

## *Hanging Garden Stole Hints, Tips and Tricks*

This is a compilation of tips and tricks for knitting Sivia Harding's Hanging Garden Stole as submitted by members of the Hanging Garden KAL. In most cases, the tips contained in this little cheat sheet are copied directly from the e-mails as written. There may be some great tips that may have been missed just due to the volume of all the great information we share here with each other. I hope you find this helpful.

To see some great progress pictures and to see what yarns and beads others are using for their Hanging Garden Stoles, check out the "Photos" section of the Yahoo Group. There's lots of great inspiration to be found.

### Pattern:

- Available exclusively at KnitPicks

### Yarn Choices of Knitters:

- Knit Picks Shadow
- DK Alchemy Silk
- Elann Peruvian Baby Alpaca/Silk
- Lisa Souza Merino
- Subtly coloured hand painted/variegated yarns can work for Hanging Garden
- A swatch will tell the tale (to determine if hand painted/variegated yarn will work with HG pattern), much easier and better than guesswork
- Knit Picks Alpaca Cloud
- A quick word from Sivia to those who are about to embark on their Hanging Gardens in the Iris colorway of alpaca cloud: This colorway is almost an exact match to metal needles, and it will challenge your eyesight unless you have a good knitting lamp and/or needles that contrast the yarn color. This yarn is also very fine, so please rest your eyes if they are tired. Be kind to yourself! That said, it is beautiful yarn and I am sure the effect will be worth the trouble.
- Another knitter's tip who is using the Iris Alpaca Cloud colour: I've re-started, and am now using the Bryspun needles. They're off-white and provide a better

contrast with the Iris color. I'm only on row 11, but I think the Bryspun's will be OK. They have fairly sharp points, though not as sharp as the KnitPicks.

#### Pattern Notes:

- Repeats for Hanging Garden: There is a mismatch in the pattern in one place stating 12 and in another 14 repeats. The total # of pattern repeats is 14.

#### Bead Choices: (some of the choices knitters have made)

- The pattern could be done without beads
- Wavy leaves
- Pearl teardrop beads
- Since lace weight yarn is so fine, I wanted beads that would add some weight to the edges, as well as have a decorative effect, so I chose drop beads.
- For seed beads, I would use either size 8/0 (smaller) for a subtle effect or size 6/0 (bigger) for a more visible embellishment.

#### Beading Techniques:

- About the beads for this pattern, they are only included in the cast on and bind off rows, so the beading technique is super easy – just slip a bead between stitches as you are either casting on or binding off. The beads are strung onto your yarn before you start knitting, so no crochet hook is needed. You will need either a dental floss threader (at your drug store in the dental products section) or a big eye beading needle, available at bead stores. If you can't find either one of these items, you can improvise a little needle out of wire or thread. No need to purchase anything unless you want to have these tools for future projects.
- **Question:** Since the beads are drop beads, once I slide them up between the stitches, which side should the bead drop onto - the side facing you, or the back side? (I hope that came out clear & you understand what I'm getting at.)

**Answer:** I understand very clearly and it is an excellent question! If you use the long tail cast on, you can actually wrap each stitch AROUND the bead as you are tightening it up. I think it hangs better this way. However, there may be other methods that I haven't tried yet that work just as well and provide different

effects. I am thinking of the backwards loop method for one, and maybe the knit over-your-thumb method. I don't think, however, that the knitted-on or cable cast ons would work with beads.

- **Question:** My yarn is all one huge skein/ball. So, what do I do about the 35 beads to be used for the bind-off?

**Answer:** This time I will also be doing this, with one big skein of Lorna's Laces Helen's Lace. I do have a solution. You really don't want to be dragging those 35 beads with you over every row to the very end, after all! But if you are working from a center pull ball, you can use the other end, the one you haven't been knitting from so far, to do the bind off. When you are ready to do the bind off row, just string the beads on that other end of yarn, attach it like you would another ball of yarn, and do the bind off. Should be pretty easy.

- A link to illustrate one particular long tailed cast-on beading technique (looks like one where the beads are strung on the tail end of the yarn):
  - <http://www.knittersedge.com/Diamond/techniques/hkt49.pdf>

#### Life Lines:

- I'm having success using a strand of Glide dental floss with the Alpaca Cloud lace weight yarn. It still requires fiddling with it throughout the row, pulling it taut to get it out of the way, but it's definitely do-able.
- I haven't put a lifeline in HG yet, but on DF I found it easiest to put in the line (I use fine dental floss) after finishing a pattern row. It's much easier to do a purl row than a pattern row with the line in place.

#### Keeping Track of Pattern:

- I follow the written instructions rather than the chart. With my eyes, it's the easiest way. I put a post-it under the row I'm knitting to help keep my place.....
- In response to a question regarding stitch count for HGS: In this chart (whichever version you have) the odd numbered (right side) rows are read from right to left. The row is worked exactly as you see, except that the shaded area is done six times, also reading from right to left each time. If you look at the chart as a whole, you will see (I hope) that the only difference in the lace pattern between the

repeat and the "unshaded" area of the chart is that the double decrease in the center of the pattern is replaced by single decreases on the sides.

- As a suggestion, look at your knitting once in a while, to see if the trellis lace lines are where they should be. If they are, then proceed. If not, then recheck for some error. The most common errors are either putting in a yarnover where it shouldn't be, or skipping a yarnover where it should.
- First of all, I try to make sure I understand how the words in the written instructions match the symbols on the chart.
- Count stitches after every row or if one row is always knit or purl count on that row as you knit, then you can catch your mistakes and rip out right away and save yourself from "frogging" several rows.

### Stitch Markers

- If you are using markers between pattern repeats, markers can be slipped over one stitch to accommodate the double decreases
- When I put markers between the repeats, I can find my way easier. In knitting back the plain purl row, I count the stitches between each marker as I purl. Since it's a 16 stitch repeat, on the purl row there should always be 16 stitches between the markers – except for the last repeat which has 17. If there's more, or less, then I know I made a mistake on the previous pattern row and I can fix it right away.
- No markers needed, but careful counting in the beginning helps until the pattern is set.
- I flagged the rows where I need to move the markers. I'm using tiny elastic bands as stitch markers, and before starting each of those rows, I use a fine crochet hook to pull the bands through the stitches to the left. Only takes a minute to move the markers. On the purl side, I count between each marker to make sure I don't drop a yarnover.

### Other Yarn Weights:

- I used fingering weight yarn on a 3.25 mm needle. Unfortunately, I don't know exactly how much yarn I used. I had a big cone of Jaggerspun wool so I wasn't concerned about running out. I'm guessing I used about 200 g., but don't hold me

to it. Other than that, I followed the pattern as written, using the same number of stitches as for the finer weight yarn. I only did 10 repeats instead of 12, and if I were to do it again, I'd do 11 repeats.

"Frogging" Tip:

- side note on "frogging" for those, like me, that do not use lifelines. I had read on a blog somewhere that if you lay the piece on a table...place a book along the bottom half to secure below where you want to rip, then proceed to pull the yarn out. it is possible to keep the stitches in a somewhat orderly fashion. when you get near the place you want to stop placing a needle through each ripped stitch in, say the row above, you can tink back to the place you wish to begin again.