



# Elvira

*There are characters called Elvira all across the arts. I named this pattern for the Elvira from Don Giovanni, but equally it could be the Elvira from Blithe Spirit. Elvira is an advanced beginner pattern for a slightly slouchy hat. It would be really easy to customize if you wanted to make it a touch longer.*

*If you're new to smocking, don't worry - it's really easy. Essentially, it is a form of ribbing (in this case, a 2x2 rib), with the yarn wrapped around groups of six stitches (two sets of 'positive'/'knit' ribs either side of one 'negative'/'purl' rib). This opens up negative space between the ribs. Shifting this pattern by 4 stitches create little honeycombs by opening and closing alternating ribs.*



*If you find yourself having difficulty following these instructions, a good [video tutorial](#)<sup>1</sup> can be found here.*

## Gauge

Using 3.25mm needles and 4ply yarn, gauge was 25 stitches and 36 rows = 4 inches.

## Yarn

I used Lana Grossa Meilenweit 50 Seta/Cashmere, which is sadly now discontinued. It's a good solid sock colour yarn, with a bit of cashmere and silk to give a lovely smooth result. It really makes the smocking pop out.

## Notions

- 2.5mm circular needle (when using this needle to make the brim, your tension will be higher than the ball band suggests so you may find it helpful to use a sharp needle)
- 3.25mm circular needle
- Stitch marker
- Needle for sewing in ends

## Skills required/abbreviations

Knitting in the round

**cdd:** centred double decrease. Work this as follows: Slip 2 stitches as if to k2tog, do not complete stitch. K1, slip the two stitches over this stitch.

## Pattern

### Smocked brim

Using 2.5mm needles and a flexible cast on such as a long tail cast on, cast on 152 stitches. Place a marker to denote the start of the round.

Rounds 1-3: \*k2, p2\*, repeat.

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<sup>1</sup> Youtube "how to knit smocking" if the link doesn't work!

**Round 4:** \*Insert your right hand needle from the front in between stitches 6 and 7. Draw the working yarn through and loop it over your left hand needle. Knit this together with the first stitch on the left hand needle, then k1, p2, k2, p2\* Repeat.

**Rounds 5 – 7:** \*k2, p2\*, repeat.

*Round 8 gets a little complicated, as on the final repeat of the pattern, you need to wrap the yarn over a group of stitches which contain your marker. This can be achieved by slipping two stitches from the start of the next round and working the wrap.*

*Alternatively, you can just ignore this altogether and knit this bit in the 2x2 rib pattern, then go back later and sew in a double-length of yarn where the missing wraps are. You really can't tell the difference unless you turn the hat inside out.*



**Round 8:** k2, p2, \*Insert your right hand needle from the front in between stitches 6 and 7. Draw the yarn through and loop it over your left hand needle. Knit this together with the first stitch on the left hand needle, then k1, p2, k2, p2\*. Repeat until you have four stitches left. Slip two stitches from the other side of your marker and insert your right hand needle to their left (so you're wrapping six stitches still) draw through a loop of yarn and slip it over your left hand needle. Knit this together with the first stitch on your needle, then k1, p2, (place marker), k2. (This replaces the first k2 of round 1 when repeating).

Repeat this 8 row repeat twice, then repeat just the first seven rows again. Try on the brim to see if it fits – it should look quite small but be very stretchy.

### **Body of the hat**

Switch to 3.25mm needles. \*K15, m1\* to last 2 stitches, k2 [162 stitches].

Knit in stockinette stitch for around 6 inches (including the brim, this will be about 8.5 inches).



*This hat is gathered to bring in the top, which means the decreases are very sudden. If you want a longer hat, continue knitting until you have the desired length, then work the decreases as for the regular pattern.*

Optional: Switch to 2.5mm needles for the last 1.5 inches to bring in the brim slightly.

### **Decreasing and finishing**

*Although it's not very important, I like to line up the raised stitches*

*made by a centered double decrease when doing subsequent rows of decreases. There's an easy way to check if you're doing this right – when you slip 2 stitches to start the decrease, you need to make sure the left hand of the two is the slightly raised stitch from the previous round of double decreases.*

Round 1: \*k3, cdd\* (see abbreviations for centered double decrease)

Round 2: Knit plain

Round 3: k2, \*cdd, k1\* until you have two stitches left. Slip one stitch from the other side of your marker and work a double decrease. Replace marker.

Round 4: Knit plain

Round 5: cdd every stitch until two remain, k2tog.

Thread the yarn through the remaining stitches and pull tight. Sew in ends.