



Moon Cowl



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The moon is a marvel. It pulls the tides. Its phases mark the passage of time. It loops around the Earth unendingly. The moon appears in countless works of art and science from all cultures and throughout history. It serves as a glowing reminder of our smallness, our wildness, and our own cyclical nature.

One such work is a 19th century map of the surface of the moon, hand-drawn by the German astronomer Johann Schmidt before the invention of photography. His eyes went back and forth between his telescope and his paper, composing 32,856 tiny craters, one by one! Johann's extraordinary attention to detail and remarkable patience reminds me of, well...knitters!

So let's knit a cowl inspired by the moon. We can pretend each stitch is a tiny handcrafted crater. We'll knit in the round, so the path of our stitches honors the moon's orbit. This cowl is double-sided (half black and half white), so that when you wear it, you can rotate it to match the current phase of the moon.

Yarn: 45% wool, 35% silk, 20% nylon. 50g (192 yards) charcoal and 50g (192 yards) eggshell.

Needles & Gauge: Size 6 circular needles, 20-24" long. Knitting in seed stitch, you will have a gauge of about 5 stitches per inch. Make a swatch to test your gauge and adjust your needle size if necessary. I prefer the stitches to be a little on the loose side, so that the finished fabric drapes nicely around the neck. Finished cowl size is about 14½ inches wide by 6½ inches high.

Instructions: To begin, cast on 141 stitches in black onto your circular needles. Take care not to twist the stitches when you start the first row! Then simply knit in seed stitch until you're almost out of black yarn. Leave a 6" tail so it's easy to weave in later. Switch to the white yarn and continue knitting in seed stitch. When you have 6 yards left of the white yarn, cast off. Use the remainder of the white to join the two edges together using whatever technique you prefer. Weave in loose ends.

Seed Stitch: Seed stitch makes a bumpy texture, like tiny craters! When knitting in the round, seed stitch is especially easy. Simply alternate K1 and P1 again and again and again. Since you'll be knitting an odd number of stitches (141), things will align so that you're always knitting into a purl stitch and purling into a knit stitch, which is the essence of seed stitch. Important detail: after each K stitch, you will need to bring your yarn around to the front of your knitting before the P stitch. And after each P stitch, you will need to take the yarn back so that it's in the proper position for a K stitch.

If you need help with seed stitch generally, here's the link for a great tutorial at New Stitch A Day: <http://newstitchaday.com/seed-stitch/>

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