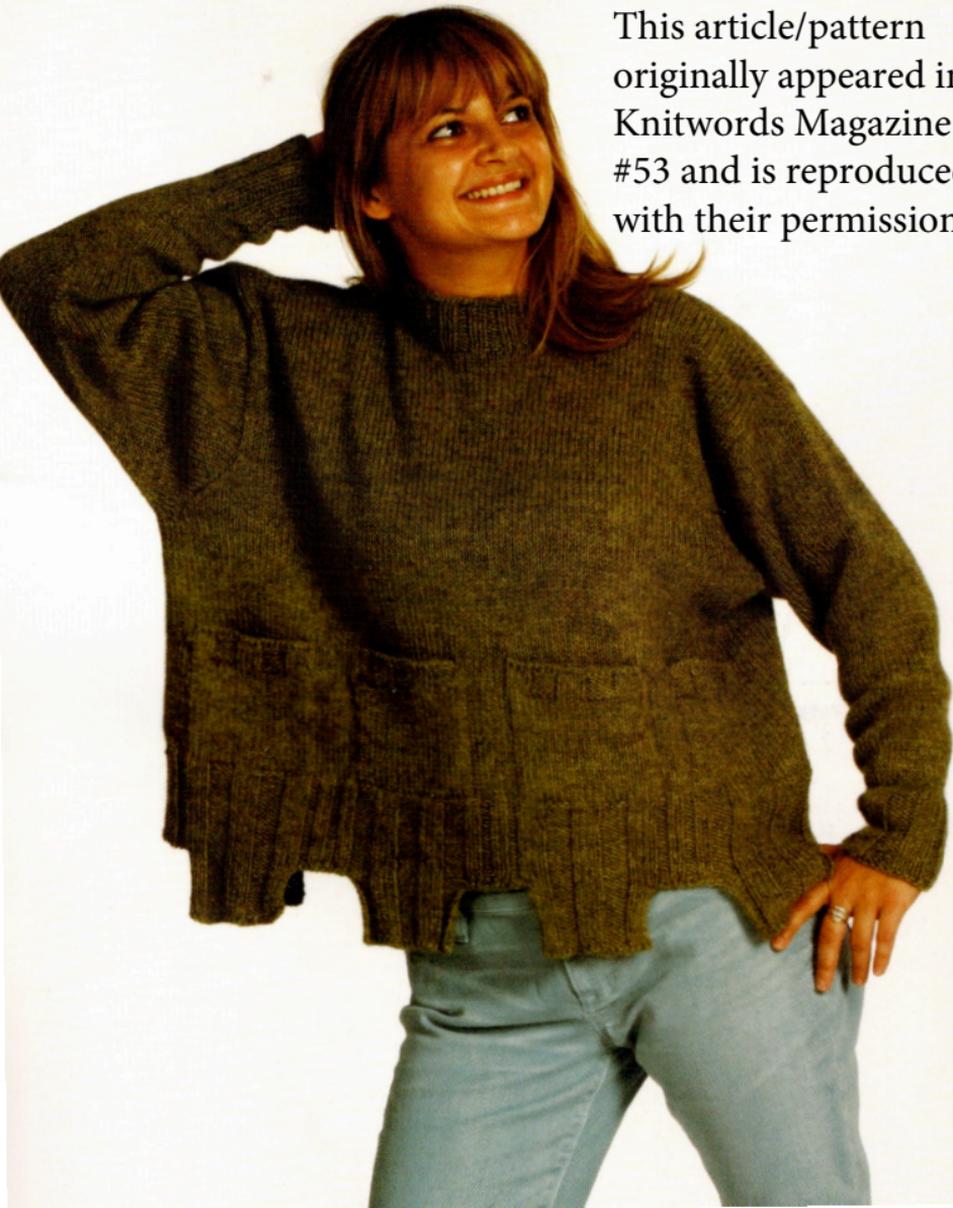


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BUILDING BRIDGES SUSANGUAGLIUMI

All of us have our favourite methods for doing things. Sometimes we favour one method over another for very specific reasons; sometimes we just latch onto one method that makes sense to us and we never try anything else. I often make very different choices when I am designing for myself (and my family) than I do when I design for magazines or books because I really believe that published patterns should teach something, offer new ways of doing things that help the reader stretch and grow as a knitter.

I designed *Bridging the Gaps* in this issue of **KNITWORDS** shortly after finishing my new book, 'More Hand-Manipulated Stitches', which deals with a method I call bridging. Briefly, bridging is a way of using holding position to access individual needles (or groups of needles) to use multiple stitch sizes in a single row, to add extra rows or to access the free yarn (the yarn between the carriage and the working needles). Bridging makes all kinds of things possible that would, otherwise, not be doable on a machine. None of the patterns in the book are double bed and I wanted to be sure that this pattern had something new to say so I designed a simple sweater with bridged ribs.

The sweater itself is an oversized pullover with modified drop shoulders and a series of four pockets on the front. The silhouette is cropped and wide, in keeping with current styling trends. The neckline rib is all worked as K2P2 rib, but the ribbing on the sleeves and lower edges is a surprising combination of K2P2 and K4P4 ribs and (I think) adds a little interest to this very basic style.

99% of the time, I begin and end all of my garment pieces with scrap knitting. I do this for several reasons. First and foremost, it allows me to really see the fit and styling of a garment before I finalize all of the finishing details - especially important when a garment is a prototype for a pattern. I prefer knitting my ribs last, rehanging the garment edges and knitting the ribbing down. This means that all of the rib edges are bound-off edges. However, I usually use the hand sewn bind-off method that I refer to as the 'gourmet' bind-off. I like the way this edge looks and find that it holds its shape better, while it allows the rib to stretch as much as necessary to fit over the head. It also matches any cast-on edges of conventionally knitted ribs.

The secret to working this bind-off is the method used for scrapping off the stitches. After knitting the rib, once all of the stitches have been transferred back to the main bed, you need to knit one row of slip 1/knit 1 (for a K1P1 rib bind-off) or slip 2/knit 2 (for K2P2

ribbing). When the scrap is folded back the main stitches will present themselves in two clearly defined rows so you can keep track of the sequence used for this hand sewn bind-off. I gave fairly detailed directions for this method in 'Twelve Sweaters One Way: Knitting Cuff to Cuff', a hand knit book I wrote in 2008. I also provided step-by-step photos and detailed photo-directions in 'More Hand-Manipulated Stitches'. 'The Vogue Knitting Book' (hand knitting) gives directions too, but they don't call for the special scrapping off and most people find their directions rather tricky to follow. You can always use a regular latch tool or transfer tool bind-off instead, but it doesn't look as nice and unless you are very careful, it often doesn't have enough stretch.

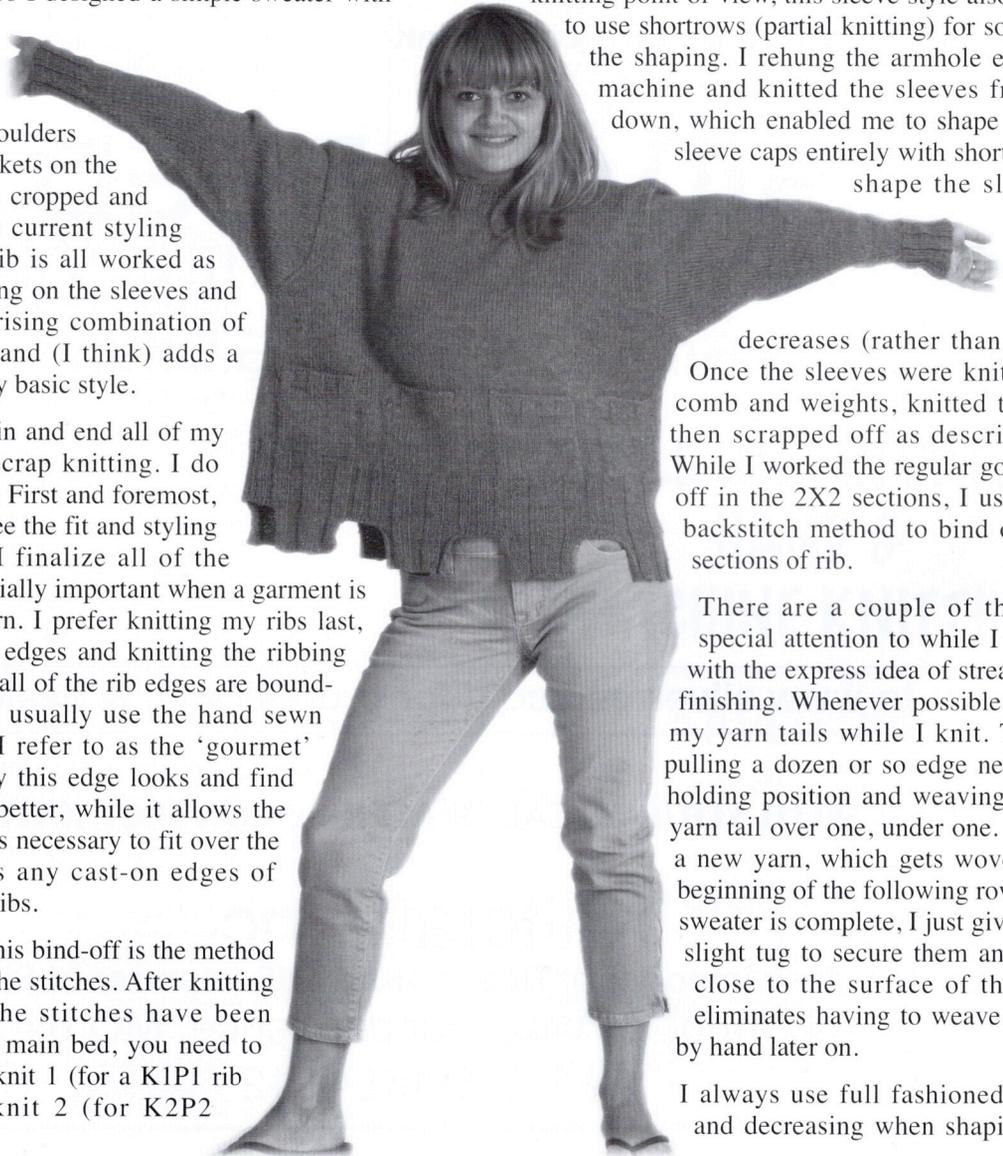
If you look at the schematics, you will see that while there is some armhole and sleeve cap shaping, the sleeve head is actually quite shallow. Usually referred to as a modified drop shoulder, this kind of sleeve minimizes underarm bulk so you don't feel like you have a bolt of fabric under your arm when your arms are at your sides. From a knitting point of view, this sleeve style also allows you to use shortrows (partial knitting) for some or all of the shaping. I rehung the armhole edges on the machine and knitted the sleeves from the top down, which enabled me to shape the shallow sleeve caps entirely with shortrows and to shape the sleeves with

decreases (rather than increases).

Once the sleeves were knitted, I hung comb and weights, knitted the ribs and then scrapped off as described above. While I worked the regular gourmet bind-off in the 2X2 sections, I used a simple backstitch method to bind off the 4X4 sections of rib.

There are a couple of things I pay special attention to while I am knitting with the express idea of streamlining the finishing. Whenever possible, I weave in my yarn tails while I knit. This means pulling a dozen or so edge needles out to holding position and weaving the ending yarn tail over one, under one. Then I start a new yarn, which gets woven in at the beginning of the following row. When the sweater is complete, I just give the ends a slight tug to secure them and clip them close to the surface of the fabric. It eliminates having to weave the ends in by hand later on.

I always use full fashioned increasing and decreasing when shaping garment



edges because it places the increase/decrease at least 2 stitches from the edge. This means that the edge stitch never changes, which makes it a lot easier to sew a straight seam. Also, when directions call for 'bind off 3 stitches' (for example) at the armhole, I bind off the first 2 and then do a full fashioned decrease for the third. I especially like the way full fashion shaping adds detail to the edges.

Speaking of decreases and binding off, I usually work around the sinker posts/gate pegs to keep the bind-off edge even and to prevent it from narrowing. Yes, it does add an extra step because the stitches have to be lifted off the posts on the next row, but it is worth it if it keeps things even. I rather like that it slows me down and prevents me from galloping ahead of myself. Sometimes a little moderation is a very good thing!

I always shortrow front and back neck shaping in order to preserve live stitches, which can then be picked up for the rib or whatever band I choose to apply. I really don't like the way necklines look when they have been bound off and then picked up to knit the trim. I don't think they have the same stretch and, unless there is something about the design of a particular sweater to justify it, they never look quite right to me. (I think this may fall into the category of things we do a particular way because we always have!) Before I scrap off a shortrowed neckline (or other edge), I always knit one smoothing row across all of the stitches so I do not have to worry about picking up both the stitches and the wraps. I usually weave the beginning tail of the main yarn through a dozen needles, then thread the carriage to knit this row so I only have one end to finish off later.

When I can, I join shoulder seams right on the machine by hanging one set of stitches on the needles. Then I bring the needles forward so those stitches are behind the latches, hang the second set of stitches in the hooks and then (carefully) nudge the needles back to working position so the first set of stitches slides over the second set. Then I bind off around the sinker posts to keep the bind-off even and prevent the seam from tightening and shortening up. If I plan to finish the neckline with a hand knit or crochet finish, I join both shoulders first.

In this pattern, bridging is used to scrap off the pocket stitches on the front and, later, to knit the irregular ribs. If you follow the step-by-step directions, I don't think you will have any problems. Just remember to turn off the row counter at the beginning of any bridged row so you don't lose count and keep moving the weights so they are under working needles.

I tried to keep the pocket application as simple as possible, but there is another way that pockets can be finished with less hand work. Pre-knit the four pocket lining sections as instructed in the pattern. Cast on with scrap to begin the

garment front. Change to the main yarn and before you begin knitting the first row, fold back the scrap and hang the lower edges of each pocket section (wrong side facing you) on the specified needles. Start knitting the front and every other row – say, whenever the carriage is on the right – pick up the edge stitches of each pocket lining and hang them on the adjacent needles. This will join the side edges of the lining to the front of the sweater. The main advantage is that it joins the pocket linings to the front smoothly and evenly. The main disadvantages are that it interrupts the knitting every 2 rows and if there is a

mistake, you need to unravel the entire front to fix it. With all join-as-you-knit methods, this is always a risk, but one that is often worth taking. Now that I have worked out all the details of this sweater, I would probably use this method to join the pockets if I were to knit it again. But, like I said, I use different methods when I am designing than I do when I am knitting for myself!



More Hand-Manipulated Stitches for Machine Knitters
Susan Guagliumi



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Bridging the Gaps **SUSANGUAGLIUMI**



This cropped, over-sized pullover features a modified drop shoulder, set-in pockets and irregular ribs.

Bridging is used to scrap off the pocket openings and to manage the unusual ribbed bands on front and back.

MACHINE
6.5mm with
ribber.

Level - Intermediate.

YARN

Berroco Ultra Alpaca, 50% alpaca, 50% wool, 215 yds/198 m/3.5 oz/100g skein. MC, 5 (6, 7) skeins.

FINISHED SIZES

Width, 110 (124, 130) cm/43.5 (49, 51.5) in.
Length, 55 (57, 57) cm / 21.5 (22.5, 22.5) in.

GAUGE

Stockinette, T8, 19 sts and 25 rows to 10 cm/4 in.



NOTES

Begin and end front and back with scrap knitting. Because these pieces will be handled a great deal for working pockets and picked up ribs, I recommend binding off the scrap.

Front and back ribs are picked up and knitted down.

Bridging is used to scrap off the stitches for the pocket flaps and to knit the irregular ribs.

For a less cropped fit, add 6 rows for every inch desired between cast-on edge and armholes.

For more information and notes on the techniques, read article on previous page.

BACK

WY, cast on 105 (116, 122) sts. Knit 6-8 rows and change to MC. CAR. Knit to RC050. Shape armholes. RC000. Bind off at each edge 3 sts once, 2 sts once. Then use 3-prong transfer tool to decrease 1 st, K2R, 7X. 81 (92, 98) sts remain.

Knit straight to RC050 (056, 056). Shape back neck. CAR, set to hold. Hold 13-0-13 n's and all n's to left of them.

KWK. At neck, hold 2 sts, KWK; 1 st, KWK. Scrap off all 25 (30, 33) left shoulder sts. Move CAL and repeat for second shoulder. 31 (32, 32) back neck sts remain. Bring all to HP, cancel hold. Thread up MC and then weave the tail over and under the first 10-12 n's at carriage side. Knit 1 row with main yarn and then scrap off.

Pocket linings. Knit 4 alike. With scrap, cast on 22 sts. MC, knit 25 rows and scrap off.

FRONT

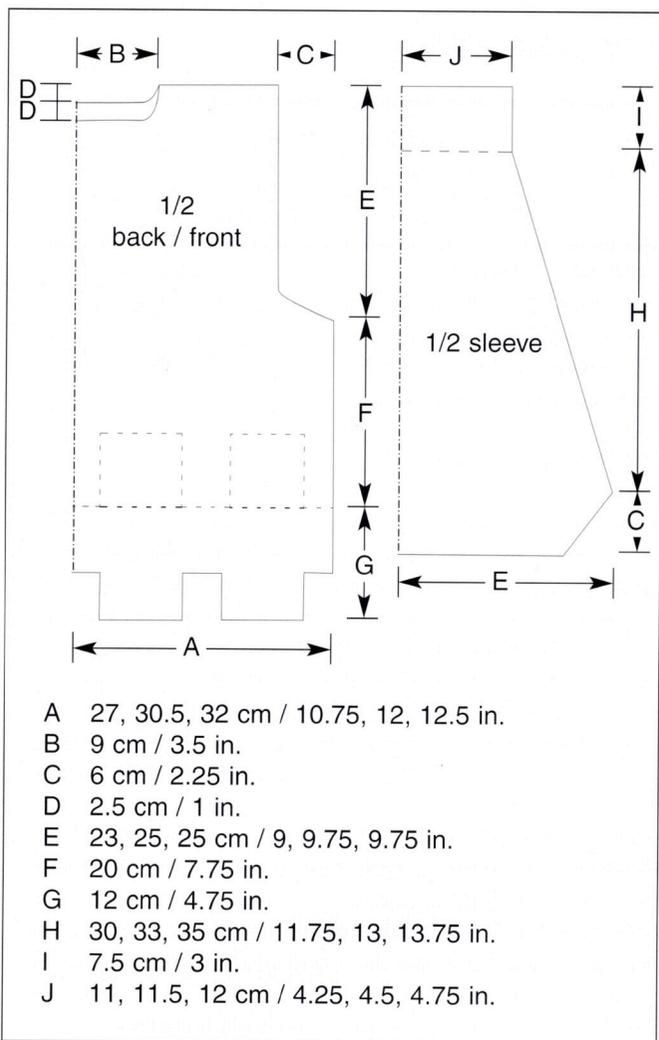
Cast on and work as for back to RC026 to scrap off stitches that will be picked up later for pocket tops. CAR. Set to hold. Hold all n's except the first 5 (6, 6) on carriage side. Knit 1 row to left and hold the needles just knitted. Unthread MC, set aside, do not cut. WY, push n's 47-28 (52-33, 55-36) to UWP and scrap off. Empty n's to NWP, return CAR. * Rethread MC, move next 5 (8, 10) n's to UWP. K1R and place these in HP. Unthread MC and set aside. WY, move next 20 (20, 20) n's to UWP and scrap off. ** Repeat from * to ** to end of the row.

Wrong side facing you, rehang top of each pocket lining on 20 empty n's that were scrapped off in the previous row. Hang two stitches on each edge needle. Hang claw weights on the pocket sections for the first few rows to make sure the stitches all knit cleanly.

Continue as for back to RC044 (050, 050) above underarm to shape front neck. CAR, set to hold.

Hold 5-0-5 n's and to the left of them. KWK. At neck, hold 4 n's, KWK; 3 sts, KWK, 2 sts, KWK, 1 st, KWK, 2X. RC056 (062, 062), scrap off 25 (30, 33) shoulder sts. Repeat for second shoulder. Scrap off front neckline sts as for back, working one smoothing row of main yarn first.

Shoulder seams and neckband need to be completed before continuing because the sleeves are knitted by picking up the armhole edges and knitting down to the



cuff. Join one shoulder seam. Wrong side facing you, rehang neck edge over 66 n's. Hang comb and weights and work 12 rows of 2X2 rib, T6/6. Bind off loosely. Join the second shoulder seam.

SLEEVES

CAR. Wrong side facing you, pick up 86 (96, 96) sts along armhole edge. MC, K1R. Set to hold. Hold 12 n's at right. K1R, wrap. Hold 12 n's at left, knit and wrap. (On side opposite, move 1 needle to UWP, knit, wrap) 5X at each side. Then, at each side on EOR, return 2 n's, 2X; 3 n's, 1X. All n's back in work.

RC000. Knit to RC076 (082, 088), **at same time**, at each side, dec 1 st, K4R, 4 (1, 10)X; 1 st, K3R, 19 (25, 15)X to 40 (44, 46) sts.

Hang comb and weights and raise ribber bed. Transfer stitches for 2X2 rib for first 10 (12, 13) at right; then set up 4X4 rib for next 20 sts. End with 2X2 rib over last 10 (12, 13) at left. T6/6, knit 20 rows and bind off loosely.

Front and Back ribs. Wrong side facing you, fold back WY at lower edge and rehang 105 (116, 122) sts on main bed. Hang the stitches from the lower pocket edges; there will be two stitches on the needles that correspond to the pocket placements. Hang comb and weights and raise ribber bed. Transfer sts to ribber so first 6 (6, 6) sts at right

are arranged in 2X2 rib. Arrange next 20 for 4X4 rib; following 4 (8, 10) for 2X2. Continue alternating 2X2 and 4X4 rib sections across the bed, ending with 7 (6, 6) needles in 2X2 rib. T6/6, rib 20 rows, ending CAR.

Set to hold. Hold all n's except first 5 (6, 6) on carriage side. Loosely bind off these sts, empty n's in NWP. *Move next 20 n's to UWP, K1R to left. Bind off next 5 (8, 10) n's. Hold 20 n's just knitted and return CAR**. Repeat * to ** to end. Cut yarn and pull tail through last stitch to secure.

Rethread MC. Move the first group of 20 n's on carriage side to UWP, weight carefully and rib 14 rows. Bind off loosely. Weight next group of 20 n's. Move them to UWP. Rib 14 rows. Bind off loosely. Repeat with remaining two groups. Repeat for back.

Pocket Ribs. Complete one pocket at a time. Right side facing you, hang 20 pocket sts on MB. Hang weights and raise ribber bed. Transfer sts for 4X4 rib, taking care to match the placement to the lower rib. That is, beginning with 4 sts on either main bed or ribber. T6/6, rib 6 rows and bind off loosely.

Use a strand of the main yarn to whip-stitch the side edges of the pocket linings to the inside of the front. Work in all yarn tails and lightly block the entire sweater – in sections if necessary to fit your blocking board. Sew side and sleeve seams with mattress stitch. Alpaca really 'blooms' and benefits from a final washing in cool, soapy water. Rinse clean and lay flat to dry. I usually put the garment into the washer on the spin cycle for a few minutes to get out most of the water. Spin only – do not agitate!

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