

REFRESHER COURSE...

FEW TIPS in CREATING SHAWLS

Here are a few tips for those who are new to the group as well as a wonderful refresher for the shawl veterans who've been at this for awhile...

FINISHING your shawl...Sometimes we get so excited when a project is nearing the end we may forget a few finishing items...so here's a little reminder to look for loose ends or dangling strands. Weave in your loose ends and trim once your shawl is complete.

To keep your knots to a minimum...consider using the **Russian join**. You may request further information if you are interested in learning this creative way to join your yarn instead of knotting your strands, which could come loose later as it is worn or washed. Other ways of joining without knotting is simply to carry the strand from the new skein thru 2 or 3 stitches then drop what's left from first skein and continue on with new skein. Again...don't forget to weave in those pesky loose ends when completing your shawl.

Fringing your shawl...**Mop fringe** is simply putting a piece of cut yarn through every stitch or you can skip every other stitch. **Tassel fringe** is made by placing 3 strands together and folding in half, creating a total of 6 strands in a tassel and then inserting through every third stitch with a crochet hook or rug hook. **Chain fringe** is created by chaining 24 stitches and inserting hook every third chain making sure that all ends start to finish are woven into shawl once completed. We recommend fringe strands that are no longer than 12"-14". Once these are folded, they become 6"-7" when hooked thru stitches at edge of shawl. After fringing each side of the shawl...trim ends evenly and knot near the end of each strand.

GAUGE...ugh! 

It seems to be every knitter or crocheter's Arch-rival...I know it is mine! For the most part, it's not as important in the creation of shawls as it would be in making a sweater or something more form fitting. Yet...that being said...our shawls are known for their consistent shape and **width size of 26"-29" wide and 62"-68" long before fringe is added**. Please keep these shawl dimensions prayerfully in mind as you knit or crochet your shawl. If you find you require an additional skein, i.e. you need just part of a 4th skein, you might consider taking 7 skeins of one color and crocheting 2

shawls in the same color...making that 3.5 skeins for each shawl...this seems to apply more to crocheter than knitters. **The knitted shawl** pattern requires 2.5 to 3 skeins of yarn on a size 11 or 13 needle...casting on 57 stitches in the beginning.

We've had some questions about the number of stitches chained for the v-stitch pattern...Here is a quick refresher for those new to the group and to those who are veterans wishing to conquer this pattern...With any pattern there is a variance in the number of stitches chained due to your own individual tension (GAUGE...there's that word again!) The v-stitch pattern suggests chaining 132 stitches...but some have found that they only need to chain 120 stitches to get the shawl length required. This pattern is crocheted sideways...therefore your chain, stretched a bit, should measure approximately **the length of the shawl, 62"-65" long before fringe**. This pattern also has a border option...we suggest you skip this option and continue making enough rows to bring shawl into the proper dimensions. If you do not have this pattern...you may pick one up at the meeting or send an email request and we will get that to you.

This all being said...I pray you are not in a complete state of confusion or "tizzy"...if so take heart...people come in all shapes and sizes...it all works out in the end and for the good or all...Speaking of TIZZIES...here is a blast from the past...a frequently requested poem from Benedictine Sister, Joyce Rupp.

A PRAYER TO BE FREED FROM TIZZIES

Dear God,
You, who did not invent tizzies,
be with me when I get caught
in the wild worrying of my mind,
and the needless scurrying around
in my fearful heart.

Trip me up when I fret and stew
so I can see the trap of tizzies,
with their schemes to keep me
bunched up in stress and strain.

Let me fall headfirst into the truth
of your never-ending presence,
Wrap your kind arms around me
and calm my doubts and fears.

Shout loudly in my spiritual ear
When my nerves get knotted,
My mind feels cramped.
And my stomach screams.
It may be difficult
But do try to get my full attention,
Because tizzies are not healthy,
And they definitely chase peace
out the front door of my heart.

Dear God, you did not invent tizzies,
I did,
And only I can send them on their way,
And I will,
If you strengthen me
To let go of my anxious hold
On what is nonessential.
--Joyce Rupp

(*A tizzy is "a state of frenzied excitement or distraction, especially over some trivial matter"--Webster's New Unabridged Dictionary).