

# RAIISA LACE BLOUSE

A knitting pattern

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Some years ago I took a virtual tour of Russian-language knitting websites. I don't speak or read Russian, which was a bit of a handicap but I had fun anyway. From the first site visited, I deduced that the Russian equivalent of the characters transliterated into the English characters "uzor" meant stitch. I used a standard search engine to look for that term.

In the process stumbled across quite a few knitting websites showing texture and lace pattern stitches I have not seen collected in the various English language stitch directories. I decided to play with some of the directional lace designs I found. Here's a close-up of my result:

I modified the original stitch pattern somewhat and came up with a mirrored repeat short-



sleeve lacy low-cut blouse that took advantage of the diagonals in the lace. I present the pattern here, in womens' size large (about 16-18). In that size the fit is very close and body-hugging (but not constricting) due to the all-over ribbing. Smaller sizes can wear this too, but the fit will be looser and less outrageous [grin].

This top is knit in the round from the bottom up to the armholes. Then the front and back are continued separately, and seamed at the shoulder. The sleeves picked up along the armhole edge and knit down from there. They feature mirrored echoes of the main body pattern. I did not knit this one entirely in the round then cut and steek it in the Norwegian manner because the lacy pattern and ribbon yarn I chose did not seem suitable for that method. Feel free to work this project that way if you like.

I knit my Raiisa top in Silk City's Spaghetti- a sport weight non-slippery cotton ribbon yarn that is now long discontinued. It came on a cone, and I used a bit more than 0.75 pounds (around 420 grams). Any

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sport weight yarn that produces a similar gauge can be used.

One note on fit: The neckline as I did it is rather revealing. You might be less brazen than I am. It's easy to raise the neckline by starting it a bit higher up the front. No other pattern alterations are needed to do so, and you should have enough yarn in my estimate to cover an inch or two of additional knitting.

A final note - the top is named "Raiisa" not after Mrs. Gorbachev, but after the middle name of a very special knitter who helped me through some initial frustrations when I was designing this piece. (Thanks, Mom!)

## Materials

- Approximately 1,250 yards (around 1,144 meters) of sport weight cotton yarn - this includes enough extra yardage for people who want to make the neckline less deep.
- US size #5 (3.75mm) 24-inch circular needles (or size needed to achieve gauge.)
- 14 ring or stitch markers (coil-less safety pins work well). You might want two of a contrasting color or type.
- Stitch holder, shoelace, or spare circular needle to park the front stitches while you are working the back.
- Tapestry needle for darning in ends.

## Gauge and Measurements:

Needle size specified is for convenience only. Use any size needle required to achieve the desired gauge.

22 stitches = 4 inches (10 cm) measured over pattern.

32 rows = 4 inches (10 cm) measured over pattern.

Please note that gauge can be problematic and is measured over a large swatch because this is a lacy pattern with ribs. Both ribs and eyelets make taking exact gauge measurement difficult.

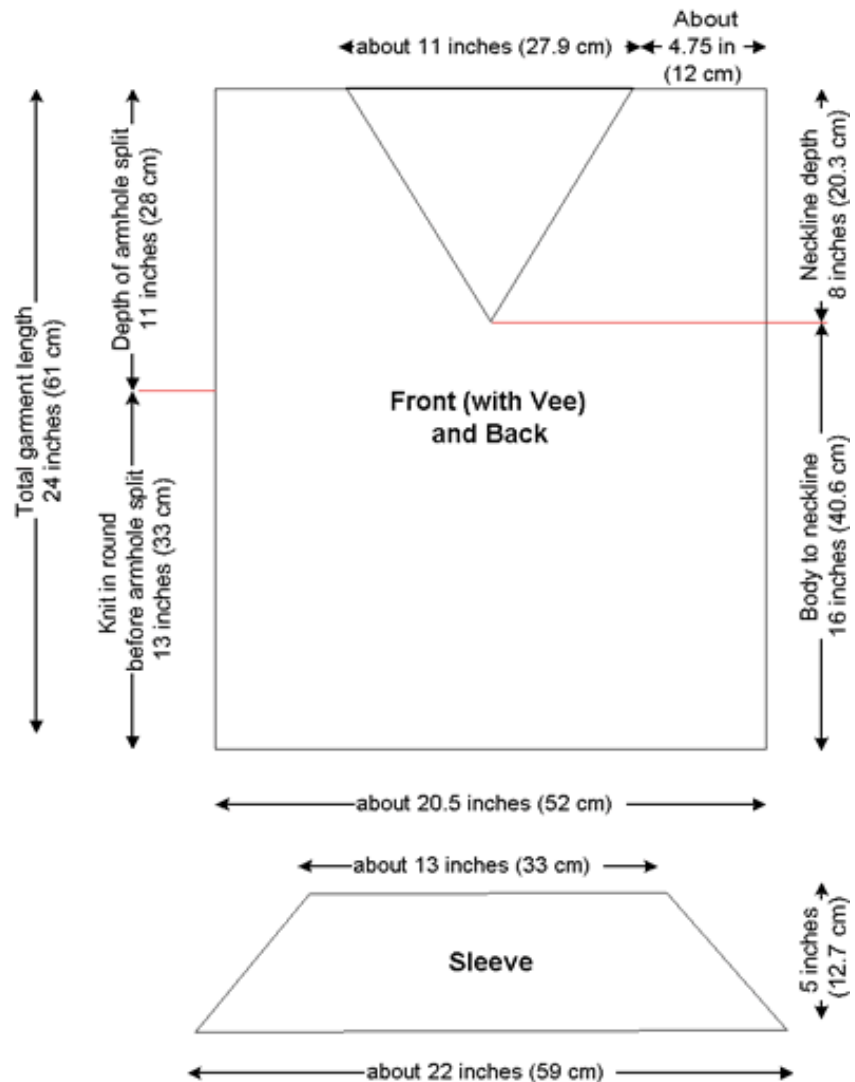
## Body

Using your circular needle, cast on a total of 214 stitches in this manner

- Cast on 5 stitches, place a marker
- Cast on 24 stitches, place a

marker

- Cast on 24 stitches, place a marker
- Cast on 2 stitches, place a marker. (This little bit is the center back)
- Cast on 24 stitches, place a marker
- Cast on 24 stitches, place a marker.
- Cast on 4 stitches, place a marker. (This is the left side "seam" line, you may wish to use a contrasting color marker)
- Cast on 5 stitches, place a marker
- Cast on 24 stitches, place a marker
- Cast on 24 stitches, place a marker
- Cast on 2 stitches, place a marker. (This little bit is the center front)
- Cast on 24 stitches, place a marker
- Cast on 24 stitches, place a marker.



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- Cast on 4 stitches, place a marker. (This is the right side "seam" line, and marks the beginning of the new round. You may wish to use a contrasting color marker)

Join and work from this point forward in the round, taking care not to twist this cast on row as you do the join.

Follow the chart at the end of this pattern. There are separate 24 stitch repeats marked for the left and right sides of the garment, plus "extra" stitches to eke out the repeat at the side seams and center. Your placed stitch markers will correspond to repeats of the pattern as shown on the chart. Yes, it IS a 48-row repeat. Row 49 on the chart duplicates Row 1 to flesh out the visual presentation.

You will first work across the front. Starting at the lower right of the chart, work the edge stitches once, then two repeats of Group A. Work the few non-repeating stitches that make up the center, then work two repeats of Group B. Work the edge stitches on the left hand edge of the chart. You will now be at the marker that indicates the right hand seam line, and you will be ready to work across the garment back. Again start at the right hand side of the chart, and work the edge stitches, two repeats of Group A, the center stitches, two repeats of Group B, and the left-most edge stitches. You have now completed the first round. Continue working in this manner from the chart until your body tube measures 13 inches (33 cm). Work across the row until you are two stitches before the marker that indicates the point where you begin the chart to work the back. Work the last two stitches, and then place them on a safety pin. Work the three stitches after the side marker, and add them to the side seam safety pin. Work across the back until you reach the side marker. Place the last two stitches before the marker on a safety pin. Work the first three stitches and add them to your side seam safety pin. Work across the front until you reach the stitches you previously placed on the first safety pin. Stop (but do not bind anything off) and look at your work. You will have the stitches that make up the front, five stitches on a safety pin (these will become part of the underarm); the stitches that will make up the back; and another safety pin containing the stitches that will be part of the other underarm. You will have just completed the section that will become the garment's back and will be up to the newly made gap between the back and the front.

Place the live front stitches on a spare circular needle, shoelace, or stitch holder. We'll get back to them later.

### Back

Continue working the chart for the back. You'll have to work back and forth from here to completion of the body - flipping the work over working across to

the other side instead of round and round from this point on. Take a moment to make sure you know what the symbols of the chart mean when knit in the flat. For example, the twisted stitches that are made in circular knitting by knitting into the back of the stitch will need to be purled into the back of the stitch when knit back and forth. (Yes, this is awkward but the finished look is worth the effort.)

Keep going, following the chart. When your piece measures 3 inches (7.6 cm) from the front/back split and 16 inches (40.6 cm) from your original cast-on, bind off the back stitches.

### Front

Examine the back. You may even want to squirm into the project at this point. Figure out how deep you want your neckline. Find a natural line of the pattern that falls at the depth that's comfortable for you. I suggest selecting one of the ridged diagonals that are formed as part of the texture pattern. On my chart, my chosen lowest neckline point is indicated by a yellow stitch. Put a safety pin in the center back to mark the neckline's lowest point. File that point away in your memory.

Now put your reserved front stitches onto your working needle. Continue working, following the chart and knitting back and forth just as you did for the back. When you get to the point that corresponds to your chosen neckline depth, make sure you're on a right-side row and are at the center of the front. Put the remaining front stitches on a stitch holder, shoelace or spare circular needle. Work the wrong side row back from the center front to the edge. Turn the piece as usual and following the chart, work back towards the center front.

Your chosen neckline will be along one of the natural diagonals formed by a K2tog. Work to that diagonal, do the K2tog, and turn the work. In effect, you are using the pattern's own K2tog to bind off a stitch at the neckline edge. Continue to work in this manner, binding off one stitch at the end of each right-side row until the front of the work is the same length as the back. Bind off all stitches.

Put the stitches for the left front on your working needle. Again, following the chart and using the initial SSK as the mechanism to bind off one stitch per right-side row at the neck edge, work until this side is the same length as the other side of the front. Bind off all stitches. Sew the shoulder seams together.

### Setting in the Sleeves

#### Left Sleeve

Start with the five reserved stitches stowed away on your safety pin. The centermost stitch of the five will be the centermost stitch on the bottom edge of your sleeve. Mark it by placing a marker on either side of

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the centermost stitch. Using a circular needle or double points, slip the five safety pin stitches, then pick up 103 stitches along the edge of the armhole between the last safety pin stitch and the shoulder seam. Pick up another 102 stitches between the shoulder seam and the first of the safety pin stitches. You will now have 210 stitches total.

Repeat rounds 1 and 2 of the left sleeve chart decreasing one stitch on either side of the center stitch on every odd numbered round as follows: starting with the centermost stitch - k1b, move the marker, ssk, work around until two stitches before the marker that indicates the centermost stitch, k2tog. Continue decreasing in this manner until 129 stitches remain, ending with an even numbered round. Begin that final even numbered round with a ssk to incorporate the lonely centermost stitch. You now will have 128 stitches - an even multiple of the 16-stitch repeat shown in the balance of the left sleeve chart. Work rounds 3 through 22 of the chart as shown. Bind off in pattern.

### Right Sleeve

Repeat process for left sleeve, using the chart for the right sleeve.

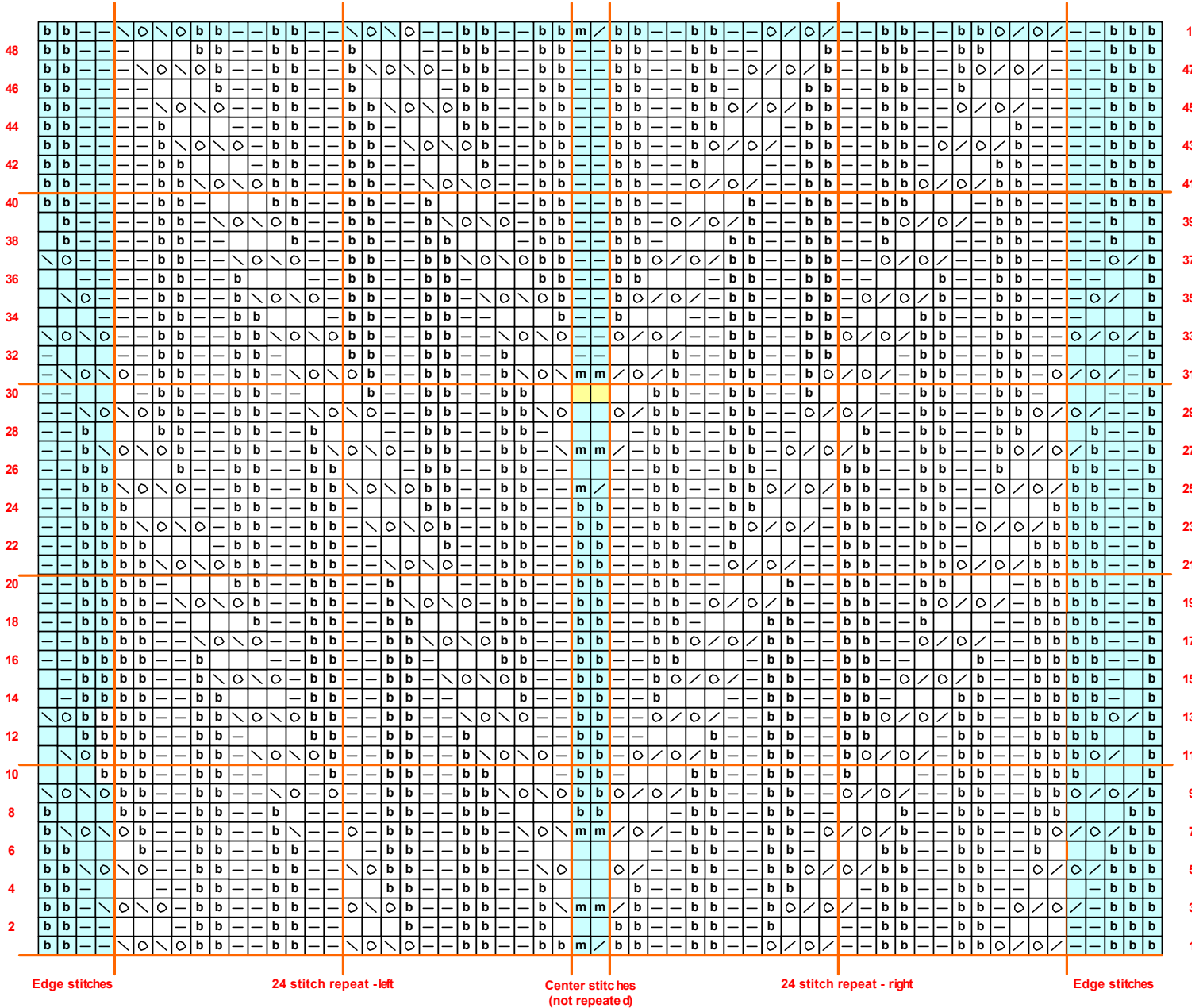
### Finishing

There's very little finishing in this piece. At this point you will have completed the body tube; picked up the sleeves and knit them top-down. All that's left is to darn in any dangling ends.

# Raiisa - A Lace Blouse, Body

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Front Side	Reverse Side
Knit	Purl
Purl	Knit
Yarn over (eyelet increase)	-
Knit 1 through back of loop	Purl 1 through back of loop
Make one (non-eyelet increase)	-
Knit two together	-
Slip, slip knit	-
<p> All stitches that make up the edges, center strip, or duplicate prior rows are shown shaded. Edge and center strip stitches are not repeated.</p>	
<p> My neckline bind-off began at the third iteration of this point in the vertical repeat.</p>	

# Raiisa - A Lace Blouse, Sleeves

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22	-- b b -- b b -- b							b b		21	22	b b \ \ \ \ \ b -- b b -- b b --	21
20	-- b b -- b b -- \ / \ / \ b b							b b		19	20	b b -- \ \ \ \ \ -- b b -- b b --	19
18	-- b b -- b b -- \ / \ / \ b b							b b		17	18	b b -- \ \ \ \ \ \ / \ / \ \ b b -- b b --	17
16	-- b b -- b b -- \ / \ / \ b b							b b		15	16	b b -- b \ \ \ \ \ \ / \ / \ \ b b -- b b --	15
14	-- b b -- b b -- \ / \ / \ b b							b b		13	14	b b -- b b \ \ \ \ \ \ / \ / \ \ b b -- b b --	13
12	-- b b -- \ / \ / \ \ / \ / \ b b							b b		11	12	b b -- b b -- \ \ \ \ \ \ / \ / \ \ \ b b -- b b --	11
10	-- b b -- \ / \ / \ \ / \ / \ b b							b b		9	10	b b -- b b -- \ \ \ \ \ \ / \ / \ \ \ b b -- b b --	9
8	-- b b -- \ / \ / \ \ / \ / \ b b							b b		7	8	b b -- b b -- \ \ \ \ \ \ / \ / \ \ \ b b -- b b --	7
6	-- b b -- \ / \ / \ \ / \ / \ b b							b b		5	6	b b -- b b -- \ \ \ \ \ \ / \ / \ \ \ b b -- b b --	5
4	-- \ / \ / \ \ / \ / \ b b -- b b -- b b --							b b		3	4	b b -- b b -- \ \ \ \ \ \ / \ / \ \ \ b b -- b b --	3
2	-- b b -- b b -- b b -- b b -- b b --							b b		1	2	b b -- b b -- b b -- b b -- b b --	1
	-- b b -- b b -- b b -- b b -- b b --							b b				b b -- b b -- b b -- b b -- b b --	

Left Sleeve

Right Sleeve

Front Side		Reverse Side	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Knit	<input type="checkbox"/>	Purl
<input type="checkbox"/>	Purl	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knit
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yarn over (eyelet increase)	<input type="checkbox"/>	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	Knit 1 through back of loop	<input type="checkbox"/>	Purl 1 through back of loop
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make one (non-eyelet increase)	<input type="checkbox"/>	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	Knit two together	<input type="checkbox"/>	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	Slip, slip knit	<input type="checkbox"/>	-