in mind as you pick up and knit these stitches, is to keep them nice and even. So, in other words, you don't wanna pick up a stitch that is too far away from the previous picked up stitches. See how these are kinda coming out pretty even? This one looks like a little far apart, but that's because it's loose. See? But, if I go up along here, and I skip two rows, I'm going to do it just to show you. Let's skip two rows. What happens? Well, when I start knitting, it's gonna pucker. So that's a no no. So instead, we're going to pick up evenly all the way along this neck edge. Right here, see that was an increased stitch. I'm going to be sure to be extra careful not to accidentally pick up a bar in between the stitches, but to actually pick up some live yarn. You're also going to notice, because of shaping, look. See how this line of stockinette kind of merges with this? You are going to have some natural jogging that occurs as you creep up. That's normal, but just be aware that no matter what you do, it's going to happen. So your best bet, is to be very deliberate when you do this. Take it slow, and kinda check in what you're doing. See, here's another little bit of a jog. And try to keep everything kind of consistent in what you're doing. Now, do you want to use a different size needle for this part? If you use the same size needle on your body as you did on your hem and on your cuffs, then you'll probably want your ribbing to match on your neck line. If you used a smaller needle, keep in mind that there might be a chance that you

might get some slight puckering around the neck line. And if you're the type of knitter who has some experience, and you can kind of loosen up your knitting, yet use a smaller needle and make it keep, you know, neat and not ripply, then go ahead and go for it. But, what I do typically on my neck line edging, is I will use the larger needle on my neck line edging even if I used a smaller needle on my cuff and on my hem. As you're picking up these neck line stitches and around the edge here, you will need to make sure that you're counting as you go. In this case, we're working two by two rib flat, not in the round. But we'll still need a multiple of four. If you're working a one by one rib, be sure to count as you go, and pick up an even number of stitches. And even, I mean as in the number. It could be divisible by two. Also, one thing to consider is that, let's say, you've counted as you've gone, it all looks nice and neat, you're happy with the results, yet once you've reached the end of your first row of ribbing, you've discovered that you have an extra stitch, or that you need one extra stitch. With this type of knitting, and if you're not a super-duper perfectionist, it's totally cool if you go ahead and make a stealth increase on your way, or a stealth decrease on your way. If it bothers you though, you can tink back; that's t-i-n-k, which is opposite of knit, k-n-i-t, and then carry on. The stitches are now on the needles. I'm going to work two by two ribbing flat along the neck edge. In all other situations with this sweater you've been knitting in the round. But this time I'm knitting two by two, that means knit two, purl two, flat. So on right sides I knit two, purl two to the end, and then on wrong sides I purl two, knit two to the end. I'm going to make this knit edging about an inch deep. We're working two by two ribbing. This is my first row along the neck edge. See I'm kind of inching my way up toward the sleeve top. I don't have to worry about any markers at all because it's just one stream of knits and purls flat. Just to remind you, you're working in rows. You can see that the wrong side is facing me, you can see the seam where I picked up the stitches, and because I'm working the wrong side of two by two rib, all I gotta do to remember that I'm knitting the two by two and how to do it, is just to knit the stitches as they appear. So this appears like a purl stitch, so I'm going to purl it. You can see this is a pair of knit stitches, so I'm just going to knit them. This is why working ribbing is so much fun for me. Once I lay down that first row around of stitches, all I have to do is purl the purl stitches or knit the knit stitches and then I get on a roll. I'm almost at the end of my wrong side row. It's really important that you use a circular for this type of neck line because it's pretty large and it curves. Imagine trying to use straight needles in this situation. You would really ruin the neck line. This is what I love about circular needles. If you have a set of circular needles, you can knit either flat or in the round. If you have sets of straight needles, you can't knit in the round. So, I pretty much only own circular needles. For your neck edging, you will work your chosen edging flat for about an inch. And when it is about an inch, you will bind off and pattern. Keep on knitting and purling until your neck edge is about an inch wide, or however deep you want it to be. I have one here. This is the class sample. And I want to show you how to overlap those flat edges of the bottom of the v, and tack it down to make it look really really finished. You can see on this one that I've bound off in pattern. So everything is kind of stretchy, looks really nice and finished. I have a tapestry needle. I've left a tail after I finished binding off, and all I need to do to finish it, is thread my tapestry needle and then decide how it looks best to be overlapped. I can overlap it that way. I can try it again this way, to see what looks best. I like it like this. So I'm going to go ahead and start tacking it down. One thing that I like to do, is make sure that it's not too tight. You don't wanna stretch it. You wanna keep it in line with your picked up stitches along here. Push my needle through to the other side of this left neck edging, kinda at the bottom, pull it through, and kind of tug this little knotted edge there in a little bit just to lay it flat. Then, I can either turn it inside out, or I can carefully hold it together. See where it matches up there? Line it up. You can

even use some dull pins if you want to tack it down or hold it down. And I just kind of weave it together, make sure I'm picking up from the other side, like a little bar there. Then there's already picked up... See, I picked up that bar, and now I am going to bring it back down, to the other side, then again. See? Pick up there. A simple sewing maneuver just down through to the bottom. Don't pull too tight. You don't want it to pucker. Then a little bit up, catch a stitch. See now, I've pretty much reached the end here, so I'm going to turn the right side facing me again, and kind of check how it's laying. You can see that I tacked down here. So there is a little bit of a lip there. This doesn't bother me because this is not a close fitting sweater. If it were a close fitting sweater, it might stretch. And if that's the case, it's your choice to go ahead and do a little bit of sewing to tack it down kind of invisibly. I'll pick up this one last bar or stitch from behind, pull it through, and then to finish it off, I want to bring my needle to the very very wrong side to the back here. You turn this inside out. So that looks nice. Can you see how it looks pretty good? Pretty happy with that. And then, as we weave in the ends on other sweaters, we might just kind of weave, weave underneath other stitches. Take it down to the inside ridge where you picked up stitches before for your neck edging. Some people never make a knot in their knitting. I like to make knots. It's really your choice. With this type of yarn, it will stick together so, making a knot is not necessary. The reason why I like to make a knot is because I can find that knot later, and then in case I don't like the way it looks, I'll look for that knot and unravel it. So I'm just going to hide this for now, and take a look at it, see if I like it. Looks pretty good! Last step is to weave in your ends unless you're the kind of person who likes to weave in as they go. And then, we'll take a look at our new masterpiece. You've knit your first, possibly your first, no pattern, all in one piece Raglan sweater from the top down. And to give your sweater a nice and polished finish so it looks really really professionally done and nicely handmade, go ahead and give it a nice gentle wash. Roll out the water, lay it out on a flat surface, and then if you're like me, get out your wooden spoon and bang on it, and it flattens the stitches out really nicely. And that's a tip that nobody ever tells you. Let's just keep it between us. Next week, we're going to start our top down set-in sleeve sweater. This is not a Raglan. This one's a set-in sleeve sweater. It's knit from the top just like this one, but as a cardigan, there are endless variations. Can't wait til next week. (uplifting music) In the next couple of weeks we are going to work on a top down set-in sleeve sweater. (uplifting music) This week we're going to focus on passing on to the back, working down to the armholes, and then casting them for the front and finishing off the body. Unlike the Raglan pullover that we worked on before, this is as cardigan that doesn't have any waist shaping, but it does have a nifty soft tie belt to pull it all together. (uplifting music)

Chapter 3 - Top-Down Sweater Knitting: Custom-Fit Set-In-Sleeve Sweater

Part 3 Overview

(bright upbeat music) - Welcome to week three. In the next couple of weeks we are going to work on a top down set and sleeves sweater. (bright upbeat music) This week we're going to focus on casting on for the back, working down to the arm holes, and then casting on for the fronts and finishing off the body. Unlike the raglan pullover that we worked on before this is a cardigan that doesn't have any waist shaping but it does have a nifty self tie belt to pull it all together.

Materials

- The materials we'll use for this particular sweater are very similar if not the same as your raglan sweater. You will need some yarn, enough yarn to make your cardigan. I'm using Blue Sky Alpaca Suri Merino just like I used for the raglan. And you might choose to use like a yarn requirements

guide or talk to your yarn store to find out how much yarn you're going to need for your cardigan. You'll need circular needles. I prefer using the circular needles because the weight of the stitches and the curvature of the cable makes everything more manageable. Also you can repurpose them for the sleeves when you're knitting them in the round. Optional item would be double-pointed needles for the sleeves knit in the round. Some stitch markers, pair of scissors, tape measure, tapestry needle, some nice slippery waste yarn, this is cotton. And I've chosen a color that is contrasting with this so that you can see it and pull it out easily from live stitches. Your gauge swatch, this is the same gauge swatch I used for the pullover because it's the same yarn. Remember how I told you before that I put knots in the tail of my swatch. When I read the gauge I will be reminded that I used size 7 needles to render this type of fabric that I really like. You'll need also your PDF printout for this week's class, a pencil or a pen, and a trusty calculator.

Taking measurements

- I already made my swatch. It's in the same yarn, so I can reuse it. You need to measure it. You need to know your stitches per inch and your rows per inch. I remember what mine are. I get five stitches per inch and six rows per inch. So I'm going to go ahead and plug that into my worksheet here. The next step is to take some measurements. You have a choice. You can either measure your favorite sweater, or if you're knitting for somebody else, maybe grab a favorite sweater of theirs that you know fits them, or you can measure yourself or have a friend help you, or measure a mannequin, if you happen to own one. So let's start by taking the following measurements. We're gonna start with the crossback. Crossback is just simply from shoulder tip to shoulder tip. Across here. If you want a dropped sleeve, something that comes down, you can give it, yourself a little extra maybe inch or two, so it kind of hangs down a little bit. It's looser fitting. This one's going to be relatively fitted. So I'm getting about 14 inches crossback. I'm going to write that down in my worksheet, 14 inches. The next step is to take the underarm measurement. Again, you can use a favorite sweater, or measure a friend's sweater. And this is from the top of the shoulder down to a comfortable underarm area. This is about seven inches. So I'm gonna write down seven inches. You might get seven and a half or eight and a half or seven and a quarter. If you happen to get a different measurement, not a whole number, seven and a quarter, eight and a quarter, it's totally cool. It'll all work out. We don't have to round up or round down. The next thing that we're going to do is take a desired chest measurement. Now, if you want it to fit closely, you will go ahead and just measure all the way around. Not pull it tight or anything, but just measure all the way around. Now, notice how this is a cardigan. You're going to add an edging that will add some width. I still like to take just an actual chest measurement and not add or subtract anything, 'cause I want my cardigan to overlap. So I'm getting about 34 inches here. If you want a looser fitting garment, go ahead and add an inch or two to give you some positive ease. The last step is take a measurement from your neck to your shoulder tip. I always say, with a cardigan like this, to be a little conservative. Don't overdo it, because then, you might have a sloppy-looking cardigan. I'm gonna measure the mannequin. Don't pay attention to the sweater. But see, it's about four inches. But when you take this measurement, be sure that you take in account that you will be adding a border, and that border, if it's three inches, will be added to that four inches. The next step is to determine our cast-on numbers and our goal stitches. And then next, we'll cast on. But first, let's write some things down. I know that I have five stitches per inch. My crossback, that first measurement that I took, is 14 inches. If I multiply those two numbers, I get 70 stitches for my initial cast-on. Next, again, I'll write down my five stitches per inch, and multiply it by my desired chest circumference, which is 34. So that's 34 times

five. I get 170. Then I'm going to divide it by two. I get 85 stitches. That would be my goal for the front or the back. In this measurement, I got 85. It's an uneven number. I'm going to go ahead and round it up or down to an even number. I think I'll chose 86. Notice how I started with 70. That's the initial cast-on for the top of the back. My goal number of 86 is a goal. So what happens when you are making this back, as you get toward the arm hole, and I'll show you more later, you're going to be adding some stitches so that you shape the underarm, and then you end up with a goal of 85 stitches. So that means I am going to add-- Or 86, rather. I'm going to add 16 stitches to the back as I go down toward the hem.

Casting on and working the back

- The first step in this process is to cast on for your upper back. I've already determined that I need 70 stitches that will give me the 14 inches' worth of stitches for that upper back. I'm using a long tail cast on, and I'm going to cast on 70 stitches. 65, 66, 67, 68, 69 and 70. As you move forward in your knitting on the fly exploration, you can use other stitch patterns, but today I'm using Stockinette and beginning with a knit row. I'm going to knit with a right side and a wrong side, that means I'm knitting flat, to just about an inch shy from my goal underarm, arm hole length, rather. And then after that, I'm going to make a quick calculation and decide how I will proceed with the underarm shaping. Now I need to work a wrong side before I will be ready to work my underarm shaping. I'm just about finished. There's my last stitch. My back piece measures about one inch from my goal measurement of seven inches. Now I'm ready to do some underarm shaping. We're ready for step three. We have to make one last calculation for this back. What we're going to do is transfer our goal stitches of 86, that's my case, your number might be different, to this right here. My goal stitches are 86 stitches, but I need to subtract those 86 from my original cast on of 70 to find out how many stitches I need to add to the underarms to make the circumference, or at least the back, measure one half of my circumference. My original was 70, so if I subtract 70 from 86, I get a total of 16 stitches that I need to add to the back or the front, but right now we're working on the back, so I will add 16 stitches to the underarms. But I need to cut that in half, to eight stitches and eight stitches to either side of the underarm to make it nice and even. So this is how we're going to do it. Notice this is the back piece. And I'm knitting from the top down. So this is the cast on edge, and I'm working toward the underarm. Just like in garment sewing or anything, you have a curvature here. And I will do it on both sides. For my first set of increases, remember, I'm adding eight stitches to each side. What I like to do is to maybe add only one stitch here and one stitch here, work a purl row or a wrong side row, then using backward loop, add maybe three stitches here and three stitches here, work a wrong side row, and then I need another four stitches, so I will backward loop four stitches on here, four stitches on here, and do a purl row, and that will have my back complete at that point. Not everybody will be adding eight stitches to each side of their underarms, so if you need a little bit of guidance, go ahead and check out your worksheet, and that will explain what you need to do. I like to use a make one increase for my first set of increases, and I usually put that make one one stitch from the beginning and one stitch at the end. So here's my first make one. Now I have added one underarm stitch here. When I get to the end of this first shaping row, one stitch before the end, I will make another increase, and it's going to be another make one. Okay, here we go. One stitch away from the end, I'm gonna lift up that bar, insert my needle, and knit in the back of the stitch. There's my make one. Knit the last stitch, and now I've added one stitch to either side of the arm hole. Now I'm working one wrong side row, which is a purl row because I'm working in Stockinette. If your cable is looping like this and it bothers you, it's okay to straighten it out. It's

actually pretty easy. All you have to do is steam some water, you know, boil it and get some steam going. And then pull the cable taut over the steaming water and the heat will make it straighten out. I've actually even dipped it in boiling water real quickly, and then pulled it taut and it works perfectly. But I have a funny friend and I won't name her name, she put hers in the microwave, and it exploded. All right, at the end of this wrong side row, my next step is to go ahead and use backward loop to add three stitches to each side. There's the front, with backward loop, you usually have the wrong side facing. So there's one, two, three, now I'll knit those three stitches. You can take a look. See how it's beginning to give that curved line? So let's knit across to the end, and when I get to the end, I will backward loop, cast on three stitches, so it's symmetrical. See how that is a little bit loose? That's okay because later you will be picking up stitches along this line to knit your sleeves. All right I'm almost at the end now. I added three stitches to the one side, now I'm going to add three stitches to this side. Backward loop one, two, three. I'm going to turn it and work a wrong side. After that, I will add four stitches to each side of the underarm again, work one wrong side row, and then I will have completed my upper back. This piece is finally beginning to look like a back of a sweater, but before I start the fronts, I'm going to place this piece on hold by using my waste yarn and my tapestry needle. Let's thread the waste yarn, again, this is contrast to the gray so I can see it. It's slippery so it'll go through the stitches, and not get caught. I'll give myself a nice big piece, long piece. All I do, as with the raglan, is just begin threading this tapestry needle through these live stitches, sliding them off the knitting needle onto the tapestry needle. I'll do this all the way to the end, and then I'm going to cut my working yarn. This is the working yarn. There we go.

Work front of sweater

- We're going to begin knitting the fronts of the sweater. What we will do is pick up the stitches from the cast on edge, work the front separately, and do the same under arm shaping that we did to the back. We're just going to mirror that and then join the whole piece together. That's when this sweater's really, really going to start looking like a real sweater. From there, we'll in one piece, work all the way down to the hem and we will have completed the body of the sweater. In step five, we determined the number of shoulder stitches that we need and how many to pick-up along the cast on edge. In order to do that, we'll go ahead and transfer our shoulder measurement which was four inches. We multiply that by our five stitches per inch and that equals 20 shoulder pick-up stitches. For this cardigan, we determined that we would pick-up 20 stitches for each front. What we will do is pick-up and knit 20 stitches starting at the right side with right side facing with one ball of yarn. Once I pick-up 20 stitches from here to about here, I will then move on to the left front and pick-up stitches there too. Once I get there, I'll show you a trick, so you'll know exactly where to begin picking-up your stitches with your second ball of yarn. If you want to, you can work a right front, just on it's own and then when you're done with that, with your underarm shaping, put your piece on hold. You can then move on and work your left separately. I'm going to work these fronts simultaneously. It's a lot easier than you think if you've never done it before. So I thought that while we're here together, that you can see me doing it at once and then you'll be encouraged to go ahead and try it yourself. I'm going to go ahead and pick-up twenty stitches now starting at the outermost column of stitches with right side facing, I'll just stick my needle through here, take my first ball of yarn and pull up a loop. Sometimes it'll take a couple tries. Okay, now I'm ready to go, there's one. Be sure that I get the working side of the yarn ... There's two, well almost ... two, three, four, six, 19, and 20. Now I'm done with the right front, see they're right there. You can see you've created sort of an internal seam. This will give it a little bit of reinforcement. I'm going to go ahead

and put down that piece of yarn there. Then move in with my other ball of yarn. How do I know where to begin picking at my stitches? You can see that I'm working from right to left. Well, I use a removable marker. What I do, you can also use a safety pin by the way, I kind of take either a pencil or the other end of my needle which I'm pulling through the stitches and I'll count. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, that's halfway. Eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, and twenty. See? Now go ahead and mark that spot. That's how I know how if I pick-up stitches, I will pick-up 20. First I'll stick the needle through and then I'll remove the marker to make it easy and let's go. Most of the time, placing that removable marker, in from the left hand edge works. About 99% of the time it does. If it doesn't, you get to the end, and you've picked up the wrong number of stitches, it's pretty easy just to go ahead and remove your yarn and try again. 19 and 20. Pull it all the way through. Now you have started your right front and your left front. The first step is to go ahead and turn my work and work a wrong side row. But when you do that, you work from one ball at a time. Keep track of where they are and I'll show you once I get started a few tricks on how to keep things from getting tangled up. Pearl this first front, the wrong side, these 20 stitches. Now this last stitch will be loose because it's not tethered to anything. See this tail? This will be woven in later. So I finish this one front, I'm dropping that working yarn, then pick-up the other side, this other needle. Slide the stitches close to the others so I can work it. With this ball of yarn, I'll pearl to the end. Once I get to the end ... this is where if you don't pay attention things could get tangled. You're not going to turn your work around and around, you are going to pay attention. Rather than turning around and around, you're going to flip it back and forth. You can see it's sort of confusing right now, but I promise once the fronts get longer it'll be easier to track. So, I'm turning it again towards me and I'm ready to work a front. But here's the deal, don't let these two balls get too close to each other on the table. Put them on either side of the table, as if they would be fighting siblings so they don't get tangled up. Here's a little tip, in this cardigan we are working our neckline shaping. This is shaping that occurs at the neck edge on each front, every eighth row. Which is a right side row. But if you wanted to make something more like a v-neck that slopes in a lot faster, you could do your shaping every sixth row or so. The good idea or the best idea rather is to go ahead and follow the instructions for this one and maybe in future cardigans, you can practice with different shaping intervals. Then you'll come up with something that's a little bit different. Anyways, I'll start the fronts again and work seven rows. On my eighth row, I am going to do some shaping and I'll show you. Now I'm working on the wrong side. This would be considered row three. Ready to drop this yarn and pick up the next one. Slide these stitches over, and then pearl across this second wrong side of the front. Now turning to the right side again and not flipping around and around. Kind of checking in with those fighting siblings. Turning it this way. Now this is my fourth row of my right front. Drop that yarn, pick up the second ball of yarn for the left front and finish the fourth row. I find when I'm doing this, it's a little easier to have the yarn on a table, rather than in my lap because it's easier to keep track of where everybody is. We're on our eighth row. Now it's time to do some neck shaping, remember? We are working, shaping units every eighth row. at the neck line edge. Pointing at the fronts, it would be at this neckline here on the right and here on the left. Just remember and orient yourself any you'll keep it consistent that it's separate from underarm shaping that comes a little bit later. Let me demonstrate the first set. Using the yarn connected to the right hand side front, I will knit across and one stitch before I get to the end, I will use a make one increase to work the first neck line shaping increment. Here we go! I knit to the place where I want to do my Make One increase, which is here. I pick up the horizontal bar in between the stitches. I place it on my left hand needle, then I knit into the back of

that stitch, and pull a loop through. I've created an extra stitch, then knit the last stitch. I've added one stitch right here, drop this yarn, move to the left front, slide the stitches to the tip of the needle. Remember, we're working neck edges. In this instance, we work one stitch, we work our increase into the following stitch, which is the make one and then knit to the end. That will be our first set of neckline shaping units. After this, I will turn and work a wrong side row. Then again on the eighth row, I will repeat this process. What you'll find is that this will slowly shape itself. Continue shaping your fronts as set, but what you need to watch for now, is as you work your fronts, you want to treat the fronts exactly like you did your back. In other words, go ahead and work your fronts until you're one inch shy from your goal under arm depth or the number of inches. In our case, we wanted seven inches. I stopped at around six inches. After you get there, do the same maneuver you did with your under arm shaping for the back. But in this case, on your two fronts, at the under arm side. After that, we're going to connect them all together and then make the body all in one piece.

Join front and back and finish body

- Let's take a look at our work before we connect the fronts to the back. I have my two fronts and they are almost all the way shaped in the underarms, except for one last step. At the same time, I increase for the neck every eight rows on the neckline edge. I've gone ahead and put my backstitches that were on hold with waist yarn, on to an extra circular needle. This circulate needle doesn't have to be the same size as what you've been working on, but it should be within one size. Let's say you're using a size seven, it's okay to use an eight or a six if you don't have one on hand. But the key is you've gotta get pretty close. Otherwise your first row of stitches will look either a little loose or a little too tight. The next step for me is to go ahead and do those last backward loop additional stitches at the underarm on the fronts like I did with my back. You can see here how we are starting to get a curvature on the front like we did with the back. Next I'm just going to add those four extra stitches, work a wrong side row and then connect these two fronts to the back. Starting with the backward loop, I turn this so the wrong side faces me. And I cast on four stitches for the underarm, like I did with the back. And then I knit across these stitches all the way to the neck edge. And by the way, this is not an eighth row. This is actually six rows away from my last neck shaping increment. So I don't have to do any neck shaping on this particular row when I get to the end here. Drop the ball of yarn. Now I need to knit my left front stitches and work a backward loop at the armhole edge. Or actually four backward loops. Here we go. One. Two. Three. Four. I will work one wrong side row on each front. Turn it. Work a right side row on each front. And at the end of the left front I will connect the underarm of that front to the corresponding back underarm. Alright, I'm at the end of the row now. But where do I go next? Just take a look. This is the back underarm with the added stitches. I literally just fold it toward me. See this hole? That's your underarm. I will place a marker to keep track of where my stitches are and my backstitches and my front stitches. In this case it's a removable marker. You can use any type of marker that you want. Once I'm connected here, I knit across the back stitches. Make sure that the work is not twisted. Sometimes I haven't paid attention and I found that I've twisted maybe a front or the back. And then I end up with the pretzel piece. If you're going to end up with the pretzel piece, it's mostly likely to happen at this other edge. And I'll show you why. And now this metal one, this extra needle that I used for placing the live stitches onto waist, off of the waist yarn, I get to get rid of, put that away. But see this right here. You can see how it can be a little confusing. What you wanna do is turn your work so you see all of your stockinette stitching facing you. In other words, the knit

stitches facing you. Not the wrong side. And this is the place where I'm going to connect it. Before you make one more knit stitch, just have to check in. Take a look at your one connection, make sure everything is knit side facing. And then take a look at this connection, make sure you're not twisting anything. And double check that you're creating one piece. See? Now I'm in good shape here. We bring the right front stitches close to the edge of the needle. Place a second marker. And then I'll knit to the end and everything will be all in one piece. Remember as you get to each neck edge, every eighth row you do your neck shaping. Notice when you've gotten to the end of your row, that you have your live yarn happens to be the smaller of these two. And you have the sister, the big sister, that is also connected, but not being used on that particular row. Let's go ahead and just cut it off and put it aside for later. Now everything is connected. It looks kinda small, but it blocks out beautifully. And to size, to your blocked gauge. All you need to do from here is continue knitting flat and continuing with your neck shaping as said, every eighth row or whatever row you've determined. Until the sum of your two fronts equal the number of stitches in your back section. ^You'll work the body until it's time to add a hem. ^Now this is where the fun and the magic begins. ^Well, the magic kind of already began ^when you kind of put everything together ^into one great piece, but when you get to the hem, you can make a design choice. In my case, I decided that I wanted to use a stitch pattern from my book *Up, Down, All-Around Stitch Dictionary*. I chose Seated Rib for the hem, ^because it has a really fantastic texture. ^And I also swatched it with the yarn that I intended to use ^to make sure that it looked the way that I wanted it to look. You'll notice that each stitch pattern that you can select has a multiple of stitches. In this case it has a multiple in the flat version of four plus three. So this is what I did right before I reached the hem. I counted the number of stitches on my needles. And I needed to make a slight adjustment by decreasing a couple stitches. You might end up not having to decrease a stitch or increase a stitch at all. But what you need to do is on your last row, make a stealth decrease or increase to make sure that you have the proper multiple and then on your next right side row, go ahead and start your chosen stitch pattern and then knit to the bottom. If it makes sense you can bind off in pattern. Hey guys, it's week four. We are going to finish up our sweater. We need to do our sleeves. I'm gonna show you how to pick up the stitches from the arm hole and work some short rows. They're really easy, I promise. And finish your sleeve, just like you did the right one. We are also going to pick up our stitches around the edges of the cardigan and finish those up. And then last we are going to make a self tie belt. This is the great thing about improv knitting. Just think, you are now your own designer.

Chapter 4 - Top-Down Sweater Knitting: Finishing Your Set-In-Sleeve Sweater

Part 4 Overview

- Hey guys, it's week four. We are going to finish up our sweater. We need to do our sleeves. I'm gonna show you how to pick stitches from the arm hole. And work some short rows. They're really easy, I promise. And finish your sleeve, just like you did the right one. We are also going to pick up our stitches around the edges of the cardigan and finish those up. And then last, we are going to make a self-tie belt. This is the great thing about improv knitting. Just think, you are now your own designer. (pop music)

Pick up stitches and knit sleeves

- I want to talk about how great these set-in sleeves are. First of all, you can always try on it as you go. It's perfect, you just stick your arm through like you did with the raglan and when you decide

the length is perfect then you add your cuff and you're done. The other thing that's great is that they are patternless. You don't have to follow a pattern. That means that if you have another written pattern for, let's say, a vest or a shell, knowing how to do these afterthought sleeves, well, it's a great opportunity to go ahead and add in the sleeves to an otherwise sleeveless pattern. Another thing that is great is that sometimes when we knit in pieces, notice how you're trying to set in a sleeve and you get this kind of puckered-top-of-the-sleeve look, and maybe you have to make adjustments, it's difficult, it's a little frustrating. In this situation you are literally picking up the stitches perfectly around the armhole and you are going to achieve a very, very professional look. Let's take a look at our knitting so far. Well, your sweater won't look like this because this is literally half of a sweater. I made this up so it's a lot easier for me to demonstrate one sleeve rather than two. We have the armhole edge here. We have the shaped neck that goes all the way down. You can see that I finished my shaping about here and then from there I knit straight. And then I added my seeded rib at the bottom. It measures about 2 1/2 inches. You'll also note that there is no body shaping in this cardigan. You will also see this, and I wanna point this out so that you're not confused, this garter edge, it's a three-stitch garter edge. I added this so that the knitting doesn't roll up into my way, so you can see that this is the back side and let's not pay too much attention to that. That's just so that my sample lays flat. One other thing I wanna point out is that this is the top of the sleeve and when we pick up stitches in a moment, we will make sure that one half of our picked-up stitches are on one side and the other half are on the other side. This can behave as our center point. So, let's dive in. I have some yarn here. I have some stitch markers. I have a circular. You can also use a shorter circular, but you need to know the circumference of your sleeve, or your armhole, because most circulars are, I think the shortest are around 16 inches, and some sleeve holes are 16 inches. You can also find some really short ones, but they're like eight inches, and I find them to be kind of difficult to use but it's totally up to you. You can also use double point needles. You can also use two circulars. I know at this point you know your favorite way of working in the rounds, so go ahead and just dive in with me and do it the way you like to do it. I'm going to find the center point of the underarm. Remember how we did this underarm shaping here, by adding stitches? I'll try to find that center point, and it's, see this tail from before? So, my guess is it's about right here. You need to be as precise as you can be, but if you're off a stitch or so it's not that big of a deal and nobody will notice. So, let's begin to pick up stitches. I typically pick up about two stitches for every three rows. You will find your best ratio as you go. One thing I wanna point out is that the depth of this armhole is directly correlated to the circumference of your sleeve. So, that means the number of stitches that you pick up all the way around will tell you how wide your sleeve will be. And if you pick up too many your sleeve might be too big. If you pick up too few your sleeve might be too small. So, we're going to go ahead and give this a shot. We're going to count our stitches, determine the circumference, and if I'm happy with it then I'll just keep going and then the next step is I'll show you how to place your markers. Just like when you picked up stitches along the neck edge of your raglan, you will just kind of be careful to do it evenly and consistently so you don't get a jagged look. I'm working my way up to the top, sort of, seam there where you picked up the stitches along the shoulder. And when I get there I'm going to count the number of stitches that I have, and then make sure that on my way back down I pick up the same number on the other side. Let me hold this up for you. You can take a look at this nice column of stitches that I'm running along here. Imagine if you had to sew in a sleeve cap from a pieced sweater. It would take a great deal of skill in order for you to achieve such a perfect look. I'm not saying that it can't be done, it's just a much easier way to go about it. We're picking up. And now I'm just reaching the very top of the sleeve. I'm going to

double check, yep, remember we had that seam there? I counted 32 stitches to the top of the sleeve. I'm going to go ahead and place a blue marker here at the top so that I know that this is the very top of the sleeve. Now I'm going to go ahead and continue down the other side and make sure that I also pick up 32 stitches for a total of 64. 64 stitches means that I, I figured it out, it means I will have almost a 13 inch sleeve. This is a pretty small sweater so 13 inches is OK. How do I know it's 13 inches? 64 divided by my stitch gauge of 5 is about 12.8, so it'll be just under 13 inches, so this is the time for you to count your stitches, do a little calculating, because remember you're using your own yarn and your own needles, and if the circumference that you get is too big or it's too small you can go ahead and take out what you picked up and try it again, and maybe have a goal number of stitches that you can get. Like I said before, the length of the armhole or the circumference of the armhole is related to your final circumference. So, say you have a very deep armhole. It's pretty impossible to make a very, very tiny sleeve, unless, you know, you pick up so few stitches that you get puckers, so there's sort of a happy medium there. Even if it's a little bit too big, you can do some real quick decreases at the underarm after you've completed your cap shaping and I'll show you how to do that a little bit later. I'm going to point out a couple things here before I start drawing a diagram to help you place your markers. This is the top of the sleeve. I put just a blue marker there. Remember when we began to do some under arm shaping? Remember how I cast, I did a make one, then I cast on three stitches, then I cast on four stitches, for a total of eight stitches? One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight. Now you can count the exact number that you actually cast on or you can physically look for that area. We will be placing markers there. I'm going to call them A markers. I'm going to draw a diagram on paper and it will help you visualize what you're going to do next. So, let me put this aside. This is your sleeve. You put your blue marker there already. If you're working with double pointed needles you may eventually want to put an end-of-round marker here. I'm not going to because I'm working with one long magic loop method here. What we are going to do is calculate using my number of 64 stitches, the top third of the sleeve cap. OK, 64 times .33333 to get a third is 21.3. I'm going to round that down to 20 stitches and I'm going to separate my sleeve cap into two equal portions. So, ten and ten. So, what you're going to do is as we begin to knit our first round, you're gonna knit within, knit two within ten stitches of that center marker and place this marker A. Or B, rather, I'll do B. Then, we're going to knit to the marker, knit ten stitches, and place another marker. Next we will knit all the way to eight stitches within the end, those are those added stitches. Yours might be ten, yours might be 12. I'm just going to put those there, visually or just by counting. And then, the next round after we've placed our markers, we are going to work our short rows and I'm going to do them for you, but I'm going to show you on paper first. We're going to knit to that marker. We are going to slip that marker and we are going to make a short row, then we are going to knit back a wrong-side row, and do the same maneuver on this side, and turn. Then we are going to knit to that wrapped stitch, I'll show you. And then knit a stitch and then turn and continue working back and forth in rows until I've reached this marker. Then I work one final row. And then start working in rounds. It seems hard but it really isn't. Once you see it happening in front of you it's going to make complete sense. I teach classes like this all the time and there's always a few people that seem like going in, that they're kind of scared or confused, but everybody gets it once they see it. It's gonna be a lot of fun. Let's start knitting and place our markers. I'm knitting one plain row. When you get really good at this, you will be able to pick up stitches and place markers simultaneously, but I want to show you the easiest way to begin. Now, recall that I added eight stitches to the underarm to each side of the back and to each underarm side of the front. I'm going to knit the first eight stitches and place a marker. One, two, three, four,

five, six, seven, eight. I'm just going to put a marker to remind me that that's where I started the shaping or ended the shaping. You know what I mean. Now I'm going to knit to within ten stitches of the very top of the sleeve. Recall that there are 20 stitches that comprise the sleeve cap. The sleeve cap is $\frac{1}{3}$, or approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ of the total number of stitches all the way around. Notice how my top of the sleeve, the center of the top of the sleeve marker, is kind of hanging here in space. I'm going to leave it here just so that you know that this is the top of the sleeve. Depending upon your favorite method of working in the round you may or may not need this marker, but I'm gonna leave it here as a reminder. I'm knitting to within ten stitches of the top of the sleeve. Let's take a look, let's check in. Two, four, six, eight, ten, I've got two more to go. And then I'll place another colored marker, a different colored marker. Since I have the purple there separating off the shaping area, then I'll knit to the top. And then, if I needed to, I would slip that top center marker and count ten stitches, and place another green marker. Once you get your first row, or round rather, done and then you start your short rows, it gets a little less fiddley. So, OK, ten stitches. One, two, three, four, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. Then I'll place the other sleeve cap marker. In your notes, your PDF, I call these B markers. Now I work my way down the other side of the sleeve. And when I'm eight stitches away from the center bottom I will place an A marker which is my purple markers. Which are my purple markers. Two, four, six, right, I have two more. OK, and these are the last stitches of this round. Notice I don't need to have an end-of-round marker because of my method. Depending upon your method you might have an end-of-the-round marker right here. And this is what it looks like. Now let's shape our sleeve cap. We are using short rows to shape our sleeve cap. So that for this first row, it's a right-side row. We are knitting it as we are working in stockinette. In stockinette we knit the right-side rows and we purl the wrong-side rows. Now, I'm coming upon my first A marker, the one that separates the shaping from the rest of the sleeve. I'm slipping it, I'm going to continue knitting past it. I'm coming upon the green colored marker, which in the notes I refer to as a B marker. I'm going to knit past that one, too. I'm going to make my way to the center. And I'm passing that up, too. I am just going to go ahead and make my way to this second B marker. Past the center. I'm gonna pinch this together so it's, the stitches are nice and tight. OK, the magic is gonna start happening now. I'm going to do a short row. Now, a short row is an incomplete knitted row. So, here's this marker where the next short row happens, but I have to wrap and turn first. This is how you wrap and turn. You take your right-hand needle and you're going to slip the next stitch as if we were going to purl it onto the right-hand needle. We're going to bring the working yarn forward and we're going to turn so the wrong side faces. OK, see how this working yarn is now behind? We're going to slip that unknit stitch back to the right-hand needle, We're taking the working yarn and wrapping it around, so that's called wrapping a stitch. Wrapping it around to the working side, because now we're working a wrong-side row. I'll slip that marker back and I will purl my way back to the center top. So, I will purl this wrong-side row. Notice how I didn't work in a round, I'm working in rows now. These are short rows. They are magical things. Love, love, love them. The first one is just like a lot of things in knitting. It's a little tricky until you lay down a few rows, or rounds. There we go. I'm purling to that next marker, and I need to do a short row on the stitch, or at least beginning on the stitch that is right after this green marker. So, let's go ahead, wrap and turn our next stitch. You stick your right needle into the stitch as if you were purling it. You take your working yarn, you bring it to the back of your knitting or your working-it side of the knitting, and then you slip that unworked stitch back to your left-hand needle. See how it's wrapped? I slip that green marker, that B marker, onto my right side that now I'm working. A knit row 'cause the right side is facing. You're going to notice a little wrap there, see that little jiggety

jag? Some knitters actually like the way the wraps look if they leave them there. It kind of looks decorative to them, and I actually agree. So if you find that you like the way they look, you go ahead and leave them, it's fine, but I'm going to show you how to hide them just in case. Working on my right side, so I'm knitting, I'm going to knit my way back past the center point again to the other side of the sleeve. Slip this center marker. And I'm going to work my way to that first wrapped stitch. See it right there? That's where I wrapped that stitch and made that turn. I'm going to pick it up, I'm then going to knit the stitch on the needle as if I were pretty much knitting them together. And then knit one stitch. See, I've hidden it. See they look like they're kind of on top of each other? That's hiding a wrap. So, I knit one plain stitch and I'm going to wrap and turn the following stitch. So, again, we slip as if to purl the next stitch. We bring the working yarn around to the front. We slip that unworked stitch back to the left-hand needle, then we turn to the wrong side and we work a wrong-side row. See it wrapped? Just purl our way back. And once I get to that wrapped stitch I will show you how to hide the wrapped stitch from the purl side. Sometimes when I'm at home knitting a project just for fun and I'm working a sleeve like this, after I've knit the first couple set of short rows I'll take out my markers and I won't need them at all because the wrapped stitches will kind of show me where to go and that's my road map. So after you've done this a few times you might find that you don't need markers at all. I'm coming up to that first wrapped stitch. See this wrap here on this stitch? We have the purl side facing. This is how I hide it. I'll drop this out of the way just so it's clearer. From behind, I pick up that wrap right here, I put it on the needle. Now I have two stitches there on the needle. All I do is I purl those two together. And it's hidden, and then I purl one stitch plain. Now I'm going to wrap and turn my next stitch. I slip it to, as if to purl, onto my right-hand needle. I bring my working yarn to the front. Now right-side faces. I bring that stitch back to my right-hand needle. I bring the yarn to the back, I've wrapped a stitch, and now I'm turning and working back toward the other B marker. So, this was my first wrapped stitch that's been hidden. I worked one plain stitch before. This also has been wrapped but hasn't been hidden so let's hide it. Just gonna pick it up and then knit through the stitch on the needle. And then knit these two together to hide it, see? I knit one plain stitch. And then I'm going to wrap and turn the following stitch, that means slip it, bring the working yarn to the front, slip that unknit stitch back to the left-hand needle, turn so wrong-side faces, and then I will continue knitting back toward one stitch beyond the last wrapped stitch. And as I move on I always hide any stitch that was wrapped. Now let's take a look at how this is moving along. I don't know if you can see that. This is what a short row will do. See this wedge? It's like almost like a triangle? This is creating a sleeve cap. Once your sleeve cap is complete and you've done your short row shaping to your A markers, you'll begin working in rounds and hiding any unhidden wraps. After that, you can add some sleeve shaping like you did with your raglan, and if you want you can do a 3/4 length sleeve, you can do a cap sleeve. The sky's the limit. Just keep track of what you are doing so that you can repeat the same thing for the other side. Another note, when you do your cuff, make sure that it matches your hem. It'll look really nice that way.

Pick up stitches and add edging

- We're ready to go ahead and add our cardigan edging. This is exciting because this means we've almost finished our cardigan. There's another reason why I have half of a sweater here. Because I'm going to pick up stitches all the way around the raw edge of the neckline. If I had to do that on camera, you'd have to, I don't know, go get a snack, because it would take a long time. So what I'm using is one nice long circular. You might use an entire circular on one half of the side and maybe

have to find another circular to pick up stitches on the other side. Or you can stuff all the stitches onto one long one. This one actually is long enough to do an entire cardigan so your mileage may vary. What I'm going to do, is go ahead and start on the neck edge, the back neck, on this sample, but depending up if you're right handed or left handed, you might start on the right bottom edge of the hem, or you might start on the left bottom edge of the hem. With the right side facing, I'm going to go ahead and start picking up stitches and knitting them. Sort of semi-reattaching some yarn right here. Sometimes the first loop is a little tricky to get it through, and I did it, yeah. So I'll pick up stitches and knit them, I guess we're not really technically knitting them, but that's what the term is in knitting, picking up a knitting. And as I do so, I will probably, at least along the back of the neck edge, pick up one stitch for every cast on stitch. The reason for this is that sometimes the back of your cardigan will need to stretch around your neck, so you don't want to pick up too few stitches. Especially there. And then once you get down toward the neck-shaping area you can be a little more judicious in picking up stitches. Maybe pick up three out of four, but always keep track of how many stitches you are picking up, because depending upon your desired hem, cuff and edging here, there will be a multiple of stitches that you need to adhere to. In my case I'm using seeded rib, and the required multiple is four stitches plus three. So I'm going to keep track so I can work that type of stitch pattern and not have any issues with stitch counts. Now I'm at the sleeve top. You can see that little seam there. Just to help you orient where we are. Now I'm heading down toward the side where there might be some shaping or extra stitches, or a slope. So when I reach that part where there might be a slope, here, can you see that extra stitch where we get a new column that's introduced? I'm just keeping aware of it, so then as I pick up it stays nice and neat, and I try to make it all look so that it flows evenly along the edging here, see. You see that line of stitches? You don't want to kind of travel back and forth because then it will look sloppy. I like the idea of handmade. It's kind of a complicated thing because I know we're all crafty people and we like to make things and garments and sometimes it's nice to go out in the world and have people look at the sweater that you made and say that they really like it. But there's always that moment in your mind when they say, "Oh, did you make it yourself?" And you kind of don't know if you want to tell them or not. But handmade is really a wonderful thing, and this is why we're doing it, right? So my goal is to make it look as professional as possible but handmade is great. Homemade sometimes the connotation isn't as great, but handmade is wonderful. So it's important to take your time when you're picking up your stitches and doing these final details. Something that will make you really proud. So I'm picking up stitches along this edge here, keeping track of my stitch count so that the multiple is correct. I'm also keeping, you know, sort of maintaining a nice edge along here so it looks nice and neat. Unlike along the back of the neck, I'm not picking up one for one. Couple reasons, the first reason of course is that you have to maintain that stitch multiple and it would probably be impossible to have the same number of rows match the multiple that's required. But also because I want my edging to not droop too much. If I picked up one for one it would be droopy, but on the other hand if I didn't pick up enough stitches and skipped too many rows in between them, the pickups, then it might pucker. So there's a delicate balance. As you knit more and more and you are, you become more experienced in your knitting and picking up a knitting, it becomes second nature. But for those of you who are sort of dipping their toes into some new techniques, the only thing that I can say is that this is only picking up in knitting, and it's totally cool if you don't like the way it works after a first row or two. Don't be afraid to rip out your knitting. A lot of people just want to keep going and going and going no matter what and then the end result is not pleasing at all. So just know that before you go too far if there's a question mark in your head, step away from the

knitting, and then come back to it when you're fresh, and just take a look at it. And if you're at all unhappy with it, rip it out, there's always a second chance. I'm almost down to the end here. You can see on my seeded rib there's a column of knit stitches, that's kind of nice that it worked out that way that I can just pick up stitches and just expose those as the stitches that lay next to the edging that will be coming out this way. They kind of act as a guide as well. Now on this last stitch on the hem, if you can and if the multiple works out all right for you, pick up enough stitches so that you get to the very end. If you don't then what might happen is that your edging as you start working it this way this edge might pull in a little bit, so if you have any more stitches that you can pick up to fit into your multiple, it's always wise if you can, to pick up one more at the very bottom and it's gonna be tricky for me, but I'm gonna do it. There we go. Now I'm all set. I'm going to turn my work, and work the first wrong side row of seeded rib. My plan is to work this seeded rib the same depth as the hem, which is about two and a half inches. That way the cardigan will be really visually pleasing and balanced. Let's say that you decide by trying on as you go, that you want a deeper edging along the neck here, maybe your cardigan doesn't overlap as much as you want it to. Go ahead and add an inch or two if you need it. Then bind off and pattern, weave in your ends, and you're almost done.

Knit belt and finish

- We're almost there guys it's really exciting. Just think you're almost ready to finish, to put the final touches on your second sweater. This means we're going to work on our self tie belt which is a lot of fun. It's really long, but it actually goes but really, really quickly. What I did with this one is I used the same seeded rib with the self tie belt, that I used on the hem, and on the edging that went around the cardigan. Notice how it doesn't roll. All of use have made a scarf before that rolled up before we realized we had to add a garter edge, or some sort of an edge to keep it from rolling. That's what I did with this one. So I'm gonna show you how to do it. I'm going to cast on for my seeded rib self tie belt. I'm starting off with one cast on stitch using long tail method, and I'm placing a marker. I'll tell you why I'm placing that marker there in a moment. Now I'm going to cast on for a multiple four plus three until it looks like about the width that I want it to. I'm using the four plus three because that's what seeded rib needs to be if it's knit flat, three, four, one, two, three, four, it's almost there so I'll add that plus three now. One, two, three. Then I'm placing a marker, and then I'm going to add one extra stitch. The reason why these extra stitches are here is this is going to help keep my belt from rolling. If you're using a two by two rib, or a one by one rib you're going to do it in between those two markers. Just whatever you do, and you might have some trial and error in terms of the width of it, but whatever you do just cast on the correct multiple in between those two markers, and the stitches on either side of those markers will act as sort of like a retaining wall on your self tie belt so that it doesn't roll up, and curl up on you. When you work your self tie belt you will always slip your first stitch, work your center stitches in your choice rib, in my case again, it's seeded rib, and then you will always knit your last stitch, no matter what side is facing you. This stitch or column of stitches will be in garter stitch, and then every other stitch is actually slipped. So you always slip your first stitch, no matter what side is facing you, and then I'm working my first row of seeded rib. In this case it's knit three pearl one, knit three, pearl one, knit three, there's a knit three, there you go, pearl one, and then on my last three stitches I'm just going to knit, and then like I said before you slip your marker. You work till your retaining wall stitch, and ya knit it. I'm going to turn to the other side of my belt, and the one bonus of the seeded rib is that like a lot of other ribs, it's reversible. So your self tie belt will look fantastic. Always slip your first stitch. I

usually bring it, the yarn in front for this, and then the stitch pattern is knit one, for the back side pearl one, and then knit three. Actually yeah, and pearl one see, knit three, knit one, and then I always knit the last stitch no matter what side it's facing. I turn, and now I'm on the other side. Always slip. You can see it's growing. When you're knitting your belt it's okay to go down a needle size because that will create a belt that's sturdier, denser and less stretchy. It will feel more substantial. What I did with this one is I knitted until it was about 60 inches long, and that seemed perfect for this particular sample. So go ahead, and as you're knitting. Try it on as you go, and then bind off and pattern, weave in your ends, and you have a fabulous, fabulous sweater. Now I wanna show you some other examples of top down knitting. You'll recognize this sweater. This is the cute children's raglan cardigan that I showed to you. Here's that iconic raglan line that we know so well by now. This one remember has the mock rib edging. The edging stitch comes from my up down all around stitch dictionary. This was knit flat instead of in the round. The sleeves are in the round. There's no shaping. Most children's items don't have very much shaping, maybe a little bit at the cuff to bring it in. I've also added just a simple rib to the edging here, the neck, and an I-cord, simple I-cord, really fun to knit, but what's really neat here is that when I knit the edging I added a little button hole here so that when we tie it, we put it on the kid first of course, but when we tie we just pull it through, if I can do that for you. Ta Da, you can tie it. Children's garments don't have to fit super snug. So I like to make em a little oversized so the child can grow, and these I-cords are perfect, because it makes the cardigan completely adjustable. Here's a raglan from my book, Custom Knits 2, it's actually on the cover. It's one of my favorite, favorite pull overs. It's another raglan. It has that diagonal line. This one has kind of a key hole neckline. What I did here is I worked straight for a couple of inches. I did a few increases, then I cast on some stitches, and then I worked straight to create this V. There's some simple color work here too. Normally with just plain cotton yarns you don't do a lot of color work, because the fibers don't really mush up together very well if you will, but this is a cotton and wool blend. It's perfect for wearing at the beach when the sun starts dipping below the horizon. So I thought this is a perfect addition, this color work band here, and it kind of adds a lot of interest to the sweater. I love it. This is from my first book. These three stripes remind me of a Letterman sweater, something that somebody would wear in college, or in high school. This reminds me of a sweater that I made for my daughter when she was three. What I did was I made something called the school spirit sweater for her, and I put three stripes on it, and she was so proud to wear it, because she could count to three by counting the stripes, and a lot of people made that sweater, and they made it for kids. It's for exactly the same reason that I made that sweater for my little girl, and it's a really neat memory. Another thing I wanna point out about this sweater is that I had little tags made. They say Knit and Tonic, but you can have similar ones made for yourself. So if you give gifts, you can put the tag in and personalize it, or if you make something for yourself, you can put a tag in it, and it kind of makes it feel special. I love this vest. This pattern actually comes out of the up down, all around stitch dictionary as you do the cables here, but guess what just with what you've learned these last four weeks you will be able to recreate something very much like this, by just making a vest, in other words, you will make a top down set in sleeve garment, but joined in the rounds so it's all in one piece, and then not add sleeves. All you will do is add edging along the neckline, and along the armhole, that's it. This one is a design called cameo, and it reminds me of a cameo ring that my grandmother wore a long time ago, and when I was kid I would like at that cameo ring, and it had kind of faded. I don't even know if it was a real cameo, but it was this kind of color, and the stitch pattern in it are little ovals, just like her ring. Anyways this pattern actually does appear in my first book Custom Knits, and this is a top down set

in sleeve sweater, and it's a cardigan just like what we worked on, but what I did here was I added some really pretty ribbon to reinforce the cardigan edge, and then I sewed on some invisible snaps. So for closure, one part I like about this simple sweater is that these neck edgings overlap kind of like a baby onesie. This has cap sleeves that I worked just like you worked for your set in sleeve sweater with short row shaping, and then they are very short, and very cute and very sweet. This last sweater is also from my first book, it's the Custom Knits book. I love this sweater because it's unique. It doesn't close all the way. I know people wear sweaters for warmth, but me being a southern Californian person, I don't think about warmth when I design things, so sometimes it's just a fashion thing for me, and in this case I wanted something that didn't meet all the way in the front, people from the east coast wrote me letters about it, and said why doesn't it meet in the front, I'm cold, and I guess I realized at that point I need to be more practical, but this is an example of something you can absolutely make yourself knit from the top down, set in sleeve just like you know how to do now without a pattern, and if you want to you can add any sort of stitch pattern to the bottom, to the top, anything you want, the sky's the limit. This is just one example, of one of my favorite, favorite sweaters. Here's our completed top down set in sleeve sweater. Isn't it great? This is completely customizable, really the sky's the limit on all the different things that you can do with this type of sweater. We also have our blue raglan over there. That's a classic sweater. That one is also really, really customizable. Completely unisex, in fact, both of them are unisex. They can be made for any age in fact. You can change up the colors. You can add stripes. You can add stitch patterns, with any yarn and any gauge. What I really enjoyed doing is empowering people, or at least helping to empower people to be comfortable with their needles and their yarn, and get beyond pattern. I've had such a great time these last four weeks, and I hope that you did too.