





Contents

Q2 2025 Contents

- 4. The Material Grrrl Guide to Spring Break
- 6. Spring Fling Smock Crochet Pattern
- 8. Meet the Material Grrrl: Common Threads Press
- 12. Crown of Frills Sewing Pattern
- 14. Craft is Political: Sustainable Fashion 101
- 16. Top Notch Swatch Bag Knitting Pattern
- 18. Horoscopes
- 19. Community Happenings

Material Grrrlz Vol. 12

Hey grrrl,

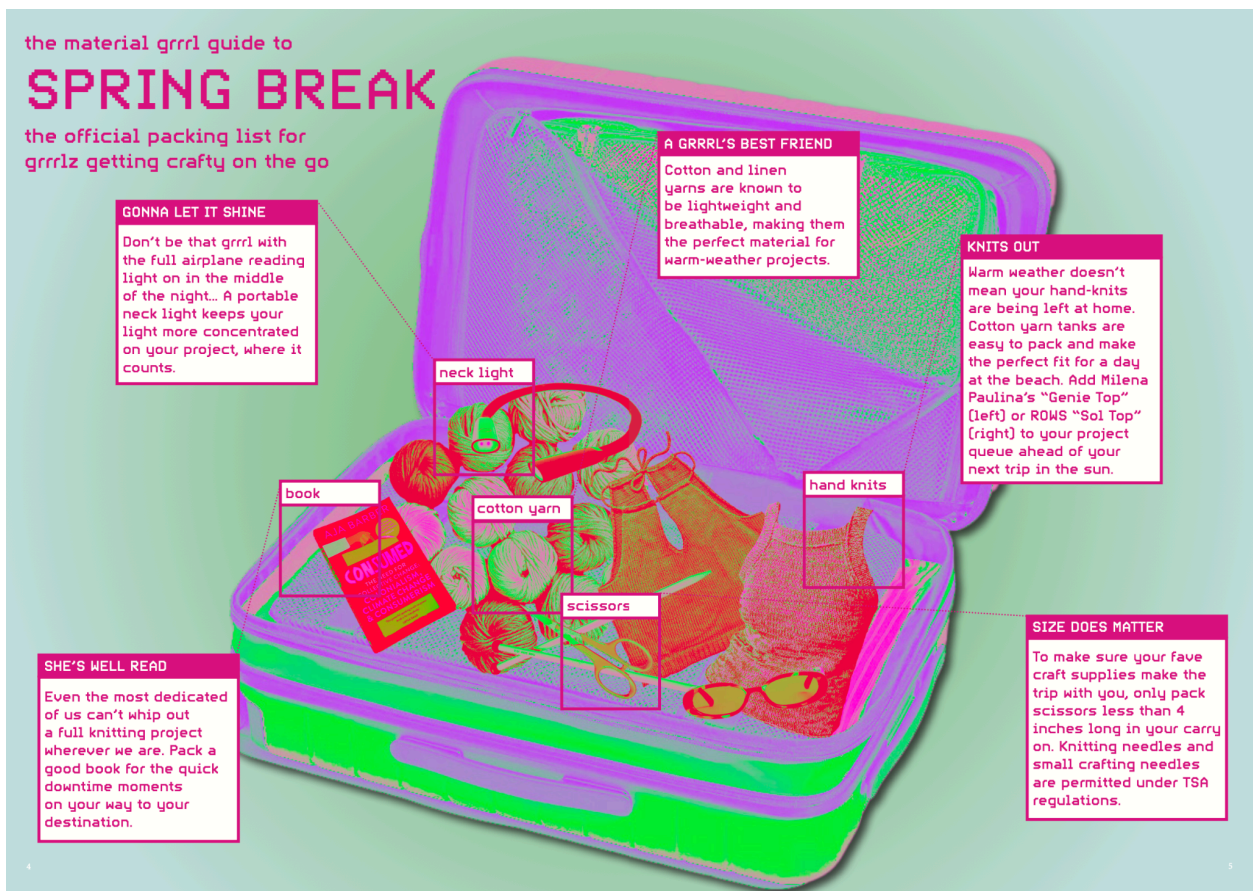
How is your spring going? Here in London, the sun has been teasing us and I've been daydreaming about my ideal vacation...

Making the perfect crochet cover up for the beach, stumbling upon a local yarn store, getting through security without my knitting needles being confiscated... anyone else relate?

This issue, we're getting you set up for the perfect spring break. Come along for a holiday full of cute fits (without a Shein haul), well-packed craft supplies, and loads of inspiration to bring home for your next project. On the itinerary: meet material grrrl Laura Moseley, founder of Common Threads Press, grab patterns for 3 new projects that can fit in your luggage, and get recs for your next poolside read.

Bon voyage, babe!

Alexa



The Material Grrrl Guide to Spring Break

An official packing list for grrrlz getting crafty on the go

Gonna let it shine

Don't be that grrrl with the full airplane reading light on in the middle of the night... A portable neck light keeps your light more concentrated on your project, where it counts.

She's well-read

Even the most dedicated of us can't whip out a full knitting project wherever we are. Pack a good book for the quick downtime moments on your way to your destination.

A grrrl's best friend

Cotton and linen yarns are known to be lightweight and breathable, making them the perfect material for warm-weather projects.

Knits out

Warm weather doesn't mean your hand-knits are being left at home. Cotton yarn tanks are easy to pack and make the perfect fit for a day at the beach. Add Milena Paulina's "Genie Top" (left) or ROWS "Sol Top" (right) to your project queue ahead of your next trip in the sun.

Size does matter

To make sure your fave craft supplies make the trip with you, only pack scissors less than 4 inches long in your carry on. Knitting needles and small crafting needles are permitted under TSA regulations.

Spring Fling Smock



Crochet Pattern

Materials

6.5mm crochet hook
5+ skeins of 50g/100m yarn (size 4)
Optional: split skeins between colors a & b

Gauge

14 sts by 16 rows = 4x4 inches
Use a 6.5mm hook and follow the instructions for rows 1-3 of the Smock Front for the stitch pattern

Technique

This is a great first garment for beginner crocheters! You will create two rectangular pieces for the front and back of the smock, then seam them together and add ties to secure the smock on your sides.

Sizing

This is a made-to-measure pattern that you will customize to fit your exact measurements! For this to work, it's important that you meet gauge. Create your custom fit by following these instructions (in inches):

To calculate how many stitches to start with:

1. Measure your chest circumference by wrapping a measuring tape all the way around your chest at its widest point
2. Divide your chest circumference by 2
3. Multiply the answer by 3.5 and round up or down to the nearest odd number. This is the number of stitches you should cast on and will be noted in the pattern as (a)

To calculate how many rows to knit:

1. Measure from the base of your collarbone down to your belly button (or wherever you would like the hem of your shirt to hit)
2. Multiply this measurement by 4. This is the number of rows you will knit for the body of the smock and will be noted in the pattern as (b)

Abbreviations

st(s) - stitch(es)
rep - repeat
ch - chain
sc - single crochet
ch sp - chain space

Finishing

Copyright © 2025 Alena Karl Designs. For personal use only. Reader/purchaser may not copy, resell, or redistribute any part of the pattern without permission. Reader/purchaser may not sell any pieces created following the pattern.

Smock Front

Chain (a)

Ch1 and turn

Row 1: Sc in the first ch, rep (ch1 and skip next st, sc) to the last ch, ch1 and turn

Row 2: Sc into the first st, rep (sc in next ch sp, ch1 and skip next st) to the last 2 sts, sc in next ch sp, sc in last st, ch1 and turn

Row 3: Sc into first st, rep (ch1 and skip next st, sc in next ch sp) to the last 2 sts, ch1 and skip next st, sc in last st, ch1 and turn

Continue alternating between row 2 and 3 for a total of (b) rows. Optionally, change colors every 16 rows to create a thick stripe pattern.

Neckline

Beginning on an odd number row, you will now build up each shoulder one at a time.

Row 1: Sc into first st, rep (ch1 and skip next st, sc in next ch sp) 10 times, ch1 and turn (21 sts)

Row 2: Sc in first ch sp, rep (ch1 and skip next st, sc in next ch sp) 9 times, sc in last st, ch1 and turn (20 sts)

Row 3: Sc in first st, rep (ch1 and skip next st, sc in next ch sp) 9 times (19 sts)

Fasten off

Turn piece around so the shoulder you just created is on the left. Reattach yarn to the top right corner of the piece to begin the other shoulder.

Row 1: Ch1 in first st, sc into next ch sp, rep (ch1 and skip next st, sc in next ch sp) 9 times, ch1 and turn (21 sts)

Row 2: Sc in first ch sp, rep (ch1 and skip next st, sc in next ch sp) 9 times, sc in last st, ch1 and turn (20 sts)

Row 3: Sc in first st, rep (ch1 and skip next st, sc in next ch sp) 9 times (19 sts)

Fasten off

Smock Back

Repeat all previous steps to create the back piece.

Finishing

Seam the front and back smock pieces together at the shoulders.

Create a single crochet border along each edge and the neckline.

Try the smock on to decide where to attach ties. At this point on the edge, reattach yarn and chain for 18 inches. Repeat to create 4 ties.

Crochet Pattern: Spring Fling Smock

Materials

- 6.5mm crochet hook
- 5+ skeins of 50g/100m yarn (size 4)
 - Optional: split skeins between colors a & b

Gauge

14 sts by 16 rows = 4x4 inches

Use a 6.5mm hook and follow the instructions for rows 1-3 of the Smock Front for the stitch pattern

Technique

This is a great first garment for beginner crocheters! You will create two rectangular pieces for the front and back of the smock, then seam them together and add ties to secure the smock on your sides.

Sizing

This is a made-to-measure pattern that you will customize to fit your exact measurements! For this to work, it's important that you meet gauge. Create your custom fit by following these instructions (in inches):

To calculate how many stitches to start with:

1. Measure your chest circumference by wrapping a measuring tape all the way around your chest at its widest point
2. Divide your chest circumference by 2
3. Multiply the answer by 3.5 and round up or down to the nearest odd number. This is the number of stitches you should cast on and will be notated in the pattern as (a)

To calculate how many rows to knit:

1. Measure from the base of your collarbone down to your belly button (or wherever you would like the hem of your shirt to hit)
2. Multiply this measurement by 4. This is the number of rows you will knit for the body of the smock and will be notated in the pattern as (b)

Abbreviations

st(s) - stitch(es)

rep - repeat

ch - chain

sc - single crochet

ch sp - chain space

Fine Print

Copyright © 2025 Alexa Kari Designs. For personal use only.

Reader/purchaser may not copy, resell, or redistribute any part of the pattern without permission. Reader/purchaser may not sell any pieces created following the pattern.

Smock Front

Chain (a)

Ch1 and turn

Row 1: Sc in the first ch, rep (ch1 and skip next st, sc) to the last ch, ch1 and turn

Row 2: Sc into the first st, rep (sc in next ch sp, ch1 and skip next st) to the last 2 sts, sc in next ch sp, sc in last st, ch1 and turn

Row 3: Sc into first st, rep (ch1 and skip next st, sc in next ch sp) to the last 2 sts, ch1 and skip next st, sc in last st, ch1 and turn

Continue alternating between row 2 and 3 for a total of (b) rows. Optionally, change colors every 16 rows to create a thick stripe pattern.

Neckline

Beginning on an odd number row, you will now build up each shoulder one at a time.

Row 1: Sc into first st, rep (ch1 and skip next st, sc in next ch sp) 10 times, ch1 and turn (21 sts)

Row 2: Sc in first ch sp, rep (ch1 and skip next st, sc in next ch sp) 9 times, sc in last st, ch1 and turn (20 sts)

Row 3: Sc in first st, rep (ch1 and skip next st, sc in next ch sp) 9 times (19 sts)

Fasten off

Turn piece around so the shoulder you just created is on the left. Reattach yarn to the top right corner of the piece to begin the other shoulder.

Row 1: Ch1 in first st, sc into next ch sp, rep (ch1 and skip next st, sc in next ch sp) 9 times, ch1 and turn (21 sts)

Row 2: Sc in first ch sp, rep (ch1 and skip next st, sc in next ch sp) 9 times, sc in last st, ch1 and turn (20 sts)

Row 3: Sc in first st, rep (ch1 and skip next st, sc in next ch sp) 9 times (19 sts)

Fasten off

Smock Back

Repeat all previous steps to create the back piece.

Finishing

Seam the front and back smock pieces together at the shoulders.

Create a single crochet border along each edge and the neckline.

Try the smock on to decide where to attach ties. At this point on the edge, reattach yarn and chain for 18 inches. Repeat to create 4 ties.

common threads press

Laura Moseley is the founder of Common Threads Press, an independent publisher of books and zines that uplift histories of creative work.

How did you begin working with textiles?

Textiles had always been in my peripheral vision as most of the women in my family have a craft that they'd shared with me growing up. I started with embroidery and have gradually worked my way up to regularly cross-stitching, quilting and dressmaking, with some knitting and weaving along the way. I love trying new crafts as well, I recently did a Batik workshop and it was so much fun!

What inspired you to begin researching craft?

I can trace it back to the Anni Albers retrospective at Tate Modern in 2018, which was the first time I'd seen my interest in textiles reflected in such a large, comprehensive exhibition. There was a brilliant symposium that accompanied it at UCL which I nervously went to and just found myself hooked. I decided to focus on Albers for my undergraduate dissertation (I did a BA in History of Art at the University of York), and my supervisor, the brilliant James Boaden, told me about an artist called Cecilia Vicuña. Vicuña is still, to this day, one of my favourite artists.

Why do you think sharing these stories is important?

Hearing new stories about craft's capacity to hold our histories and cultures will never fail to amaze me. Every new submission we receive for Common Threads reflects something special about a community that most people



won't know about, or, from a perspective that offers something different to our understanding of it. It will always be important to learn about our own and other's histories, it's how we understand each other.

How did Common Threads Press begin?

When I was part of the Feminist Society at the University of York I would run craft fairs and invite local women to exhibit their work. I met some brilliant illustrators from Leeds Arts University and was so inspired by their capacity to tell stories through zines and

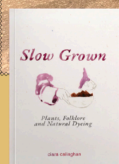
illustrations. My sister Hannah was also involved and had her own zine shop on Etsy. I was finishing my BA and learning about craft histories through my dissertation research, and had the idea to make zines about these histories, commissioning the illustrators I'd met at the fairs to bring them to life visually. Things have come a long way since then (2019!) but we are still a DIY operation that commissions illustrators and puts on fairs, some things don't change!

Can you walk us through the process of independently publishing a book?

We choose submissions from our open calls and begin to talk to the author about format, images and creative direction etc, then once they've written it, we go through our editing process. From here, our brilliant designer, Chris Shortt, begins to formulate a visual



identity for it and we discuss the direction we want it to go in. Then, Chris designs the book, the printers print it, and we announce it on social media. From there, we pack the orders in our one-bedroom flat and our distributors, ArtData, process orders from bookshops and museum shops.



What's something interesting that you learned from a recent Common Threads Press publication?

When Marenka Thompson-Odlum approached us about making an exhibition book on Hawaiian quilts for the Pitt Rivers Museum, I really couldn't believe it. It was a whole world of craft that I knew absolutely nothing about, but turned out to be something I have been a bit obsessed with ever since. When you look at the quilts, it's hard to comprehend that the central motif comes from one piece of fabric, that is folded over in sixths or eighths, and a design is cut into it, before the fabric is opened up and appliqued onto fabric. Like a really complex paper snowflake! The skill involved is incredible. The histories of Hawaii that they're drawing on to make these designs is fascinating, it was a true blessing to work on that.

What are you currently working on?

We're currently working on our next book, which is called "We Will Find Them: Arpilleras and the Political Art of Chile Under Pinochet" by Jessica White. During the years 1974–1990 in Chile, as the military dictator Augusto Pinochet led an extremely oppressive and violent regime, many women and queer people produced works of protest through textiles. This book gathers these works and stories, and the result is a really powerful volume of resistance through various artistic media. I can't wait to share it with our audience!

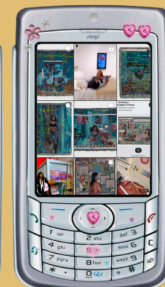
What tabs do you have open right now?



"Tabitha Arnold's Tapestries Eulogize the Working Class" by Leila Genis on Hyperallergic



"Running/Planning" by CMAT



@Qualeasha on Instagram

Connect with Common Threads Press
@commonthreadspress on Instagram
commonthreadspress.co.uk

Use code
"MATERIAL
GRRRL10"
for 10% off :)



Meet the Material Grrrl: Common Threads Press

Laura Moseley is the founder of Common Threads Press, an independent publisher of books and zines that uplift histories of creative work.

How did you begin working with textiles?

Textiles had always been in my peripheral vision as most of the women in my family have a craft that they'd shared with me growing up. I started with embroidery and have gradually worked my way up to regularly cross-stitching, quilting and dressmaking, with some knitting and weaving along the way. I love trying new crafts as well, I recently did a Batik workshop and it was so much fun!

What inspired you to begin researching craft?

I can trace it back to the Anni Albers retrospective at Tate Modern in 2018, which was the first time I'd seen my interest in textiles reflected in such a large, comprehensive exhibition. There was a brilliant symposium that accompanied it at UCL which I nervously went to and just found myself hooked. I decided to focus on Albers for my undergraduate dissertation (I did a BA in History of Art at the University of York), and my supervisor, the brilliant James Boaden, told me about an artist called Cecilia Vicuña. Vicuña is still, to this day, one of my favourite artists.

Why do you think sharing these stories is important?

Hearing new stories about craft's capacity to hold our histories and cultures will never fail to amaze me. Every new submission we receive for Common Threads reflects something special about a community that most people won't know about, or, from a perspective that offers something different to our understanding of it. It will always be important to learn about our own and other's histories, it's how we understand each other.

How did Common Threads Press begin?

When I was part of the Feminist Society at the University of York I would run craft fairs and invite local women to exhibit their work. I met some brilliant illustrators from Leeds Arts University and was so inspired by their capacity to tell stories through zines and illustrations. My sister Hannah was also involved and had her own zine shop on Etsy. I was finishing my BA and learning about craft histories through my dissertation research, and had the idea to make zines about these histories, commissioning the illustrators I'd met at the fairs to bring them to life visually. Things have come a long way since then (2019!) but we are still a DIY operation that commissions illustrators and puts on fairs, some things don't change!

Can you walk us through the process of independently publishing a book?

We choose submissions from our open calls and begin to talk to the author about format, images and creative direction etc, then once they've written it, we go through our editing process. From here, our brilliant designer, Chris Shortt, begins to formulate a visual identity for it and we discuss the direction we want it to go in. Then, Chris designs the book, the printers print it, and we announce it on social media. From there, we pack the orders in our one-bedroom flat and our distributors, ArtData, process orders from bookshops and museum shops.

What's something that you learned from a recent Common Threads Press publication?

When Marenka Thompson-Odlum approached us about making an exhibition book on Hawaiian quilts for the Pitt Rivers Museum, I really couldn't believe it. It was a whole world of craft that I knew absolutely nothing about, but turned out to be something I have been a bit obsessed with ever since. When you look at the quilts, it's hard to comprehend that the central motif comes from one piece of fabric, that is folded over in sixths or eights, and a design is cut into it, before the fabric is opened up and appliqued onto fabric. Like a really complex paper snowflake! The skill involved is incredible. The histories of Hawaii that they're drawing on to make these designs is fascinating, it was a true blessing to work on that.

What are you currently working on?

We're currently working on our next book, which is called "We Will Find Them: Arpilleras and the Political Art of Chile Under Pinochet" by Jessica White. During the years 1974–1990 in Chile, as the military dictator Augusto Pinochet led an extremely oppressive and violent regime, many women and queer people produced works of protest through textiles. This book gathers these works and stories, and the result is a really powerful volume of resistance through various artistic media. I can't wait to share it with our audience!

What tabs do you have open right now?

- "Tabitha Arnold's Tapestries Eulogize the Working Class" by Leia Genis on Hyperallergic
- "Running/Planning" by CMAT
- @Qualeasha on Instagram

Connect with Common Threads Press

Use code "MATERIALGRRRL10" for 10% off

Commonthreadspress.co.uk

@commonthreadspress on Instagram



Sewing Pattern: Crown of Frills

We dare you to make just one! These headbands are as quick and simple as it gets. Sew two pieces of trim together, scrunch them up along a headband, finish off with hot glue, and you've got an accessory fit for a craft queen.

Materials

- 1 thin headband: 1/4 inch (2/3 cm) wide
- 1 meter/yard ribbon: 3/4 inch (2 cm) wide or more. This is ribbon A.
- 1 meter / yard ribbon: 1 1/4 inches (3 cm) wide or more. This is ribbon B.
- Hot glue (or other strong adhesive)

Ribbons can be any width, as long as the smaller ribbon is at least 0.5 inch (1 1/4 cm) wider than the headband and at least 0.5 inch (1 1/4 cm) thinner

than the larger ribbon. This ensures that the channel will be wide enough to hold the headband while leaving extra ruffle room for the larger ribbon.

Tutorial

A complete video tutorial for the Crown of Frills Headband is available on the Material Grrrlz YouTube channel. Search @materialgrrrlz to watch.

Fine Print

Copyright © 2025 Alexa Kari Designs. For personal use only.

Reader/purchaser may not copy, resell, or redistribute any part of the pattern without permission. Reader/purchaser may not sell any pieces created following the pattern.

Instructions

- Stack ribbon A on top of ribbon B, directly in the middle. Optionally, pin the ribbons in place.
- Sew down either long edge of ribbon A, using no more than a 1/4 inch (2/3 cm) seam allowance. This creates a channel for the headband to be fed through.
- Insert the headband into the channel and scrunch the ribbon up along the length of the headband.
- Pull the ribbon up onto the headband so one end of the headband is exposed. Place a dab of hot glue on the end and pull the ribbon down over it, leaving approximately 1 inch (2 1/2 cm) of ribbon hanging off the end. Let dry and repeat to secure the other end.
- Roll each ribbon end over twice to hide the raw edge. Hot glue or stitch in place.

Sustainable Fashion 101

Like many other consumers, before learning how to sew, I was completely in the dark about how a piece of clothing was actually made. I assumed that companies could churn out such high volumes of styles because machines were making them. I did seasonal closet cleanouts, thinking that donating dozens of pieces that had been in my closet for less than a year was an act of charity. My consumption habits were entirely led by the trend cycle, and I never questioned them.

Learning how to sew has made me more aware of the amount of work, skill, and time that goes into making a piece of clothing, taught me about the life cycles of different materials, and completely changed my consumption habits.

Engaging with craft as a politic is about making these connections between our personal experiences and larger political issues. When you understand the work that goes into making a piece of clothing, you can advocate for fair labor practices for garment workers. When you understand different materials, you can advocate for environmentally friendly manufacturing processes. When you work intentionally with clothing, you're joining the conversation about sustainable fashion.

Keep the conversation going by asking questions and staying curious. Who benefits from the fast fashion system? Corporations do well when we don't understand how the fashion industry works. Let's change that:

Fast Fashion

Fast fashion is the system of mass-producing inexpensive clothing. This is made possible by limited environmental oversight, paying workers unethical wages, and manufacturing an ever-changing trend cycle to keep consumers buying.

(Un)ethical Labor

Most fast fashion companies outsource labor to traditionally pillaged countries, where they move from factory to factory looking for the lowest manufacturing prices. Manufacturers are forced to either take these unlivable wages, or go without work at all. Sustainable fashion prioritizes paying workers a living wage and guaranteeing safe work environments.

Environmental Impact

The fast fashion system produces billions of new garments each year, mainly out of cheap polyester-based materials that release microplastics. Sustainable fashion prioritizes lowering clothing production overall and implementing strict environmental regulations on fashion companies.

Commitment to sustainable fashion starts by educating ourselves on the harmful consumption habits perpetuated by capitalism and questioning how we have been influenced by this. Once we are aware of how fast fashion has been normalized in our own lives, we can take concrete actions towards making more sustainable decisions, and supporting the work that's being done to make a more sustainable and ethical fashion industry for all.



Consumed by Aja Barber

Aja Barber connects the fashion industry's system of creation and consumption to the long history of colonialism extracting resources and wreaking economic havoc on traditionally pillaged countries in order to bolster western consumerism. This accessible but challenging read explains the political issues of fast fashion and provides actionable prompts for the reader to question their own consumption.

Reflection

How do you use your current closet?

What's in your closet? How long have you had your clothes? Do you wear all of them? Pro tip: apps like Whering or Indyx can help you catalogue your wardrobe and track sustainable stats like how long you've had pieces, cost per wear, new vs. reused, usage percentage, and more.

How do you add to your wardrobe?

What makes you buy new clothing? Where do you shop for it? What do you prioritize when you're choosing between different brands or pieces? Engaging with sustainable fashion involves being honest with yourself about how you can use the resources you have to make the most sustainable decision you can.

What is the life cycle of your clothes?

What do you do when a piece in your wardrobe goes out of style? Gets ripped or stained? Doesn't fit anymore? Fast fashion encourages consumers to buy new clothing without thinking about its longevity, while a sustainable wardrobe has a plan for when it's time to part with a piece.

Sustainable Fashion 101

Like many other consumers, before learning how to sew, I was completely in the dark about how a piece of clothing was actually made. I assumed that companies could churn out such high volumes of styles because machines were making them. I did seasonal closet cleanouts, thinking that donating dozens of pieces that had been in my closet for less than a year was an act of charity. My consumption habits were entirely led by the trend cycle, and I never questioned them.

Learning how to sew has made me more aware of the amount of work, skill, and time that goes into making a piece of clothing, taught me about the life cycles of different materials, and completely changed my consumption habits.

Engaging with craft as a politic is about making these connections between our personal experiences and larger political issues. When you understand the work that goes into making a piece of clothing, you can advocate for fair labor practices for garment workers. When you understand different materials, you can advocate for environmentally friendly manufacturing processes. When you work intentionally with clothing, you're joining the conversation about sustainable fashion.

Keep the conversation going by asking questions and staying curious. Who benefits from the fast fashion system? Corporations do well when we don't understand how the fashion industry works. Let's change that:

Fast Fashion

Fast fashion is the system of mass-producing inexpensive clothing. This is made possible by limited environmental oversight, paying workers unethical wages, and manufacturing an ever-changing trend cycle to keep consumers buying.

(Un)ethical Labor

Most fast fashion companies outsource labor to traditionally pillaged countries, where they move from factory to factory looking for the lowest manufacturing prices. Manufacturers are forced to either take these unlivable wages, or go without work at all. Sustainable fashion prioritizes paying workers a living wage and guaranteeing safe work environments.

Environmental Impact

The fast fashion system produces billions of new garments each year, mainly out of cheap polyester-based materials that release microplastics. Sustainable fashion prioritizes lowering clothing production overall and implementing strict environmental regulations on fashion companies.

Commitment to sustainable fashion starts by educating ourselves on the harmful consumption habits perpetuated by capitalism and questioning how we have been influenced by this. Once we are aware of how fast fashion has been normalized in our own lives, we can take concrete actions towards making more sustainable decisions, and supporting the work that's being done to make a more sustainable and ethical fashion industry for all.

Consumed by Aja Barber

Aja Barber connects the fashion industry's system of creation and consumption to the long history of colonialism extracting resources and wreaking economic havoc on traditionally pillaged countries in order to bolster western consumerism. This accessible but challenging read explains the political issues of fast fashion and provides actionable prompts for the reader to question their own consumption.

Reflection

How do you use your current closet? What's in your closet? How long have you had your clothes? Do you wear all of them? Pro tip: apps like Whering or Indyx can help you catalogue your wardrobe and track sustainable stats like how long you've had pieces, cost per wear, new vs. reused, usage percentage, and more.

How do you add to your wardrobe? What makes you buy new clothing? Where do you shop for it? What do you prioritize when you're choosing between different brands or pieces? Engaging with sustainable fashion involves being honest with yourself about how you can use the resources you have to make the most sustainable decision you can.

What is the life cycle of your clothes? What do you do when a piece in your wardrobe goes out of style? Gets ripped or stained? Doesn't fit anymore? Fast fashion encourages consumers to buy new clothing without thinking about its longevity, while a sustainable wardrobe has a plan for when it's time to part with a piece.



Knitting Pattern: Top Notch Swatch Bag

If you're a good grrrl, you're drowning in gauge swatches from correctly testing your tension before knitting last winter's sweaters. It's time to turn them all into this spring's cutest travel accessory! Never made a gauge swatch in your life? This is a judgement free zone. Grab your needles and yarn scraps and use this as your moment to get in the habit ;)

Knitting Technique

Pick or make 5 square gauge swatches, seam them together, then pick up stitches around the top to create a drawstring closure. Optionally, follow the video tutorial to see how to line the inside of the bag with fabric.

Materials & Measurements

- 5 gauge swatches
- Scrap yarn to create the drawstring closure

- Knitting needles
- Fabric (optional): 5 pieces measuring 4.5x4.5 inches (11x11 cm)
- 1 stitch marker

Most gauge swatches measure 4x4 inches (10x10 cm), but you can use squares of any size as long as they are all the same. The bigger the squares, the bigger your bag will be. If you use 4x4 inch (10x10cm) squares, your bag will measure approx 15 inches (38 cm) in circumference and 5 inches (13 cm) in height.

Any size yarn and needles can be used as long as gauge swatches are all the same size. The bag pictured was created with fingering weight yarn and 5mm needles.

Video Tutorial

A complete Top Notch Swatch Bag video tutorial is available on the Material Grrrlz YouTube channel. Search @materialgrrrlz to watch.

Stitches Pictured

- Seed stitch
- C2B cable pattern
- Basketweave stitch
- Reverse stockinette chevron stitch

Fine Print

Copyright © 2025 Alexa Kari Designs. For personal use only.
Reader/purchaser may not copy, resell, or redistribute any part of the pattern without permission. Reader/purchaser may not sell any pieces made following the pattern.

Knitting Instructions

1. Lay gauge swatches out in a cross figure, with the swatch for the bottom of the bag at the center. The other 4 swatches will form the sides.
2. Seam all sides of the middle swatch. One edge of each of the side swatches should be seamed to the middle swatch.
3. Seam each side swatch together (4 seams extending from each corner of the middle swatch). This will create the bowl shape of the bag.
4. Choose where along the top of the bag you want the bow tie to be placed. Begin picking up stitches at this point, going around the entire top edge of the bag, and making sure to pick up an even number of stitches.
5. Turn work and 1x1 rib stitch (repeat 1 knit stitch, 1 purl stitch) for 3 rows. These rows are worked flat to create a hole for the drawstring.
6. Place a stitch marker at the beginning of the row and work the same 1x1 rib pattern in the round for another 3 rows.
7. Cast off in pattern.
8. Create the drawstring by chaining, i-cording, or cutting a piece of ribbon that measures 28 inches (71 cm) or desired length.
9. Optional: add fabric lining to the inside of the bag
 - Cut 5 pieces of fabric that measure 4.5x4.5 inches (11x11 cm) each
 - Sew the fabric pieces together (good sides together, using 1/4 inch (2/3 cm) seam allowance) in the same shape as the knit swatches were seamed (see video tutorial for hand sewing explanation)
 - Place the lining inside the gauge swatch bag (wrong sides together)
10. On the inside of the bag, lay the drawstring in place over the middle of the ribbing with the ends pulled through the hole and left on the outside of the bag.
11. Fold the ribbing over the drawstring, covering the top edge of the fabric lining, and matching the top edge of the ribbing with the seam on the inside of the bag.
12. Sew through the ribbing and lining to hold everything in place.

HOROSCOPES

Your dream craft getaway is written in the stars. This spring break, get adventurous with a little trip to a craft workshop, near or far from home :)

ARIES

This spring break, try your hand at a woodworking workshop. Pick up some power tool basics and fulfill your desire for a challenge with a home woodworking project to finish over break.

TAURUS

Enjoy the comfort of fresh yarn in a yarn spinning workshop. Lean into the process from carding to twisting, and head home with an inspiring fiber to use for a spring break knitting or crochet project.

GEMINI

Taking inspiration from whatever your current obsession is, join a zine-making workshop to transform all your weird and wonderful thoughts into a scrappy piece of collage to share.

CANCER

Get your hands dirty while soothing your mind in a pottery class. Shape something meaningful for you or a loved one while enjoying a peaceful afternoon learning hand building or wheel basics.

LEO

Show off your creative fire and sparkle (literally) in a beaded embroidery class. Channel your dramatic energy into a piece full of flair and detail, sure to catch everyone's eye on your next night out.

VIRGO

You have the natural patience to master an intricate pattern in an afternoon. Head to a cross stitching class to give yourself an exciting new project to hyperfixate on for the rest of spring break.

LIBRA

Spring vibes are calling you to a flower arranging workshop. Channel your love of beauty and harmony into learning to arrange fresh blooms and gifting them to someone you love.

SCORPIO

Forget journaling, your ideal meditation is fully making a journal. Seek out a leather bookbinding class to learn how to invest your intensity into a new material and create something that tells a story.

SAGITTARIUS

Take a trip back to your summer camp days with a tie-dye workshop. Grab some old tees and channel your wanderlust into bold colors and controlled colorful chaos that reflects your sense of play.

CAPRICORN

You love things that last and leave a mark. Find a stamp-making workshop to carve something practical and cute and spend the rest of break customizing stationery and cards to share with loved ones.

AQUARIUS

Your mind thrives on creative problem solving. Find an origami class to satisfy your love of patterns, geometry, and doing things a little differently than everyone else.

PISCES

Let your inner artist express its imagination and emotion in a weaving class. Whether using a lap or floor loom, this is the perfect opportunity to create something intuitive and dreamy.

Horoscopes

Your dream craft getaway is written in the stars. This spring break, get adventurous with a little trip to a craft workshop, near or far from home.

Aries

This spring break, try your hand at a woodworking workshop. Pick up some power tool basics and fulfill your desire for a challenge with a home woodworking project to finish over break.

Taurus

Enjoy the comfort of fresh yarn in a yarn spinning workshop. Lean into the process from carding to twisting, and head home with an inspiring fiber to use for a spring break knitting or crochet project.

Gemini

Taking inspiration from whatever your current obsession is, join a zine-making workshop to transform all your weird and wonderful thoughts into a scrappy piece of collage to share.

Cancer

Get your hands dirty while soothing your mind in a pottery class. Shape something meaningful for you or a loved one while enjoying a peaceful afternoon learning hand building or wheel basics.

Leo

Show off your creative fire and sparkle (literally) in a beaded embroidery class. Channel your dramatic energy into a piece full of flair and detail, sure to catch everyone's eye on your next night out.

Virgo

You have the natural patience to master an intricate pattern in an afternoon. Head to a cross stitching class to give yourself an exciting new project to hyperfixate on for the rest of spring break.

Libra

Spring vibes are calling you to a flower arranging workshop. Channel your love of beauty and harmony into learning to arrange fresh blooms and gifting them to someone you love.

Scorpio

Forget journaling, your ideal meditation is fully making a journal. Seek out a leather bookbinding class to learn how to invest your intensity into a new material and create something that tells a story.

Sagittarius

Take a trip back to your summer camp days with a tie-dye workshop. Grab some old tees and channel your wanderlust into bold colors and controlled colorful chaos that reflects your sense of play.

Capricorn

You love things that last and leave a mark. Find a stamp-making workshop to carve something practical and cute and spend the rest of break customizing stationery and cards to share with loved ones.

Aquarius

Your mind thrives on creative problem solving. Find an origami class to satisfy your love of patterns, geometry, and doing things a little differently than everyone else.

Pisces

Let your inner artist express its imagination and emotion in a weaving class. Whether using a lap or floor loom, this is the perfect opportunity to create something intuitive and dreamy.

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

Material Grrrlz is a worldwide community of crafters connecting online & IRL through a quarterly print & digital magazine, Instagram meme page, and events in London, UK.



Rosette badge making workshop at London's Barbican Centre



Q1 2025 Snail Mail Grrrl packs



Scan to listen to this issue's playlist

PRINT SUBSCRIPTIONS

Get every new issue of Material Grrrlz sent to your door (in a made-for-junk-journaling pink package) by signing up to our Snail Mail Grrrl subscription on MaterialGrrrlz.com. Through this subscription, you will pay a monthly fee, receive a welcome merch pack, and print copies of every new issue of the mag.

FREE FIBER ART FUN

Every past issue of Material Grrrlz magazine is available to read for FREE on MaterialGrrrlz.com! Log on to read all 12 mags and explore our free pattern library featuring dozens of knitting, crochet, and sewing projects that have been published in the magazine over the past two years :)

PLAYLIST

Scan the QR code above to listen to this issue's playlist. Follow Material Grrrlz on Spotify for all your crafting soundtrack needs!

@MATERIALGRRRLZ

@MATERIALGRRRLZ

@MATERIALGRRRLZ

FIND YOUR CRAFT COMMUNITY

We want to help every material grrrl get connected to a local craft community! We've launched a craft club finder featuring clubs in nearly 20 countries. Log on to MaterialGrrrlz.com to find one near you <3 Keep the community going online by joining the @materialgrrrlz broadcast channel on Instagram. Join us to chat all things craft, share your latest projects, get inspired by other crafters, find shop and event recommendations around the world, and more.

LET'S HOOK UP

We love gathering the grrrlz in person to make anything hot pink and glittery. We host a monthly Material Grrrlz Club meetup in London, UK, as well as other crafty workshops inspired by girlhood birthday parties and making everything from ribbon rosettes to upcycled clothing. Keep an eye out on MaterialGrrrlz.com to join us for a future event!

MEME PAGE

Where it all started. Follow @materialgrrrlz on Instagram for your daily dose of fiber art memes about everything from dropped stitches to craft world controversy.

Crochet Pattern: Tabi Mittens

Material Grrrlz is a worldwide community of crafters connecting online & IRL through a quarterly print & digital magazine, Instagram meme page, and events in London, UK.

Print Subscriptions

Get every new issue of Material Grrrlz sent to your door (in a made-for-junk-journaling pink package) by signing up to our Snail Mail Grrrl subscription on MaterialGrrrlz.com. Through this subscription, you will pay a monthly fee, receive a welcome merch pack, and print copies of every new issue of the mag.

Free Fiber Art Fun

Every past issue of Material Grrrlz magazine is available to read for FREE on MaterialGrrrlz.com! Log on to read all 12 mags and explore our free pattern library featuring dozens of knitting, crochet, and sewing projects that have been published in the magazine over the past two years.

Playlist

[Link to this issue's playlist on Spotify](#)

Find Your Craft Community

We want to help every material grrrl get connected to a local craft community! We've launched a craft club finder featuring clubs in nearly 20 countries. Log on to MaterialGrrrlz.com to find one near you. Keep the community going online by joining the @materialgrrrlz broadcast channel on Instagram. Join us to chat all things craft, share your latest projects, get inspired by other crafters, find shop and event recommendations around the world, and more.

Let's Hook Up

We love gathering the grrrlz in person to make anything hot pink and glittery. We host a monthly Material Grrrlz Club meetup in London, UK, as well as other crafty workshops inspired by girlhood birthday parties and

making everything from ribbon rosettes to upcycled clothing. Keep an eye out on MaterialGrrrlz.com to join us for a future event!

Meme Page

Where it all started. Follow [@materialgrrrlz](https://www.instagram.com/materialgrrrlz) on Instagram for your daily dose of fiber art memes about everything from dropped stitches to craft world controversy.

