

aimee sher



Building Blocks Cardi

*Bottom-up, multi-function V-neck
cardigan and vest for everyday wear*

aimeeshermakes.com

Building Blocks Cardi

A versatile worsted weight cardigan with V-neck shaping and optional bust darts, this pattern is chock full of features to create your unique version. This pattern has underarm shaping to make sure that the sleeve join of the drop shoulder really is off the shoulder and not out in the elbows. Bust darts ensure a good fit across the front that doesn't ride up, for those of us who need it.

Build the exact right vest for your style and climate. A sleeveless vest/tee version is available, as well as the options of a high-low split hem or a plain hem.

The base pattern is knit from the bottom up flat, then split for the front pieces and back while the V-neck shaping is worked at the same time. A drop shoulder construction is finished with a Three Needle Bind-Off, then the sleeves are picked up and worked flat for gauge consistency, then seamed at the very end. Finally, the neckband and any optional pockets are worked.

The bust darts add 4 additional inches to the drafted B/C cup that the pattern base pattern accommodates. It was drafted for a slim sleeve with 1" / 2.5 cm ease in the upper arm, but has optional instructions for knitting the armscye a different size for a full bicep adjustment if a less slim sleeve ease is desired.

Specs

Size Selection

A (B, C, D) [E, F, G, H] (I, J, K) designed for:

Actual upper bust measurements of: 31 (34.25, 37.5, 40.75) [44, 47.25, 50.5, 53.75] (57, 60.25, 63.5)" / 77.5 (85.5, 93.5, 102) [110, 118, 126.25, 134.5] (142.5, 150.5, 159) cm

Finished full bust measurements are: 38.5 (43.25, 47, 50.75) [54.5, 59.25, 63, 66.75] (70.5, 75.25, 79)" / 96.5 (108, 117.5, 127) [136.5, 148, 157.5, 167] (176.5, 188, 197.5) cm

Choose a size based on your actual upper bust measurement. If the difference between your full bust measure and the finished full bust is between 7 / 18 cm to 11" / 28 cm, then you have chosen the correct size.

Check "[Choosing A Cup Size](#)" on page 4 to determine desired bust shaping size if the difference is 6" / 15 cm or less.

Credits

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Schematics: Becky Monahan
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Layout: Aimee Sher
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Pattern Support

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This pattern was designed with a very slim ease in the arm to balance the boxy body. Measure the upper arm halfway between the shoulder and the elbow to determine desired ease. Instructions are given in the pattern for lengthening the armhole depth for knitting the next size up for sleeve.

Model has 34" / 86½ cm full bust and 31" upper bust, and 10½" / 26½ cm bicep.

Charcoal vest sample is a straight Size B, model's usual size.

Light gray vest (shown last page) is Size A with Size 1 darts, a size down as model is between sizes.

Blue sample was cast on with Size B, then decreased throughout body to Size A shoulders. It was worked with Size 1 darts and Size B arm holes and sleeves, as discussed in Page 8.

Gauge

17 stitches and 24 rounds = 4" / 10 cm, Stockinette stitch knit flat on Needle A

17 sts and 26 rows = 4" / 10 cm, 1x1 ribbing knit flat on Needle B

Notions

Unique marker for beginning of round, 2 stitch markers to mark side and short rows, tapestry needle, waste yarn, removable markers

Needles

NEEDLE A (MAIN FABRIC)

US8 / 5 mm or size to obtain Stockinette stitch gauge, in the following lengths:

- Circular needle 32" / 80 cm or higher depending on size

NEEDLE B (RIBBING)

US6 / 4 mm or 2 sizes down from Needle A, in the following lengths:

- Circular needle 32-40" / 80-100 cm for body

NEEDLE C (OPTIONAL TUBULAR CAST ON)

US5 / 3.75 mm or 3 sizes down from Needle A, in the following lengths:

- Circular needle 32-40" / 80-100 cm

Needle for Tubular Cast On

Using a smaller needle creates a tidier cast on. Swatching the cast on is highly recommended to determine preferred size for this purpose due to personal tension differences when casting on.

Yarn Selection

Choose a very lightweight, fluffy worsted weight yarn (such as woolen spun) or unspun yarn that gets gauge.

Vest Sample and Blue Long Sleeves

Honer Och Eir Nutiden in Adekvat (charcoal) and Ynnest (blue), held double.

Nutiden is an unspun yarn and works up to about worsted / light aran weight when held double. It comes in slightly variable yardage (but very flexible gauge) in 100 gram plates. When using unspun, always purchase an extra plate, just in case, as each batch can change in its density and yardage depends on the conditions and season at the time of milling.

Long Sleeve, Gray Sample

De Rerum Natura Gilliatt, held single, in Goéland

Gilliatt is a semi-woolen spun and lofty merino yarn. It has a relatively smooth look and feel compared to other woolen-spun yarns, but a similar loftiness to them. 100% merino / 270 yards / 100g balls.

For yardage, see ["Yardage" on page 4](#).

My personal preference for this pattern is to use a yarn that has light grist ([link](#)) for its wraps per inch labeling (sometimes known as weight).

A woolen spun yarn will have a lighter hand and weight, and hold more air (and thus be warmer and more insulating) than a worsted spun yarn. An unspun yarn will be even more so.

Alternatives the unspun yarn used in the sample, include Lopi Plötulopi and Wooldreamers Manchelopi.

Alternatives the semi-woolen spun yarn used in the sample, include Harrisville Highland, Wooldreamers La Rinconada, and Peace Fleece Worsted.

Any worsted weight yarn that gets gauge will work, but will create a heavier garment if it is worsted spun and/or superwash.

Yardage

Yardage in yards/meters												
Size	Unit	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
Full length	yards	1025	1125	1250	1350	1450	1550	1675	1775	1875	2000	2100
	meters	925	1025	1150	1225	1325	1425	1525	1625	1725	1825	1925
Vest	yards	550	625	700	775	825	875	950	1000	1050	1125	1175
	meters	500	575	650	700	750	800	875	925	950	1025	1075
Yardage in Nutiden												
Full length	grams	475	525	575	625	675	725	775	825	875	950	975
	plates	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9	10	10
Vest	grams	300	325	350	400	425	450	500	525	550	575	600
	plates	3	4	4	4	5	5	5	6	6	6	6

ADDITIONAL YARDAGE FOR CUP SIZES:

Cup Size 1: 15 yds/m or 7 grams of Nutiden
Cup Size 2: 30 yds/m or 14 grams of Nutiden
Cup Size 3: 45 yds/m or 21 grams of Nutiden
Cup Size 4: 60 yds/m or 28 grams of Nutiden

ADDITIONAL YARDAGE FOR POCKETS

20 yds/m each or 13 grams of Nutiden

CONTRAST EDGE

43 (45, 47, 50) [51, 53, 55, 57] (59, 61, 63) yards /
 39 (41, 42, 45) [46, 48, 50, 52] (53, 55, 57) meters
 total for CC

Choosing A Cup Size

This pattern includes instructions for short row shaping for breasts. They add a wedge to the front of the garment to add length. To choose a cup size, measure the intended wearer's body from the top of the shoulder to the underbust line in the back and the front. This may require help from a second person. Be sure that the back and the front underbust points are parallel to the ground. It may be helpful to tie a piece of yarn or string around the underbust point so that the measurement is consistent.

Subtract the back length from the front length, then subtract 2" / 5 cm from this number (because the pattern accommodates a 2" difference already). The remaining difference is how much you need to add.

Each subsequent cup size adds 1" / 2.5 cm.

It's better to have slightly too few short rows than slightly too many. If you are in between or unsure, choose one cup size smaller.

Cup Size 1: Adds 1" / 2.5 cm
Cup Size 2: Adds 2" / 5 cm
Cup Size 3: Adds 3" / 7.5 cm
Cup Size 4: Adds 4" / 10 cm

Construction Notes

Slip all markers as they are encountered. The shoulders are joined with three-needle bind off, then the sleeves are picked up and knit flat, then seamed.

The pattern comes with two hem options, a plain hem or a split high/low hem with overlapping edges. Suggested mods include not doing high-low and doing a split hem with equal lengths on each side, playing with striping, etc.

If working with unspun, optionally you can pick up the sleeves without casting on the two additional selvedge stitches (on each edge) and work the sleeves in the round rather than flat to avoid seaming. Just ensure that stitch gauge is consistent to prevent sleeves from being too tight.

When seaming with unspun, lightly twist the yarn when it's on the tapestry needle as you are seaming.

If working with woolen spun, make a swatch with ribbing to make sure it will not draw in overly. The samples were all knitted with a Needle B two sizes down from the main fabric, but some testers needed to use the size in between instead.

Both tubular cast off/bind off and long tail/in pattern instructions are given to customize the finish desired.

Special Techniques

GERMAN SHORT ROW (MAKE DS)

(WS): With yarn in front, slip next st purlwise. Bring yarn over needle, to back of work, drawing the legs of the st up the needle, creating a double stitch (DS). Bring yarn to the front between needles, ready to purl the next st.

(RS): Bring yarn to front between needles, slip the next st purlwise. Bring yarn up and over needle, to back of work, drawing the legs up the st onto the needle, creating a double st. Leave yarn in back, ready to knit the next st.

To resolve short rows, knit or purl into both legs of double stitch as one when coming upon it again.

THREE-NEEDLE BIND OFF

Divide sts evenly over 2 needles; with the RS of garment pcs together (to form ridge on inside of garment), hold the needles parallel. With a third needle knit the first st of front and back needles together, *knit next st from each needle together,

(2 sts on RH needle), BO 1 st; rep from * until all sts are BO.

LONG TAIL CAST ON

[Tutorial: Knitty article](#)

TUBULAR CAST ON

[Video Tutorial: Knitpicks - Tubular Cast On](#)

TUBULAR BIND OFF

[Knitpicks - Tubular Bind Off video](#)

[Purl Soho - Long Tail Tubular Bind Off video](#)

SLOPED BIND OFF

[Purl Soho - Sloped Bind Off video](#)

ONE-ROW BUTTONHOLE

Step 1: With 1st remaining before marker, bring yarn to front, sl next st pwise, bring yarn to back. *Sl1, pass previous slipped st over (1 st dec'd); repeat from * until the number of sts specified in pattern have been bound off, removing the marker as you go. Do not use working yarn to bind-off. This step is worked with the row below and slipping st only.

Step 2: Slip the last st on the right hand needle to the left hand needle and turn work to WS facing. Insert right needle between first and second sts on the left needle, wrap yarn around as if to knit, and draw up a new loop, and put it on the left needle, as for the Cable Cast On method (1 st cast on). Continue to cast on sts until you have cast on the number of sts bound off, plus one more st.

Step 3: Turn work again to RS facing. Sl first st from left needle to right needle. Pass extra cast on stitch over. Slip the last right hand needle stitch back onto the left needle. Continue as est.

Tips for Working With Unspun/Woolen Spun

The recommended yarns are unspun and woolen. Both of these yarns are delicate and prone to breaking, but there are advantages too. Woolen and unspun yarns have less 'organized' fiber that go in all directions within the strand, and are more lofty and airy as a result. This makes them superior for insulation and creates very warm, very light garments. They have moderate (woolen) to very little (unspun) twist holding them together once the fabric is knit.

When choosing a view and a yarn, consider what finishes you'd like to work. On the samples, the tee sample was worked with binding off in rib, and Long Tail CO, using an unspun yarn, which means that the only sewing was in the pockets. On the long sleeve samples, I chose to use Tubular Bind Off finish since woolen spun yarn is much stronger than unspun.

The challenges of working with these yarns means that some special techniques are needed to complete some elements of this pattern. Here are some of my tips:

1. When joining new yarn, I recommend using the spit felt join. These yarns are the perfect candidate for this invisible join. Bonus: no ends to weave in.
2. When sewing with this yarn to seam pockets or to perform a sewn Tubular Bind-off, lightly twist the yarn as you go, holding the tapestry needle, and join in new yarn if the yarn breaks from being pulled through the stitches. The twisting action adds twist and 'spins' the yarn, adding strength for the seaming or-bind off. This is part of why this pattern is worked bottom up, so that the areas that would require sewn bind off methods are in smaller areas, such as the neckline or the cuff.
3. If the yarn breaks at any point, spit felt the ends together and continue.

I have created a video where I talk about the pros/cons of using unspun, and demonstrate some of these tips. Please view that below as needed:

www.bit.ly/unspun_yarns

Abbreviations

approx: approximately
BO: bind off
BOR: beginning of round
CO: cast on
cont: continue
CN: cable needle
dec('d): decrease(d)
DPN(s): double-pointed needle(s)
DS: double stitch (see German Short Rows in "Special Techniques" on page 5)
est: establish(ed)
fall: follows
inc('d): increase(d)
k: knit
k2tog: knit 2 sts together (*1 st decreased*)
LH: left hand
m: marker
meas: measure(s)
N: needle
p: purl
patt(s): pattern(s)
p2tog: purl 2 sts together (*1 st decreased*)
pc(s): piece(s)
pm: place marker
rem: remain
rep: repeat
rnd(s): round(s)
RH: right hand
RS: right side
Sl: slip
ssk (slip, slip, knit): Slip 2 sts one at a time knitwise to the RH needle; return sts to LH needle and knit together through the back loops (*1 st decreased*)
ssp (slip, slip, purl): Slip 2 sts knitwise one at a time; return sts to LH needle, purl together through the back loops (*1 st decreased*)
st(s): stitch(es)
St st: stockinette stitch
tog: together
WS: wrong side
work even: knit the knits and purl the purls, continuing pattern as established
wyib: with yarn in back
wyif: with yarn in front
yo: yarn over

Schematics

Schematic measurements												
Size		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
To fit upper bust	in	31	34.25	37.5	40.75	44	47.25	50.5	53.75	57	60	64
	cm	78.5	87	95.5	103.5	112	120	128.5	136.5	145	153	161.5
To fit full bust	in	30	34	38	42	46	50	54	58	62	66	70
	cm	76	86.5	96.5	106.5	117	127	137	147.5	157.5	167.5	178
A) Chest Circumference	in	39.25	43.25	47.25	51.75	55.5	59.75	63.5	67.25	71.25	75.25	79.25
	cm	98	108.5	118	129.5	139	149.5	159	168.5	178	188.5	198
B) Back neck width (without band)	in	6.75	6.75	7.25	7.75	7.75	8.25	8.25	8.75	8.75	9.25	9.25
	cm	17	17	18	19.5	19.5	20.5	20.5	22	22	23	23
C) Wingspan (shoulder to shoulder)	in	19	22	23.75	25.25	26	27	29	30.25	30.75	31.75	32.25
	cm	47.5	54.5	59.5	64	65.5	67.5	72.5	76	77	79.5	80.5
D) Shoulder width (straight)	in	6	7.25	8.25	9	9.25	9.5	10.25	10.75	11	11.25	11.5
	cm	15.5	18	20.5	22.5	23	23.5	26	27	27.5	28	29
E) Armhole depth	in	6	6	6.25	6.75	7	7.25	7.75	8	8.25	8.75	8.75
	cm	15	15	15	17.5	17.5	17.5	20	20	20	22.5	22.5
F) Length, underarm to hem (measured on back)	in	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.00	16.00	16.00	15.75	15.75	15.75
	cm	41.5	41.5	41.5	41.5	41.5	40.5	40.5	40.5	40	40	40
G) Total garment length, neck to hem (back)	in	23.75	24.00	24.25	24.75	25.00	25.00	25.50	25.75	25.75	26.25	26.25
	cm	61	61	61	63.5	63.5	62.5	65	65	64.5	67	67
H) Sleeves length (measured from underarm)	in	18.5	17.5	17	16.5	16.25	16.25	15.5	15	15	15	14.75
	cm	47	44.5	43	42	41.5	41.5	39.5	38	38	38	37.5
I) Upper arm circumference	in	11.25	12.25	13.25	14	15	16.5	18	18.75	20.25	21.75	23
	cm	28	30.5	33	35.5	37.5	41	44.5	47	50.5	54	57.5
J) Wrist, before ribbing	in	8.5	8.5	9	9.5	10	10.25	10.25	10.75	11.25	11.75	11.75
	cm	21	21	22.5	23.5	24.5	26	26	27	28	29.5	29.5
K) V-neck depth	in	8.75	8.75	9	10.75	11	11.25	11.75	12	12.25	12.75	12.75
	cm	21.5	21.5	22.5	26.5	27.5	28.5	29	30	31	31.5	31.5

L - Neckbands and sleeveless cuff: 1.5" / 3.75 cm

M - Sleeve cuff, long: 4" / 10 cm

N - Shoulder drop: 1.75" / 4.5 cm

O - Back neck drop: 1" / 2.5 cm

P - Sleeve cap height: 1" / 2.5 cm

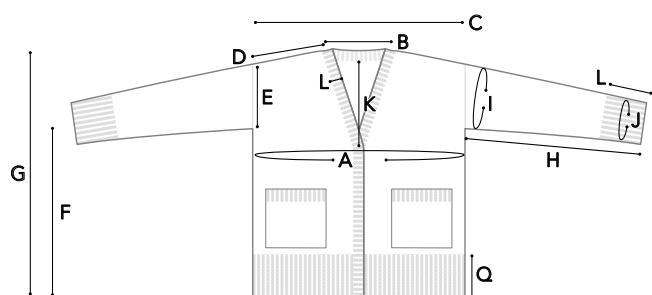
Q - Hem ribbing, plain version: 4" / 10 cm

R - Hem ribbing, high-low version: 2" / 5 cm & 5" / 12.5 cm

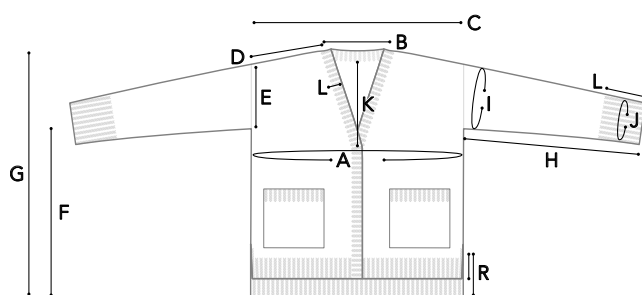
All horizontal measurements were calculated using the per inch gauge, individually for each unit (imperial vs metric). Lengths were calculated using the lengths given to work until, to make for easier calculation for the knitter if working length mods.

All measures are rounded to 1/4 inch or 1/2 cm.

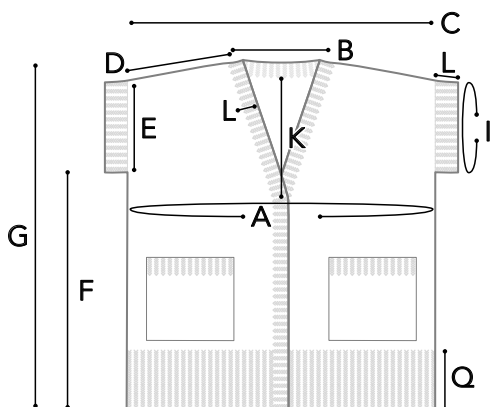
Pullover (Standard Hem)



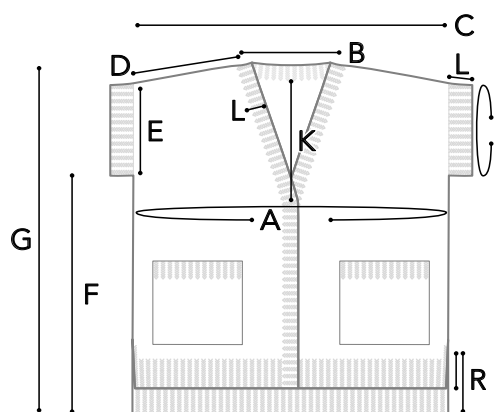
Pullover (High-Low Hem)



Vest (Standard Hem)



Vest (High-Low Hem)



Views and Fit Modifications in this Pattern

The following are the mix and match options written into the pattern, which you may use to construct your perfect garment:

- **Sleeves:** Long and vest (sleeveless)
- **Pockets:** One pocket, two pockets, no pockets
- **Hem:** Plain and high-low
- **Length:** High hip and full length

Additional tips included:

- **Full Bicep:** This pattern was written with a boxy, oversized fit in the body and shoulders, and a slim sleeve fit with 1" / 2.5 cm ease to contrast the oversized body. This location is highly variable on the human body. Measure the upper arm of the intended wearer, by first holding the measuring tape from the side of neck to the upper arm, using the D measurement to determine where the shoulder drop will be. Then, measure the upper arm circumference at that location to determine whether the intended wearer needs a full bicep adjustment. Instructions for knitting a different size than the body to accommodate a full bicep are given in the pattern at the necessary points.
- **Optional Bust Darts** (see ["Choosing A Cup Size"](#) on page 4)
- **Lengthening and Shortening instructions** throughout.