

# Blue Selbu



A bold, Norwegian-style hat with stranded colourwork (a traditional Selbu motif) around the ears for extra warmth, and at the crown. Worked in aran weight yarn, it knits up quickly and only needs a small amount of the contrast colour. Choose pure wool to be sure the floats will not show through the fabric.

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# Blue Selbu Hat

## Size

One size to fit a 21-22" / 53-56cm head  
8"/20cm long (but length is easily adjusted)

## Materials

- 85m (93 yds) - approx. 50g - of aran weight yarn in main colour (MC)
- 35m (38 yds) – approx. 20g - of aran weight yarn in contrast colour (CC)
- 3.25mm (UK 10, US 3) and 3.75mm (UK 9, US 5) circular needles, 16" (40cm) long. (Or longer circulars can be used with the Magic Loop technique.) Alternatively, use double pointed needles, especially for the top of the hat as the number of stitches reduces.
- A stitch marker



Crown of hat

## Tension / gauge

9 sts and 12 rows to 2" / 5cm in plain stocking stitch (stockinette) on 3.75mm needles. Use different sized needles to those suggested, if necessary, to achieve the correct stitch tension. (Row tension is less important.)

## Abbreviations

K	knit
P	purl
sts	stitches
MC	main colour
CC	contrast colour
K2tog	knit 2 stitches together
SSK	slip, slip, knit: slip each of the next 2 stitches knitwise, then insert tip of left needle into them and knit them together. (Alternatively, work any other left-leaning decrease.)
S2KP2	slip 2, knit 1, pass slipped stitches over: slip 2 stitches together knitwise, knit 1, pass slipped stitches (together) over the knitted stitch

## Instructions

Using the smaller needle, cable cast on 96 sts in MC and join to work in the round, placing a marker at the join.

Join in CC and work chevron braid as follows. (See p.4 for additional guidance on working Latvian braids.)

**Round 1:** (K1 MC, K1 CC) to end of round.

**Round 2:** Bring both yarns between needles to the front. P1 MC and then take MC yarn over the top of the right needle to the back of the work. P1 CC and take CC yarn over the needle in the same way, laying it to the left of the MC yarn. Bring the MC yarn back over the needle to the front, P1 MC, take the yarn over the needle as before. Continue purling in this way while alternating colours (each stitch will be the same colour as the stitch in the previous round) to the end of the round. The colour to be worked should come up from below the colour that has just been worked. This will twist the two yarns, but they will untwist in the next round.

**Round 3:** Bring both yarns back over the needle to the front. As before, purl each stitch in the same colour as the previous round, but this time keep the yarns at the front. Drop the just-worked colour to the left of the other colour, bringing the new colour up from the right, over the just-worked colour, to purl the next stitch.

The braid is complete.

Without breaking CC yarn, work 4 rounds plain stocking stitch (knit every round) in MC. Carry the CC yarn up by twisting it around the MC at the start of each round.

Change to 3.75mm needles and work stranded colourwork in stocking stitch for the 19 rows of Chart A, with 4 repeats around the hat. Keep the CC yarn underneath the MC at the back of the work to help make the motifs stand out from the background. Strand the non-working yarn loosely to ensure the colourwork section can be blocked to the same size as the plain section which follows. Twist the two yarns together in the centre of any strands across more than 5 sts - this doesn't happen very often. (See p.6 for additional help on stranded colourwork.)

After finishing the chart, break off CC and work stocking stitch in MC until work measures 6" / 15cm from the start. (For a longer, more slouchy hat, add an extra inch or two here. Alternatively, reduce the length a little for a hat which fits closely to the top of the head, or to ensure that one 50g ball of MC will be enough.)

Remove start-of-round marker, knit 2 sts then replace marker to denote new start of round. Join in CC and work Chart B, again with 4 repeats around the hat. Break off CC yarn after Round 10.

## Finishing

Pull MC yarn through remaining 8 sts and fasten off. Darn in all ends.

Wet block the hat to the required size.



# Working a Latvian Braid

## Introduction

Working a Latvian braid is very similar to Fair Isle or other stranded colourwork, except that the stitches are purled instead of knitted. This means that the floats (that is, the strands of non-working yarn) are at the front of the work, and a feature is made of them. They almost completely hide the purl stitches. Whereas in stranded colourwork the two yarns are kept from twisting by having one always coming from below and the other from above at the back of the work (see Stranded Colourwork below), a chevron braid is worked by twisting the yarns in one direction (clockwise for Blue Selbu) in the first purl round and then in the opposite direction (anti-clockwise) in the next round.

## How to achieve it

Knit a set-up round of alternating MC and CC knit stitches, keeping the floats of one colour always on top of the floats of the other as described in the Stranded Colourwork section below. (The two yarns should not have become twisted around each other at the end of this round.) Then work two purl rounds, again alternating colours, with each stitch purled in the same colour as the round below.

In the first of these rounds, start by bringing the MC and CC yarns between the needles to the front of the work. Bring the yarn up to purl each stitch from beneath the yarn that has just been used, causing the yarns to twist around each other in a clockwise direction. The instructions on p.2 describe one way to do this, but any way that works for you is fine. You may prefer to keep the yarns at the front instead of laying the just-used yarn over the needle. Just remember, if you are used to knitting Fair Isle, that you need to put a half twist into the pair of yarns on every stitch, whereas normally you would be trying to avoid twisting except to anchor a long float.



1<sup>st</sup> purl round. The dark coloured yarn has been taken over the needle, the light coloured yarn being used to purl the stitch comes up from below it.

When the next (dark) stitch is worked, the dark yarn will come up from beneath the light yarn in the same way.

Note the twisted braid forming below the stitches that have been worked.

In the second purl round, bring the new yarn for each stitch up on top of the old yarn. This results in an anti-clockwise twist.

You'll know you are doing it right if all the twisting in the yarns introduced by the first purl round starts to undo.



2<sup>nd</sup> purl round. The dark coloured yarn being used to purl the stitch lies over the light yarn that has just been used.

When the next (light) stitch is worked, the light yarn will be on top of the dark yarn in the same way.

The twist of the braid is now in the other direction, completing the chevron.



This is how the braid should look at the end of the second purl round.

The purl bumps created in the first round of purl stitches form the points of the right-facing Vs.

If you want a chevron that points to the left instead of to the right, just reverse Rounds 2 and 3 in the pattern instructions. Start the first purl round in the same way though, by bringing both yarns between the needles to the front.

You don't need to be as concerned about stranding the yarns loosely (see Stranded Colourwork below) as when working from a colourwork chart such as those in Blue Selbu. In part this is because each float is only across a single stitch, and in part because the braid needs to be quite firm to stabilise the lower edge of the hat. Just try to maintain an even tension without pulling too tightly.

## Stranded Colourwork

The charted sections of the hat are in many ways the complete opposite of the chevron braid: they are knitted with each yarn stranded at the back across the stitches in the other colour; and one colour (let's call it Yarn 1) should always be brought up to be knitted from below the other (Yarn 2), while that yarn (Yarn 2) is always brought over Yarn 1 to knit, with the result that the yarns do not get twisted.

A consistent approach to which yarn is on top makes the colourwork pattern crisp, and also produces a neat wrong side.

The floats of the "below" yarn (Yarn 1) will be slightly longer, which causes the stitches in that colour to be ever so slightly looser. It is therefore better to work with the CC in the "below" position, since that makes the CC motif stand out from the MC background.



Viewed from the back of the work, this shows knit stitches in alternating colours, as for the set-up round of the Latvian braid. The floats in the light coloured yarn (Yarn 2, normally MC) are all on top of the dark floats (Yarn 1).

The two yarns remain untwisted – each stays in its own position.



Again viewed from the back of the work. The dark coloured yarn (Yarn 1) has been wrapped ready to knit the next stitch. Note that it has been brought up from beneath Yarn 2.

It is important (for this hat, and in general) that the floats at the back are not pulled too tightly. Spread out the stitches knitted since the last colour change on the right hand needle before changing colour again, but without stretching them excessively. This should ensure that the float you are about to create will not affect the final tension/gauge or the elasticity of the fabric. If in doubt, make the floats too loose rather than too tight, or you will have difficulty in blocking the hat to the correct size. Wool floats will in any case tend to stick to the back of the fabric after a few washes.



A dark coloured stitch is in the process of being knitted.

Note that the stitches on the right hand needle are well spaced, so that the new (dark coloured) float will be long enough.

Long floats could get caught and broken when the hat is worn and washed. Anchor a float longer than about 5 stitches by twisting it right around the working yarn before knitting a stitch (with the working yarn) that is somewhere in the middle of the float. When knitting with yarns other than aran weight, you may need to anchor floats at intervals greater or less than every 5 stitches.

Take especial care that long floats are not pulled too tightly.