

16th Century Sailor Cowl/Hood

designed by Elizabeth Neily ©2017

I have been designing early 16th century Spanish period clothing for over 20 years now. As a living history researcher and performer, I focus on the Spanish conquest of Florida at places like De Soto National Memorial (1539) in Bradenton and The Fountain of Youth Park in St. Augustine (1565). So I took up knitting a few years ago, to demonstrate the craft at events and it was always my goal to recreate a Cowl/Hood to resemble the one shown in the illustration by artist Christoph Weiditz. By fits and starts, I was finally able to complete a hood and would like to share the pattern for others to try. I chose to use a 100% worsted weight wool hand-dyed with cochineal by my friend Carol Leigh Brack-Kaizer at her Hill Creek Studio in Columbus, MO. After finishing, the hood was felted to make it water repellent.

Size: Large to Extra-large

Yarn: 100% worsted weight wool. (Make sure it is not super-washed, as the piece needs to be felted.)

Needles: Size US 9, 16" to 30" L circular needle. Size US 9

Other: Tapestry needle, stitch marker

Gauge: 4 stitches = 1 inch of stockinette.



Christoph Weiditz's Trachtenbuch (1529) long considered one of the first costume books of the early modern period.



Directions:

Do a provisional cast on of 120 stitches. Place stitch marker, then join in the round. Continue knitting in round until it measures 5". NOTE: If you want to make a slightly smaller cowl/hood, make sure you begin with multiples of 10 stitches as this will be where you start the points after the rest of the cowl is complete.

Decrease Row 1: * k10, k2tog; rep from * until the row is decreased to 110 stitches.

Row 2: knit

Decrease Row 3: * k9, k2tog * until the row is decreased to 100 stitches.

Row 4: knit

Stop knitting in the round, and instead knit back and forth from the stitch marker (you're still going to need your circular needle to do this, however, since otherwise you'll rip your work apart at the break). Anyway, so we'll continue like so:

Row 5 (wrong side): k1, purl until you have 1 stitch left in row, k1

Row 6: knit

Repeat Rows 5 & 6 until piece measures 8" from beginning of Row 5. Finished on a wrong side row.

Short Rows to shape the crown of the hat.

Short Row 1 (right side): k49, wrap and turn (wrap and turn)

Short Rows 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, & 24: purl until you have 1 stitch left in row, k1

Short Row 3: k48, w&t

Short Row 5: k47, w&t

Short Row 7: k46, w&t

Short Row 9: k45, w&t

Short Row 11: k44, w&t

Short Row 13: k42, w&t

Short Row 15: k40, w&t

Short Row 17: k38, w&t

Short Row 19: k36, w&t

Short Row 21: k34, w&t

Short Row 23: k32, w&t

Short Row 25: knit all the way across to other side. (This is not a short row. Build up the other side of the cowl to match first side.)

Short Row 26: k1, p48, w&t

Short Rows 27, 29, 31, 33, 35, 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, & 49: knit

Short Row 28: k1, p47, w&t

Short Row 30: k1, p46, w&t

Short Row 32: k1, p45, w&t

Short Row 34: k1, p44, w&t

Short Row 36: k1, p43, w&t

Short Row 38: k1, p41, w&t

Short Row 40: k1, p39, w&t

Short Row 42: k1, p37, w&t

Short Row 44: k1, p35, w&t

Short Row 46: k1, p33, w&t

Short Row 48: k1, p31, w&t

Short Row 50: k1, purl until 1 stitch left in row, k1 (This is not a short row.)

Face opening

After working both sides of the crown seam along the top. First bind off and fold so the two sides match evenly.

Pick up 110 stitches evenly around the opening for the face. Knit four rows (or more if you want a deeper opening) and bind off loosely. Weave in loose ends.

Finishing points on shoulders

Pick up beginning stitches with circular needle from the provisional cast on. Place stitch marker ever 10 stitches. Using a new piece of yarn at beginning of each point,

Row 1: k2tog, k8

Row 2: p2tog, p7

Row 3: k2tog, k6

Row 4: p2tog, p5

Row 5: k2tog, k4

Row 4: p2tog, p3

Row 5: k2tog, k2

Row 4: p2tog, p1

Row 5: k2tog and bind off working in tail.

Felting

Put finished cowl in very hot water with a gentle soap and agitate. This can be done in the washing machine. Check frequently that the sides are not sticking to each other. Also rub the edges of the points to shape them. Once the cowl looks like it has shrunk to the desired size, rinse thoroughly with warm water to which vinegar has been added. Spin it in washing machine to remove any excess water. Shape the cowl by pulling it over your head and smoothing it around your head and shoulders.

Please contact me if you have any suggestions for correcting or improving this pattern.
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