

MARABOU BLUE



Marabou

Find a nice piece, maybe 10 inches or so depending on the density. Make a circle and stitch this to your finished wristlet. It takes your wristlet from simple and cool to really fun and eye-catching.

If you use a safety pin, you could even switch the marabou to match your coat.

Easy and fast! My idea of a great knit.

Gauge isn't terribly important here, but you'll still want to start with a swatch.

The good thing? You can sew the swatch inside your wristlet when you're done and you'll have a neat hidden carrying pocket. Add a button and you'll be able to stow credit cards, keys (and even an iPod nano) while you're on the go. Miki from CODE NAME: BLONDIE won't go anywhere in the winter without her wristlets! So don't think of it as losing a swatch. Instead you're gaining a little purse.

I used Diakeito diadomina yarn and size 8 needles. (I knit fairly loosely.) You may want to go with size 9's. Mileage may vary. :-). My rectangle from wrist to knuckle was 9" wide because I wanted lots of coverage. No, I didn't decrease for the wrist. Straight and simple, no fiddling.

Here's how you can make yours:

Cast on 28 stitches. This is my number, based on my swatch. Yours may be smaller if you want only a short wristlet. Start with 14 stitches and see if this gives you half the length you want.

If not, add more stitches and re-calculate. If so, proceed.

Next step is to knit straight garter stitch from side to side.

Keep knitting until you've finished 8 inches (more or less, depending on the size of your hands and the tightness you want. I wanted loose and comfy.) Stop periodically to check your rectangle against your hand.

The fun thing is watching the bands of color appear from the slow variegations in the diadomina. Great yarn. When you reach your desired size rectangle, cast off (loosely please!) and sew up the sides. But the trick is to leave a space for your thumb. My thumb hole was 2 inches in from one side, and I allowed 1-3/4 inches for the thumb opening. Go bigger or smaller to your taste and hand size. I don't use these for seriously freezing weather, so loose is fine.

Knitting doesn't get easier than this! Add a little ball of marabou and you've got instant cute. You're letting the yarn do the work, so pick something with slow color changes and no one will know that you didn't work for hours on these!

Enjoy!

RED AND FLUFFY

Go for smooth, soft yarn in bright colors. Something that will show off your stitches! Then pick up fun fur in a high-contrast color.

The good news? These are fast and a joy to knit. Only one ball of decent size yarn should net you two pairs. One for you and one for a friend. Or knit a pair for charity. Here are some links to organizations that accept knitted goods:
<http://www.warmwoolies.org>

<http://www.fireprojects.org/dulaan.htm>

<http://craftyarncouncil.com/warmup.html>

<http://www.woolworks.org/charity.html>

<http://www.friendsofpineridgereservation.org/difference/craftforpr.shtml>



False rib and fun fur
What's not to like?

These wristlets were knit side to side using malabrigo yarn and size 8 needles. (I knit fairly loose stitches. You may want to go with size 9's. Mileage may vary. :-) My gloves were 5-1/2" long (to allow for the fur at the fingers) and just shy of 8" around before seaming. No, I didn't decrease for the wrist here, either. Straight and simple. Same goes for the swatch. Don't skip this step. Cast on eleven stitches and knit twelve rows. (Use an odd number for the fake rib.) This should give you a nice little inside pocket to sew in later. Meanwhile check your size and see how many stitches you'll need. I cast one with 25, but I do knit loosely. Also, I wanted slouchy, comfy wristlets. If you want something more fitted, go with fewer stitches.

So here goes. Cast on 25 (or whatever your swatch reveals) stitches. Knit six rows of garter stitch. Then start fake rib:

Row 7: (K1, P1) and repeat to end.

Row 8: Purl to end.

Repeat this two-row unit 2 more times.

Knit four rows of garter stitch. Do two two-row units of fake rib. Knit six rows of garter stitch. (Why six? I just liked how it looked. You can do less or more. <g>)

I finished with 6 rows of real rib to tighten up the area over my fingers:

First row -- (K1, P1) to end.

Next row -- (P1, K,1) to end.

Repeat this two-row unit two more times and then cast off loosely.

Measure for your thumb opening. (Mine was 1/4 inch from the top.) Sew up the side seam, matching stitches. Final touch? Pick up stitches all around using fake fur and 4 double point needles. I liked stockinette here for a smoother look and I worked 6 rows. Bind off loosely, weave in your yarn ends and enjoy!

You'll look fab-u-lous! Tell anyone who asks that you bought them in Paris during your last visit.

MOODY BLUE



Boucle.

It's a pain to knit, at least in my book, but talk about texture. I love this Lion Brand yarn with its slow, subtle color changes. The fake fur gives a real pop, too.

For this one, you'll probably want to do some shaping because the yarn isn't very springy. (Is springy a technical term? Who knows? You get the idea.)

Knit these in blue to go with jeans. Knit them in black and you'll feel incredibly elegant. Add a vintage pin if you want to be a real stand-out.

Gauge isn't terribly important here, but you'll still want to start with a swatch. Remember, you can always sew the swatch inside your wristlet when you're done to make a wonderful, hidden pocket.

I used Lion Brand Color Waves. The yarn was soft and textural, but it was annoying to knit with. Hey, I only give you the truth here! So why do I include this one? Good question. Actually, it's because I love the finished look. There is just something about those little boucle loops that makes me smile.

This one can be knit in the round, if you hate sewing seams. Or take the easy road and knit a rectangle. Trust me, no one will notice your seams beneath all those loops. <g>

I cast on with 16 stitches and size 8 needles. Once again, if you're a tight knitter, you may want to go higher. I used stockinette for 19 rows. Go longer or shorter as you like. My rectangle from side to side was 8" wide and the length from wrist to knuckle was 5-1/2. I added a few decreases because this yarn isn't very clingy and I wanted some shape.

The best part is adding the fun fur. That's when the look totally changes. Choose your fur color carefully. Going lighter or darker gives a completely different effect. Most of all, have fun!

Here's how you can make yours:

Try the swatch thing again. Cast on 11 and see what that yields. It should be nearly one glove side. I cast on 21 stitches with size 8 needles. (This is my number, based on my swatch. Yours may be smaller if you want your to be tighter. Or just the opposite. <g>) Knit six rows of stockinette stitch. Then begin decreases every other row for 6 rows. (I knit two together or purled two together one stitch in from the end, as needed. On this loopy yarn, you won't see a thing!)

Keep on knitting until you've finished 5-1/2" (more or less, depending on the size of your hands and the tightness you want. I wanted short and fitted, but still comfy. I also wanted to leave room for the fun fur edging.) Stop periodically to check your rectangle against your hand. When you reach your desired size rectangle, pick up your fun fur yarn and work 5 rows of stockinette. (I lost the name of what you use, but Lang has a Fox yarn that should be wonderful. Estimate 8 rows = 1-1/2 inches of fur, if you want it dense. Just add more rows if you want more fur.) When the fur is done, cast off (loosely please!) and tie off your thread. Then pick up your blue lion yarn to finish.

Next stop, thumb opening. Use the same trick as for the other wristlets, leaving a gap when you sew the seam. On this wristlet, my thumb opening was 1-1/2" in from the top, and I allowed 1-3/4 inches for the thumb hole. Go bigger or smaller to your taste and hand size.

That's it. All done. Now go out and dance all night!