Sweater Design in Plain English

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If you're tired of making sweaters with sleeves that are the wrong length, necklines that droop, armholes that are too tight, and an overall look that's not quite right, then let *Seater Design in Plain English* come to your rescue. In clear, straightforward terms, Maggie Righettie shares her knitting know-how and good fashion sense so that, no matter what your knitting level, you can overcome the fear of failure, avoid costly mistakes, adapt already-existing patterns, and plan and create sweaters that really fit and look terrific-sweaters that will be worn for many years to come. Topics and techniques include:

-Understanding the nature of yarn and pattern stitches
-Choosing the most flattering color and design for the wearer
-Taking accurate body measurements
-Estimating the amount of yarn you'll need
-How to tell whether or not a sweater will look good on you-before you start to knit
-How to alter printed patterns so they really fit
-How to understand the mathematics of gauge and pattern design
-Plus start-to-finish instructions for thirteen classic sweaters

Each technique is illustrated with clear diagrams, sketches, or photographs. Complete with conversion charts and a personal-measurements record-keeping section, *Sweater Design in Plain English* takes the guesswork out of every creative knitting effort.

Sweater Design in Plain English Details

Date   : Published October 15th 1990 by St. Martin's Griffin
ISBN   : 9780312051648
Author : Maggie Righetti
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Marnie says

This is one of the few reference books I've read cover to cover, more than once because Righetti has offered a wealth of timeless information on designing all sorts of sweaters for all sorts of shapes and sizes.

I waffled between giving this 4 and 5 stars simply because, while excellent, and a must-have, in my opinion, for anyone wishing to learn to design sweaters, this book won't address certain topics that I think many designers today would find helpful, including

Working with negative ease (all patterns are assumed to have some positive ease)
Placement of empire waistlines
Hoods
Body darts
Princess seams
Grading recommendations across a wide range of sizes (for instance, how should a 6" wide neckline on a 32" bust be adjusted for a 40" bust)

That said, I suspect many people will find the section on shaping sleeves caps, alone, worth the price of admission and her comprehensive lists of standard measurements is a great reference to have on hand. These, along with many other topics will serve any current or aspiring designer well and I always recommend this book to people who ask where they can learn more about designing.

Laurie says

I borrowed this book from a friend - and what a life saver. I have to design a sweater for the Knitting Guild Master Knitting Level III and I could not have done it without this book. Lots of amazing tips. I don't know if I'll ever design a sweater again, but I've learned an amazing amount from this book!

Jessica says

Most, if not all, of the information in this book can be found on the internet. The author tends to draw things out quite a bit. As someone on Amazon.com said, she turns 1 paragraph's worth of information into several pages. I was hoping this book would talk about incorporating all-over lace patterns for a sweater, but there was none of that. I guess the author thinks that sweaters can only be made in stockinette or rib stitches! The chapter on estimating the amount of yarn needed is a joke! Her suggestions include asking an employee at the local yarn store and "buy a little extra just in case" (?!), when in fact there is a way to calculate this fairly accurately. If you know your basic math skills/have a calculator and have internet access, skip this book.

Venessa says

For knitters: a great resource. The first few chapters are helpful for all pursuers of the yarn arts.

Jen says

The emphasis here (that I missed) is on Sweater DESIGN. Not "how do I make a sweater from a pattern" but "how do I design my own sweater?" I'm not there yet, but it was still an informative and easy read, especially the first half. It inspired me to also read her boook Knitting in Plain English, which has a newer edition - hopefully they will do that soon with this book, because the painfully ugly bulky sweaters get in the way of her good style advice.

notgettingenough says

If you are the least ambitious as a knitter, and want solid knowledge behind you, she's compulsory for your library.

Ann Johnson Davis says

Excellent information. Well written.

M2t2 says

Yay! I found it & bought it. Couldn't help myself.
Fantastic resource to have.

Amy says

I actually think the first edition was better.

Anie says

I haven't tried to make a sweater off this book yet, but it's certainly detailed and full of some good advice about knitted fabrics---I'm looking forward to using it later.

Sian says

I thought this book was pretty informative, gave some tips from experience about working with different fibers and the behavior of certain stitches, their strengths and their weaknesses. Detailed description toward the end of designing a sweater yourself and how to do the math and figure out how much you will need. I would definitely consider this a reference book to keep on hand for knitters.

Francesca Roqueta says

Adequate. Not consistent. Some parts are redundant and some parts need more attention. Does not really tell you how to knit a sweater. On second thought, none of the books except for Elizabeth Zimmerman's properly tell you how to construct a sweater without a pattern. Hmm. Section on stitch behavior is helpful, however.

Huelo says

Useful stuff. Righetti has a nice writing voice. I have to say, even as someone who loves traditional and vintage designs, the ones in here are little dated. BUT, it doesn't matter, because she tells you everything you need to know to write YOUR OWN patterns. Great reference book, serious knitters should keep it on hand.

Aileen Bernadette Urquhart says

Quite a useful book, although I knew most of what was in it from other books and tutorials on iTunes. I also disliked the obviously invented conversations between the author and really stupid beginner knitters. Purlease!

Annie says

I loved her book Knitting in plain English so I got this because I was sure she could take any mystery out of designing my own knitwear. I have been knitting for decades and Ms. Righetti did not disappoint with this one. Clear, common sense instruction on how you can custom design knitwear to love for years.