

Knerdy Knitters / SFV

The Swift

*January
2017*

2017 Challenge

Celebrate your fandom!

The Knerdy Knitters are ringing in 2017 with a new challenge: Knit or crochet a project that expresses your 'fandom.'



Whatever you are a fan of -- a sports team, Jane Austen, dogs, cats, amigurumi, toy bears or StarTrek -- come up to express it. The project must be made between Dec. 1, 2016, and Nov. 30, 2017.

Challenge projects will be displayed at our annual holiday party. The one judged best by attendees will win a prize.

The challenge was the brainchild of President **Tammy Takahaki** and Crochet-Along Chair **Anastasia McGee**, who were inspired by the Southern California Handweavers' Guild's frequent challenges to inspire members' creative interpretation.

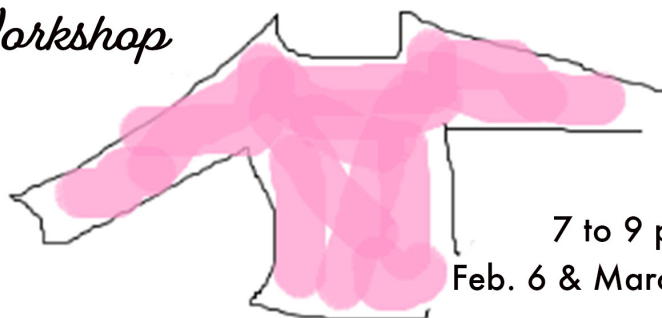
Sign up now for top down sweater class

Our very own **Dr. Virginia Van Osdel** will be teaching a two-part, top-down sweater workshop to teach you how to knit sweaters fit to your measurements and gauge.

This members-only workshop costs \$25. The sessions will be held 7 to 9 p.m., Feb. 6 and March 6 at a location to be announced. You should know how to knit, purl, increase and decrease.

You'll need 800 to 1,200 yards of dk, sport or worsted weight yarn, needles to fit the type of yarn and eight stitch markers.

Top Down Sweater Workshop



**7 to 9 p.m.
Feb. 6 & March 6**

\$25 - Members only

Calendar

January 2017

- 9 TGIFiber, 7-9 p.m. Monday, at TGIFriday's, 19855 Rinaldi St., Porter Ranch
- 16 Yarn Club, 7-9 p.m., Monday at Panera Bread, 132 E. Palm Ave., Burbank.
- 23 Guild meeting, 7-9 p.m. Monday, at Police Headquarters, 200 N. 3rd St., Burbank.
- 30 Blanket/Pillow/Square Finishing Workshop, location TBD

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Learn to love the fine art of blocking

Next to weaving in yarn ends or seaming pieces of a project together, blocking is probably knitters' or crocheters' least favorite part of the craft.

Few things make a project look as beautiful as blocking does. The good news is that it's an art that improves with practice.

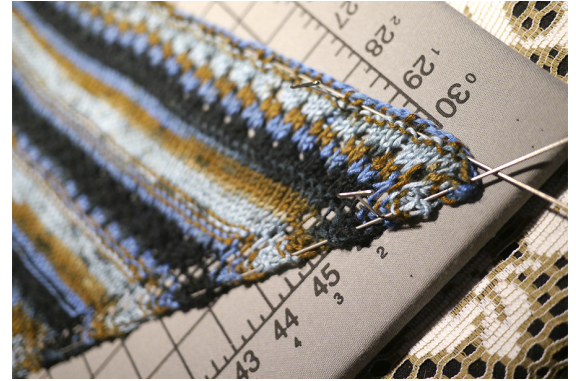
What is blocking and why do it?

Blocking is the process of putting water on a knitted or crocheted project, pinning it into shape and letting it dry. The process relaxes the yarn, evens out the stitches, lets you emphasize pattern and improves fit. It won't perfect bad craftsmanship, but it will make your work look its best and disguise a multitude of imperfections.

A wise woman once said, "Blocking is like giving a dinner party -- you're just telling all your stitches where to sit."

Here are some tips for blocking:

- Before you begin, weave in all the loose ends -- but don't cut them. The process of stretching and shaping the project may cause ends to move.
- If you are blocking a garment that has pieces that need to be stitched together, block first, stitch later. It's easier to block pieces in one layer -- and it's easier to seam after blocking.
- Blocking works best on projects made of wool. Wool is elastic and stretches or contracts into shape as you pin it. There's little or no effect from blocking acrylic. Some novelty fabrics are destroyed by water or steam, so beware. You may want to skip blocking of pieces made with fragile fibers like silk.
- If the yarn is a blend, treat it as if it were made entirely of the most delicate of the fibers.
- To get the piece wet, you can soak it in cool water. For more delicate fibers, you can spritz on the water and press it into the fibers. You can also steam the piece with an iron or dedicated steamer (held well away from the fibers). Misting is best for



Essential tools for blocking

The right tools go a long way to make you an expert blocker. Here are some essentials:

- **A blocking board or interlocking blocking mats.** The board is more durable, but harder to store. The mats can be shaped to fit your work. Both give you a stable surface for pinning your work on. Having a grid helps get your measurements even.
- **Blocking pins.** Be sure that you find rust-proof steel ones. They come in both a T-shape or a wide hairpin style. It's helpful to have some of each.
- **Blocking wires.** These come in different weights. Lightweight wires can even be shaped into curves. Used straight they give even, straight edges without the dips that can happen if a straight edge is merely pinned. Evenly spaced pins hold the wires in place.
- **Mild detergent.** You've spent weeks (or months) handling your work and carrying it around; it deserves to be clean when you block it. Any mild detergent will work. Some products, like Soak, don't need to be rinsed, which saves time.

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Holiday party marked guild's 5th birthday with fun & frolick

Good food, good fun, good friends -- and, of course, knitting and crocheting -- marked the Knerdy Knitter's annual holiday party on Dec. 3.

It also coincided with the fifth anniversary of the guild's founding, offering a double reason to celebrate.

Besides dinner, drinks and socializing, the event featured a fashion show highlighting projects members had finished in 2016 and a chance to select a gift from a table of yarn, magazines, notions and a gift certificate for the tuition to attend the Top-Down Sweater class that begins in February.



Founding mothers (from left) Jennifer Schierholt, Sarah Smith, Stacie Rasmussen and Tammy Tahaki celebrated the guild's fifth birthday. The fifth founder was Monica Sottolani (not shown above).



Jared Baker (left) and Myles Lira partied with flying needles.



Guild members enjoyed a private room at the Holiday Inn in Burbank's Media Center.



VaJezatha Payne celebrates an early holiday present from the gift table.



The guild hosted complimentary appetizers and non-alcoholic beverages. Attendees had dinner and alcoholic beverages, if they wished.



Virginia Van Osel models a sweater she designed and knit at the fashion show.



Free tuition to the Top-down Sweater Workshop crowned the gift table which also included yarn, magazines and notions. Each member present had a chance to select a gift.

KAL & CAL patterns on website

The first patterns for the 2017 mystery knit-along (KAL) and crochet-along (CAL) are now available on the website.

You can find them at KnerdyKnitters.com/Projects-and-Events. The KAL is listed under Knit-Along Projects/2017 Knit-Along. The CAL is listed under Crochet-Along Projects/ 2017 Crochet Along.

Sweater class

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Before class, you'll need to knit a swatch that is 40 stitches and 30 rows to measure your knitting gauge from.

You can register for this class by giving a check to **Virginia**, Treasurer **Sara Smith**, President **Tammy Takahashi** or Vice President **Stacie Rasmussen** at a meeting -- or you can send your tuition via PayPal. Easy instructions for doing this are below.

Easy pay instructions for guild fees and dues via PayPal

You can pay your dues or event fees through your own PayPal account this way:

1. Log into your PayPal account.
2. Click on the "Pay or send money" button.
3. When the window opens up, click on the "Send money to friends and family" panel.
4. Enter info@KnerdyKnitters.com in the box. Hit the "Next" button.
5. Type in the amount of money you are sending. Write a note about what you're paying for if you wish. Then hit continue.

It's that simple.

Blocking tips

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delicate fibers.

- All fibers -- except for linen -- get weaker when they are wet. Linen gets stronger. With any other fiber, be gentle: don't twist, scrub or wring the work.
- After soaking, you need to get rid of the excess water. Some people do this by putting the work in a bag and running it through the spin cycle of a washing machine. A more careful, gentle way is to fully support the work and carefully squeeze water out. Lay it out flat on a large, absorbent towel. If the piece is small enough, fold the sides of the towel over it; if it's too big, lay another towel over it. Then roll the towel up and apply pressure -- with your hands, by sitting on it or getting a child to walk on the bundle.
- Lay the damp piece out on a blocking board. Look for edges that should be straight; use a tape measure to make sure that sleeves are even and the item matches the desired measurements. If the pattern is lacey or has yarn-overs, you may want to stretch the work out to emphasize the open areas. If it is a garment to be worn, you need to make sure that the left and right sides match.
- Let the piece dry thoroughly. Remove the pins and blocking wires, cut off the tails of any yarn that has been woven in and sew any seams

Talk to Us

Knerdy Knitters of the San Fernando Valley publishes The Swift monthly.

We are a fiber arts guild created to promote and support the craft and practice of knitting and other fiber arts in the San Fernando Valley. People of all experience levels, ages and fiber persuasions are welcome.

We are an active guild with charity knitting, knit- and crochet-alongs, workshops, retreats, social events, casual knitting/crocheting and more.

Membership is \$24 a year and includes a newsletter subscription, event discounts and, in 2016-17, a complimentary totebag.

You can learn more about us at KnerdyKnitters.com, [Facebook/KnerdyKnitters](https://www.facebook.com/KnerdyKnitters) or [Ravelry.com/groups/Knerdy-Knitters-of-the-SFV](https://www.ravelry.com/groups/Knerdy-Knitters-of-the-SFV).