



W425

### Cloud Braided Beret



Designed by Betty Balcomb

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When Cascade asked me to design an accessory with their wonderful new Cloud yarn, the design choice was simple. The strand of Cloud looks like an elaborate braid, so the yarn inspired my principal design element. Then I just had to find the right Braided Cable. I'd done projects with 3-strand and 4-strand braids, so I decided to try a 5-strand braid. A quick search of my stitchionaries convinced me to go with the *Loose Five-Rib Braid* from Barbara Walker's *Second Treasury*. I love the way the single purl stitches between the knit ribs almost disappear while opening up and softening the texture of the braid. I am also very proud of how this hat tapers to the top.

**Materials:** 2 100 gram skeins of Cloud (with enough left over for a perky headband). Pictured hat is color 2100. Sizes 8 and 10 16" circular needles and size 10 double points, **or sizes required to obtain gauge**. Markers – 7 in one color and 1 in a different color.

**Gauge:** 4 stitches/inch in stockinette stitch. **BE SURE TO CHECK GAUGE!!**

The beret is made up of 2 stitch patterns. The simple cable section is a panel of 20 stitches and the Braided Cable section is a panel of 18 stitches. The alternating pair of panels is repeated 4 times.

## Glossary

**C4B** = slip 2 sts to CN, hold CN in back, K2 from left needle, K2 from CN

**C4F** = slip 2 sts to CN, hold CN in front, K2 from left needle, K2 from CN

**C5B** = Slip 3 sts to CN, Hold CN in back, K2 from left needle, slip the single purl back onto left needle and purl it, K2 from CN

**C5F** = Slip 3 sts to CN, Hold CN in front, K2 from left needle, slip the single purl back onto left needle and purl it, K2 from CN

**K2tog** = knit 2 together

**PM** = Place marker

**SK2P** = slip 1, K2tog, pass slipped st over the K2tog st; double decrease.

**SSK** = slip 2 sts one at a time knitwise, insert left needle into front of sts just slipped and knit them together; single decrease

**YO** = Yarn over

### **DIRECTIONS**

Using smaller needles, cast on 76 sts. Place odd colored marker and join in the round being careful not to twist stitches. Work in K2, P2 ribbing for 1-1/4".

First increase row – \*K1, YO, K1, P1, YO, P1, repeat from \* around to marker. (114 sts)

Next row: K3, P3 but knit and purl the YOs through back loop so they twist and close up holes.

Second increase row – \*K1, YO, K2, P1, YO, P2, repeat from \* around to marker. (152 sts)

Next row: K4, P4 but again knit and purl the YOs through back loop so they twist and close up holes.

Next row, establish panels – [K20, PM, K18, PM] 4X (obviously at end of row, marker is already there.) Note: I only kept the markers in for a few rows. The panels are so obvious that markers really aren't necessary for long and it is easier to knit without them.

Change to larger needles and begin pattern.

Rows 1, 2 and 3 – [K6, P2, K4, P2, K6, P2, (K2, P1)4X, K2, P2]4X

(Note: The **boldface** instructions are for the simple cable panels and the regular type instructions are for the braided cable panels.)

Row 4 – [**K6, P2, C4B\***, **P2, K6**, P2, K2, (P1, C5F)2X, P2]4X

\*I find it slightly easier to work a C4B than a C4F so I made this a right twisting cable. Feel free to work C4Fs throughout if you prefer a left twisting cable.

Rows 5, 6 and 7 – repeat row 1

Row 8 - [**K6, P2, C4B, P2, K6**, P2, (C5B, P1)2X, K2, P2]4X

Repeat rows 1-8 until the body of hat measures about 6-1/2" from cast on edge. Begin decreasing crown. I began the first decrease row on a row 6. If you are close to 6-1/2" at this point, go ahead and start the decrease but I don't think being in a different place in the pattern row sequence will matter.

**NOTE:** The first 2 sets of decreases are done only in the simple cable panels in a way that is rather different from the way you have decreased the tops of hats in the past. Continue to work the braided cable panels as established; you should be able to complete 2 more sets of cables. Remember to work one last set of cables on the appropriate row in the simple cable panels as you decrease. Change to double point needles as you have too few stitches to go around the circular needle. You will be able to do several decreases before changing.

These directions look rather daunting but they are just very detailed and actually quite easy. The result is a very elegant hat top.

Dec. Row 1 – for each of the 4 simple cable panels, SSK, K3, SSK, P1, K4 (maybe C4B), P1, K2tog, K3, K2tog. 16 sts dec'd. (136 sts)

Dec. Row 2 – work row even with no dec's, simple cable panels will be K5, P1, K4 (maybe C4B), P1, K5.

Dec. Row 3 – for each of the 4 simple cable panels, SSK, K2, SSK, K4 (maybe C4B), K2tog, K2, K2tog. 16 sts dec'd (120 sts)

Dec. Row 4 – work row even with no dec's, simple cable panels will be either K12, or K4, C4B, K4

Dec. Row 5 – for each of the 4 simple cable panels, SSK 2X, K4 (maybe C4B), K2tog 2X. 16 sts dec'd. (104 sts)

Now the decreases get very pattern specific and you will complete the decreases on every row without the even rows in between.

Dec. Row 6 – P2tog at the beginning and end of each braided cable panel and also SSK at beginning and K2tog at end of each simple cable panel. 16 sts dec'd, 2 in each of 8 panels. (88 sts)

Dec. Row 7 – SSK, K2tog, ssk in simple cable panels, no dec'g in braided panel, only 12 stitches dec'd on this row. (76 sts)

Dec. Row 8 – SK2P in simple cable panels, begin braid panel with K2tog and end with SSK (the purls between the panels are now gone.) 16 sts dec'd. All that is left of the simple cable panels is a single stitch which remains in place till the final row. (60 sts)

Dec. Row 9 – K the single stitch left in the simple cable panel, in braid panel, K2, [K2tog, K1]4x. 16 sts dec'd. (44 sts)

Now all the purls are gone and the remaining dec's are all worked in the braid panels. There are only 8 dec's per row. And this final section forms a wonderful X pattern at the very top of the hat.

Dec. Row 10 – [K1, SSK, K6, K2tog]4X (36 sts)

Dec. Row 11 – [K1, SSK, K4, K2tog]4X (28 sts)

Dec. Row 12 – [K1, SSK, K2, K2tog]4X (20 sts)

Dec. Row 13 – [K1, SSK, K2tog]4X (12 sts)

Final Dec. Row – SK2P 4X (4 sts)

Now make your hat a true beret; a traditional beret has a little nubbin on the top. Place all 4 stitches onto a single double point needle and work about 1 inch of I-cord by pushing stitches to right end of needle after each row without turning and pulling the yarn across the back of the stitches to knit the 4 stitches. To finish off I-Cord K2tog, 2X and pass 1<sup>st</sup> st over 2<sup>nd</sup> and tie off. Weave in ends.