

Combining Handspun and Commercial Yarns

For knitting or crochet (mostly)

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What we'll talk about today

Picking patterns to make the most of your handspun

Why combine handspun with commercial?

Tips for success

Examples of my projects



What makes a pattern good for handspun?

Flexible gauge

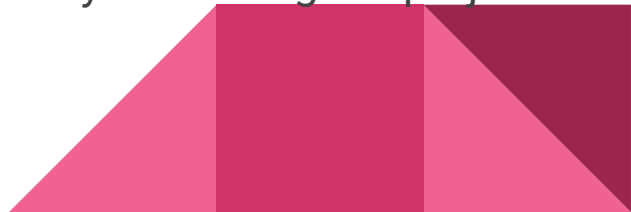
- Handspun may not be entirely consistent
- You may have trouble matching a designers gauge
- You may not want to swatch

Flexible sizing

- Opportunities to make the project bigger to use more yarn
- Opportunities to save yardage, if needed

Stitch patterns

- Balanced knits and purls, if you're worried about unbalanced yarn biasing the project



Pattern category suggestions

	Flexible gauge	Use enough yarn	Don't run out of yarn
Toe-up socks	Yes	Maybe	Yes
Top-down sweaters	Yes	Maybe	Maybe
Top-down/knit-to-fit hats	Yes	Maybe	Yes
Side-to-side shawls/wraps	Yes	Yes	Yes
Small-to-big shawls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Weigh-as-you-go shawls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Blankets (esp. corner-to-corner)	Yes	Yes	Maybe

Tips

Take a guess at an appropriate needle size, especially if you aren't doing a swatch

- Can try pattern suggested needle size, if your yarn is close to the recommended weight
- Be prepared to assess your fabric after knitting for a bit, and rip out or adjust if needed

Make sure you have enough minimum yardage for your project (note that gauge differences will affect yardage)

- Consider ways to adjust project if needed (short vs. long sleeves, ankle vs. knee socks, shawllette vs. shawl, slouchy hat vs. beanie)

Check your remaining yarn often - leave at least 2-3x a normal row/round for your bindoff

- If doing pattern repeats, make sure you leave enough yardage to stop at an appropriate place in the repeat

If your skein of yarn varies inconsistently, consider that when choosing a project

- Choose which end of the skein to start with
 - Consider adjusting needle size and/or stitch count in the middle of the project, if needed
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Why combine handspun with commercial?

Help your handspun yardage go farther (and get to making a project sooner!)

Coordinate colors

- If you like spinning colors, use commercial neutrals
- If you like spinning neutrals, use commercial colors

Add textural interest

Use a smaller amount of handspun as a feature within a larger project (e.g., sweater yoke)

Make sparkle more wearable



Tips for choosing commercial yarns

Considerations include: color, texture, fiber content, yardage, construction

Yarns don't have to be the same weight!

- Consider doubling up commercial yarn to use with a thicker handspun
- Combining yarns within 1-2 weights of each other (e.g., fingering and sport, or DK and worsted) can work just fine, especially if there aren't large sections of just one yarn and/or if sections are balanced
- Helpful reference info on Ravelry for yarn weights and multi-stranding:

<https://www.ravelry.com/discuss/stash-knit-down/3881967/1425#5>



Example projects

All photos © Eliza Sheppard (apollo1gcw on Ravelry)

Example Shawl #1

Side-to-side construction

Pattern: Velvetine Lines

<https://www.ravelry.com/patterns/library/velvetine-lines>

Project page: <https://www.ravelry.com/projects/apollo1gcw/velvetine-lines>



Example Shawl #1 - Yarns



Example Shawl #1 - F0



Example Shawl #2

Weigh-as-you-go construction

Pattern: Linear Moods <https://www.ravelry.com/patterns/library/linear-moods>

Project page: <https://www.ravelry.com/projects/apollo1gcw/linear-moods>



Example Shawl #2 - Yarn #1



Example Shawl #2 - Yarn #2



Example Shawl #2 - F0



Example Shawl #3

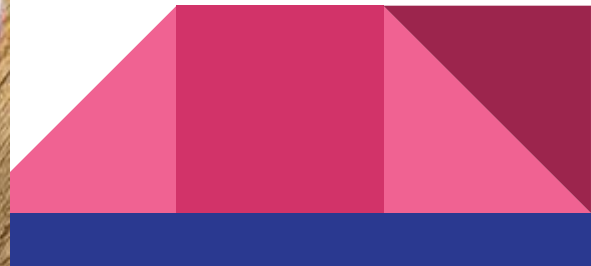
Small-to-big construction

Pattern: To The Point

<https://www.ravelry.com/patterns/library/to-the-point-7>

Project page:

<https://www.ravelry.com/projects/apollo1gcw/to-the-point>



Example Shawl #3 - Yarn



Example Shawl #3 - F0



Example Shawl #4

Small-to-big construction

Pattern: Beeline <https://www.ravelry.com/patterns/library/beeline-3>
(free from Knitty!)

Project page: <https://www.ravelry.com/projects/apollo1gcw/beeline>



Example Shawl #4 - Yarn



Example Shawl #4 - FO



WIP: Sweater

Top-down sweater

Pattern: Lineage Sweater

<https://www.ravelry.com/patterns/library/lineage-sweater>

Project page:

<https://www.ravelry.com/projects/apollo1gcw/lineage-sweater>



WIP: Sweater - Yarn



Other Ideas



Additional resources

Article on knitting with handspun:

<https://spinoffmagazine.com/knitting-handspun-yarn/>

My “Good for Handspun” Ravelry bundle: <https://ravel.me/apollo1gcw/4ddalt>





Thanks for listening!