

Take-Along Sun

by Anita M. Wheelless

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Life can be difficult. Let's face it, no matter how sunny the summer day might be outside, your day might actually be dark, dreary and depressing. To ward off such gloom, meet the Take-Along Sun. Reminiscent of my stuffed Humpty Dumpty of long, long ago (circa 1965), I hope this little guy will brighten up whatever kind of day you may be having. He's knit almost completely in the round, starting with his legs. Although his nose and the rays are attached separately, overall the pattern requires minimal seaming. Take this portable sun along and catch some cheerful rays whenever you need them!

SIZE

Finished size is approximately 13.5 inches tall, from top of ray to bottom of feet or approximately 9.5 inches tall, sitting. Approximately 23 inches in diameter, from ray point to ray point.

MATERIALS

[MC] Plymouth Encore DK [75% acrylic, 25% wool; 150 yards per 50g skein]; color: Bright Yellow; 2 skeins

Face Embroidery: Plymouth Encore DK [75% acrylic, 25% wool; 150 yards per 50g skein]; color: Black; 1 skein

2 sets US #3/3.25mm double-point needles

1 set US #3/3.25mm straight needles

Notions required: Stitch markers (the kind that look like little baby pins), polyester fiberfill stuffing, yarn needle, and straight pins with large heads.

GAUGE

28 sts/32 rows = 4 inches in stockinette stitch

PATTERN NOTES

The sun is knitted completely in the round, with the exception of his nose and his rays, which are knitted separately, stuffed, and then sewn onto his body. When an increase is indicated, please knit into the front and back of the stitch.

PATTERN

Legs (make 2, see instructions for slight variation on second leg)

Using one set of US size 3 (3.25 mm) double-pointed needles, and knitting back and forth, cast on one stitch.

First Row: Knit one, purl one, knit one in this stitch.

Second Row: You now have three stitches. Increase in each stitch by knitting into the front and back. (6 stitches)

Third Row: Knit

Fourth Row: Increase in each again. (12 stitches)

First Round: Divide these 12 stitches by knitting four stitches onto each of the three DPNs.

Second Round: Place stitch marker at beginning of round, join and knit this round.

Fourth Round: Increase in each stitch again. (8 stitches on each needle)

Fifth through 15th rounds: Knit for a total of 11 rounds.

Beginning of shaping of foot:

16th round: *On needle one, SSK, then knit the remaining stitches. (7)

Knit needle two (8 stitches); Knit to the last two stitches on needle three, then knit these last two together. (7)

17th round: Knit*

Repeat rows 16 and 17, in order, three more times. You will be decreasing by one stitch on needles one and three each time, ending up with 4 stitches on needle one; 8 stitches on needle 2; and 4 stitches on needle 3.

24th through 38th round: Knit for these 15 rounds.

Leaving a tail, cut yarn. Knot yarn close to the back of the leg, weave in tail. Transfer the four stitches from needle one onto needle three. Remove needle one. You now have two needles, each with 8 stitches. Set this leg aside and, taking up another set of size US 3 (3.25 mm) DPNs, begin working on leg number two exactly as above. When you've reached the end of leg number 2, do NOT cut yarn.

You will finish in the middle of the leg. Transfer the four stitches from needle three to needle one. You now have eight stitches on needle one and eight on needle two.

Joining legs to body

Begin by knitting where your working yarn is (right in the middle of the eight stitches on needle one on the second leg). Knit across the four remaining stitches on the needle, then, using the backward loop method, cast on 18 additional stitches. These 18 stitches will make up the body between the legs. After casting on these 18 stitches, pick up leg number 1 (the one that has been resting), and knit across the eight stitches on the front of this leg, making sure your stitches are not twisted. You can remove the needle as you knit. You will end up with 34 stitches on needle 1 (8 stitches from leg 2, 18 cast on, the other 8 stitches from leg 1 = 34 stitches). Continue knitting around onto the second needle on leg one. You are now on the back of this leg. When you've finished knitting the 8 stitches on this needle, again using the backward loop method, cast on 18 stitches to make up the back of his body between the legs. After casting on these 18 stitches, and again making certain your stitches are not twisted, you will now pick up needle 2 of the second leg and finish knitting the back of this leg. Just as before, remove the needle as you knit, so you will end up with 34 stitches on needle 2. You only have two needles right now, each with 34 stitches.

When you've reached the end of this needle, you will be at the front of his leg again. To make things easier to work, divide your stitches by knitting 17 stitches onto each of four of the size US 3 (3.25 mm) DPNs. After knitting these stitches, you will be back around to the front of leg number 2 again. Here you will be working on what we will now call needle 1. Place a stitch marker here to mark the beginning of the rounds.

Knit 6 rounds more, working the stitches on all four of the needles. You will end up with quite a gap between his legs. Don't worry. You will need this hole later for stuffing.

Shaping Body

First Round: Increase in first stitch, k7, increase in next, k7, increase in last stitch on each needle (20 stitches on each)

Second Round: Knit

Third Round: Increase in first, k8, increase in next, k9, increase in last stitch on each needle (23 stitches on each)

Rounds four through 18: Knit (15 rounds)

19th Round: Increase in first stitch, k10, increase in next, k10, increase in last stitch on each needle (26 stitches in each)

Rounds 20 and 21: Knit (2 rounds)

22nd Round: k2tog, k10, k2tog, k10, knit last two together on each needle (23 stitches on each)

Rounds 23 through 37: Knit (15 rounds)

Before knitting any more rounds, begin stuffing body and legs, pushing stuffing all the way down to the feet. The feet should be more rounded than the rest of the legs.

38th Round: k2tog, k8, k2tog, k9, knit last two together on each needle (20 stitches on each)

39th Round: Knit

40th Round: k2tog, k7, k2tog, k7, knit last two together on each needle (17 stitches on each)

41st Round: Knit

42nd Round: k2tog, k6, k2tog, k5, knit the last two together on each needle (14 stitches on each)

43rd Round: Knit

44th Round: k2tog all the way around on each needle (7 stitches on each)

45th Round: K2tog until last stitch, knit this stitch on each needle. (4 stitches on each)

You are now ready to close the hole in the top of his head.

Thread a yarn needle with a length of yarn, slip all the stitches onto the needle and pull tightly, gathering all the stitches together. After pulling as tightly as you can, closing up the top of his head, knot off as close to the knitting as possible (so as not to see the knot) and weave in the loose end.

Finishing Body

Finish stuffing body and legs. Using your hands, work the body into a ball shape, adding more stuffing as desired. When your sun looks pleasantly plump and rounded, you're ready to sew up the gap between his legs. Thread a length of yarn in your yarn needle and using a gathering stitch, weave the needle in and out of the stitches, working fairly close together, all the way around the opening. Pull tightly, making his legs move very close together. Repeat the gathering stitch, if needed, to make certain the gap is securely closed

and that his legs are right next to each other. Pull tightly and knot off, weaving in the loose end.

Nose

Cast on 9 stitches onto one size US 3 (3.25 mm) DPN. Divide by knitting three stitches onto each of three of the needles. Place a stitch marker and join.

Knit for 6 rounds. Thread a yarn needle and run a gathering stitch through the stitches. Pull tightly and knot off. Weave in loose end. Set aside.

Sunrays (make 10)

Using size US 3 (3.25 mm) straight needles, cast on 18 stitches.

First row: Knit

Second row: Purl

Third row and all following odd rows: k2tog, knit to last two, SSK

Fourth row and all following even rows: Purl

Knit the last two remaining stitches together, then thread a yarn needle and run through last stitch. Tie off.

To make up sunrays

For each sunray, take two ray pieces and, placing wrong sides together, stuff lightly and overstitch edges together. Pin rays along the side and top of the sun, then stitch securely in place. Remove pins.

FINISHING

With sun facing you, with feet forward. Find the small mark in the middle of his face where an increase was made. This marks the spot where you will attach his nose. Sew nose securely in place.

Using the black yarn, thread the yarn needle and using a satin stitch, embroider the eyes.

Using a chain stitch, embroider the smiling mouth.

