Outline for What You Need To Know About Gauge

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10am PDT

Getting Good Gauge

“Good Gauge” is matching your gauge, in pattern, to that specified by the designer, creating the same fabric look, weight, density, and texture.

It may not, however, be the best for your knitting.

First taught about gauge in 2001.

What is good gauge?

What impacts gauge:

1. tensioning of yarn
2. style of knitting
3. fiber content
4. different yarn structure
5. needles used.

Why we "need" to match gauge

It is the only way it is possible to write a pattern that someone can replicate. The person writing the pattern spent a lot of time and effort to make it all work out. Deviations from stated gauge can cause changes in the shape, fit, and design.

You do not have to meet gauge, but you WILL HAVE TO DO THE MATH IF YOU DON'T.

What I've learned that is relevant to this discussion:

- gauge can change post-blocking
- wet blocking is crucial (spray blocking can be subbed)
- pinning it out to measurements while wet isn't the best practice
- steam blocking is magic.

Stitch Interactions

How stitches work together makes a difference in gauge

[show different stitches and brief explanation]:

1. Garter stands shoulder to shoulder, but bows

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2. Stockinette stands shoulder to shoulder and stands tall
3. Seed combines bowing and standing tall
4. 1x1 rib also combines bowing and standing tall, but in columns, front to back.

Consecutive stitches of the same type will change how stitches interact

How you tension your yarn will impact both row and stitch gauge, yet we don't feel "right" saying I knit _____ style when presenting a pattern.

Differences between Unblocked & Blocked Gauge

I want to emphasize that there are no rules here. Everything depends.

Here are some "likely" things that will happen when you wet block.

- The stitches will smooth out and look better,
- Stitches will elongate or shorten,
- If the stitches elongate, the stitch will likely pull in,
- When stitches shorten, the stitches will widen,
- The bowing may lessen or flatten, and
- The gauge may change in either or both stitch count and row count.

What happens if you don't wet block?

1. The gauge will change when you eventually do wash your piece.
2. You have not given the yarn a chance to settle to its final position.
3. You have not allowed the yarn to blossom or change.

Examples: Thique

Garter stitch change: unblocked to blocked: -16.75%

Garter row change: unblocked to blocked: -14.25%

Stockinette stitch change: unblocked to blocked: 0%

Stockinette row change: unblocked to blocked: 18.5%

Seed stitch change: unblocked to blocked: 0%

Seed row change: unblocked to blocked: 19%

1x1 Rib stitch change: unblocked to blocked: -7.25%

1x1 Rib row change: unblocked to blocked: 26%

Examples: Thique

Seeded Rib stitch change: unblocked to blocked: 0%

Seeded Rib row change: unblocked to blocked: 18.5%

Nubbly stitch change: unblocked to blocked: 0%

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Nubbly row change: unblocked to blocked: 26%

Alan's pattern stitch change: unblocked to blocked: 0%

Alan's pattern row change: unblocked to blocked: 11%

Embossed Ribbon stitch change: unblocked to blocked: 0%

Embossed Ribbon row change: unblocked to blocked: 100%

What are the options when we don't meet gauge?

1. Try a different yarn,
2. Use a different needle,
3. Do the math.

It is entirely possible that another yarn might yield a better result.

A different needle may adjust your tension.

The math starts out easy and can become . . . less so.

1. trim stitch counts
2. trim row counts
3. body stitch counts
4. body row counts
5. body shaping stitch numbers
6. body shaping rows
7. underarm bind off(s)
8. armhole shaping stitch counts
9. armhole shaping row counts
10. front neck shaping
11. back neck shaping
12. shoulder shaping
13. sleeve to underarm stitch counts
14. sleeve to underarm row counts
15. sleeve bind off(s)
16. sleeve cap shaping stitches
17. sleeve minimum sleeve cap stitch count
18. sleeve cap row counts
19. sleeve top shaping stitches
20. sleeve top row counts
21. sleeve top bind off(s)
22. neck trim stitch counts
23. neck trim row counts

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