

YARN SELECTION:

All the yarns used in the project are 8ply/DK weight yarns. We have deliberately used the one yarn weight to make it easier for knitters. 8ply yarn was the obvious choice as it is the most commonly used weight of yarn in Australia. The patterns generally only use small amounts of yarn so they are perfect for using up leftovers from bigger projects.

White Gum Wool and Australian Organic Wool kindly donated the yarns used to knit all the samples in the booklet. The yarn from these companies was selected not only because their colour palettes reflect the colours of Australia, but also because their beliefs and ethos are in alignment with the sustainability message of this Textile Art project. The yarns come from farms which practise sustainable and ethical farming methods. Additionally, these yarns have a very small carbon and environmental footprint in comparison to the larger commercial yarn companies as they are processed in Australia and New Zealand, rather than China.

When selecting your yarns for this project, we would love it if you would take into account such environmental considerations and try to select yarns that reflect this ethos.

Some guidelines for yarn:

Firstly, we won't accept pieces knit from acrylic. Acrylic yarn is made from petroleum and coal products, both of which are non-renewable resources. The implication for the environment of these yarns is obvious.

Secondly, use what you have. Look through your stash and your leftovers to see what you have there before buying new. If you're unsure if an unlabelled yarn is acrylic or wool, try this: snip a reasonable length strand off and take it outside. Set it alight. If it's acrylic, it will smell like chemicals and melt. If it's wool, it will smell like burning hair and turn to ash.

Thirdly, source second hand yarn from op shops, friends and family. Again, you may wish to try the burn test on any unidentified balls of yarn.

If you do purchase yarn for this project consider the environmental impact of the yarn you purchase. Look at where it was processed and spun. Who owns the yarn company? What is the yarn made up of?

You may even want to consider whether the yarn is superwash treated as some of the projects in this book require a yarn that will felt. (Superwash is a chemical process that strips the scales from yarn and coats it in a plastic to prevent it from felting in the washing machine.)

As we mention in the patterns, the colours of the pieces aim to capture the Australian landscape, so look for colours that speak to you in that respect. The sky of our landscape, for example, doesn't have to be all the same blue. A myriad of different blues will create a wonderfully enriched image.

NEEDLES AND NOTIONS:

While all of the patterns use 8ply/DK yarns, not every pattern uses US6/4mm needles. This is not an error. Different size needles are used to create different fabrics and effects.

Each of the patterns has a specific tension stipulated for it to ensure the final object is the correct size. To obtain this size, it's important that the required tension is met. Every knitter's tension is different; different knitters will need to use different size needles to obtain the recommended tensions. Just because you are using 8ply/DK weight yarn doesn't mean you should automatically reach for your 4mm needles.

Please check your tension as required and adjust your needles to ensure your finished piece is the correct size.

Not sure how to check your tension? Make a swatch.

You may want to read this blog post about swatching. (It also talks about swatching in the round)

<http://tikkifabricaddict.blogspot.com.au/2012/10/swatching-in-round.html>

TECHNIQUES:

These patterns may introduce you to some techniques you are unfamiliar with. While the Explanatory Box will give you an outline or explanation, you may want some additional information or instruction. Unfortunately, there is simply not enough room in this booklet to provide all this information.

You can find links to extra information on Georgie's website here: <http://www.tikkiknits.com/warm-special-techniques.html>