



blue bee studio

headland: fabric stretch considerations

In selecting which size to make in a drop shoulder design, consider the lateral stretch of your fabric. When the sleeves are added to the body of the sweater, a super-stretchy fabric may widen a bit at the shoulders, due to the extra weight. You can shorten the sleeves to compensate for the stretch, or you might choose to work a smaller size.

With the two Tern samples, there was almost no change in the shoulder width when the sleeves were added. However a lighter yarn, or one with less twist, may stretch more.

How can you tell? Try turning your swatch 90° (so that the rows are running vertically) and pinning it to a bulletin board or to the back of a chair. Add a little weight by attaching a couple binder clips or clothes pins evenly across the lower edge of the swatch. You only need to add a few grams to see if your fabric is very stretchy. If it is, consider making the next size smaller than you would normally choose.

Follow the instructions for the smaller size up to the point of joining front and back, then adjust the number of decreases to maintain the recommended 6 to 8" [15 to 20 cm] of positive ease. There are two places where adjustments can be made. You can bind off fewer stitches when you join the pieces at the underarms, or work fewer decreases in the underarm shaping. Use the stitch counts for the size you would normally have made as your guide.



