



Sandi Rosner is the clever lady behind [Midtown](#), a modern twist on the pencil skirt. This post about her design (one of [many](#) she [has](#) contributed to our magazine), can also be found on [her blog](#). Make sure to also take a peek at her [enlightening look at increases](#), also in the Winter issue of Twist.

My skirt design, [Midtown](#), appears in the Winter 2011 issue of Twist Collective. I want to share a bit about this design with you.



I've been on a bit of a knitted skirt kick lately. In a fairly short period over the summer, I made [Barn Dance for Kollage Yarns](#), [Rumba for Universal Yarns](#), and Midtown for Twist. The funny thing about this is that I don't often wear skirts. When I'm not teaching, I work at home. I generally find pants more suitable for my lifestyle. But I love the look of a knit skirt.



For Midtown, I wanted a classic, tailored pencil skirt silhouette. I envisioned the sort of skirt you could wear to the office or shopping in the city, something sharp and modern and graphic. I love stranded colorwork for a knitted skirt, because the strands of yarn across the wrong side help stabilize the fabric, preventing the baggy butt that can result after sitting for a while. I wanted a design with diagonal movement, not the strong horizontal that “fair isle” patterns often have. I also wanted to keep the knitting easy, so I avoided long color floats. I played around with pencil and graph paper, drawing lattice designs until I had one I liked with floats no longer than 4 stitches.



Here is a pro tip for you – when I’m working a gauge swatch in stranded colorwork, I make a hat. It is important that the swatch be worked in the round and that it be fairly large so you get an accurate sample of your gauge. Making a hat accomplishes both goals, and you end up with something cozy and useful. I don’t worry too much about finished size for these hats – after all, its purpose is to be a gauge swatch. If the hat doesn’t fit me or someone to whom I want to give a gift, I’ll use it as a class sample or donate it to a charity program.

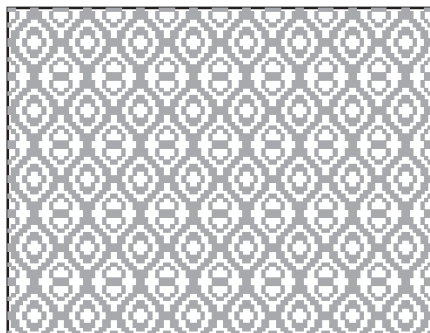


I decided against a slit at the hem of the skirt – after all, knitting stretches, so a slit wasn't needed for walking ease. I wanted to avoid bulky, bunchy gathers at the waist, so the skirt is fitted, with a zipper at the hip. Since fine finishing makes me very, very, happy, I decided to knit in a facing that would cover the zipper on the inside of the skirt. Here is what it looks like on the inside.

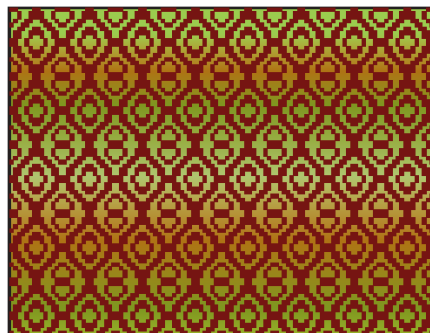


Don't be intimidated – the pattern includes step-by-step photos of cutting the steek, sewing in the zipper, and sewing down the facing. For color, the charcoal gray and cream that Twist's Creative Director, Kate Gilbert, selected really plays up the modern graphic effect of this piece. I think it would also be great in other color combinations. I'm a big fan of self-stripping yarns, and this skirt would be fun worked in a self-stripping yarn together with a coordinating solid, or in two different striping yarns.

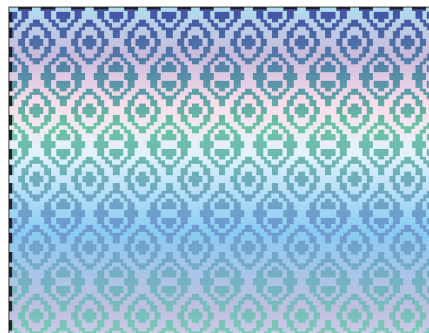
Classic 2 solid colors



1 solid with 1 self-stripping



2 different self-stripping yarns



While you could use just about any sport weight wool from your stash for this skirt, let me just put in a good word for the yarn Kate chose for this design. [Blue Moon FiberArts BFL Sport](#) may be my new favorite yarn for this kind of colorwork. It is soft and springy, but smooth enough that each stitch is distinct. This yarn is a joy to knit – it feels good in your hands, is exceptionally cooperative, and blocks beautifully. The hand dyed semi-solids we used give this pattern subtle depth and variation that a solid yarn just doesn't have. I'm really pleased with the finished skirt. It was made to fit Kate (because sample size and Sandi size are not the same), and she has already put it into her wardrobe rotation.