

# Classic World War II Watch Cap

Derived from Beanie No. 212  
Bucilla Yarn Booklet, Volume 318, dated 1940  
Interpreted by Helen Waittes

This hat pattern was probably knit at least a million times during World War II, and remains one of the most enduring hat designs. Tim Gunn would call it one of the classics. Watch a movie or television program which takes place during the winter months, and somewhere in each outdoor frame will be someone wearing this hat.

What makes Beanie No. 212 distinct is the unique pattern created on the crown of the hat as the crown is shaped. When the hat is knit with classic ribbing all the way to the crown, the ribbing creates a large star-shaped pattern. When the hat is knit with stockinette stitch all the way to the crown, three lines are created which converge at the top of the hat.

What keeps Beanie No. 212 so popular is the variety of patterns which can be included in the hat due to its 6-stitch panel construction. Within those 6-stitch panels, a wide variety of choices can be made to create a unique hat each time this pattern is knit.

For beginners, Beanie No. 212 requires no special skills and can be knit on straight needles.

The hat can be knit for small (medium, large) adult heads by using 96 (104, 112) stitches.

## Materials:

Approx. 190 yards of worsted weight yarn;  
A cable needle if cables are included in the hat  
A yarn needle to weave in ends

One set of 5 double pointed needles, size 7, if knitting in the round  
A 16" circular needle, size 7, if knitting in the round and not using dpns for entire hat

One pair of size 7 straight needles if hat is knit on straight needles and not knit in the round.  
Instructions for straight needle option follows the instructions for knitting hat on double pointed needles or a circular needle.

## Gauge:

19 sts and 24 rows = 4"

## Instructions for knitting hat on dpns or circular needle:

Cast on 96 (104, 112) stitches using long-tail cast on or other method of cast on which has stretch in it. Join and work in ribbing of knit 2, purl 2, for 6 inches, which should be

approximately 42 rows. Switch to ribbing of knit 6, purl 2, for 22 rounds, or use one of the 6-stitch panels in place of the knit 6 panel for variety.

### **Crown shaping:**

Divide stitches on 3 double pointed needles with stitches evenly divided among the three needles as follows:

96 st hat = 32 stitches on each needle

104 st hat = 34, 35, 35 stitches on each needle

112 st hat = 37, 37, 38 stitches on each needle

Decrease 1 st at both ends of each needle, as follows: \*knit 1, slip 1, knit 1, pass the slipped stitch over the knitted stitch ("slip-k-pass"), knit to within 3 stitches of end of needle, knit 2 stitches together (k2 tog), knit to the last stitch; repeat from \* until 4 stitches remain on each needle. Break off yarn, thread end into the yarn needle, and draw yarn through all 12 stitches twice. Tighten and then weave in ends.

### **Straight Needle option:**

This hat can be knit on 2 straight needles instead of knitting in the round. Two extra stitches are added to the pattern for ease of sewing the seam up the side of the hat.

Cast on 98 (106, 114) stitches using long-tail cast on or other method of cast on which has stretch in it. Work in ribbing of knit 2, purl 2, for 6 inches, which should be approximately 42 rows, knitting the first and last stitch of each row. Switch to ribbing of knit 6, purl 2, for 22 rows, which will create 6 stitch panels of plain stockinette stitch, or use one of the pattern 6-stitch panels in place of the stockinette 6-stitch panel for variety.

### **Crown shaping:**

Place stitch markers as follows:

**96 st hat** = a stitch marker every 32 stitches so stitches will be divided on needle this way:

32 stitches, marker, 32 stitches, marker, 32 stitches

**104 st hat** = place a stitch markers after 34 stitches, then place a second stitch marker after 35 stitches so that 35 stitches follow the last stitch marker. Stitches will be divided on needle this way:

34 stitches, marker, 35 stitches, marker, 35 stitches.

**112 st hat** = place a stitch marker after 37 stitches, then place a second stitch marker after 37 stitches so that 38 stitches follow the second marker. Stitches will be divided on needle this way:

37 stitches, marker, 38 stitches, marker, 38 stitches

Decrease 1 stitch on each side of marker as follows:

\*knit 1, slip 1, knit 1, pass the slipped stitch over the knitted stitch ("slip-k-pass"), knit to within 3 stitches of next marker, knit 2 stitches together (k2 tog), knit to the last stitch; repeat from \* until 4 stitches remain on each side of the stitch markers. For the last decrease, only make the decreases necessary for 12 stitches to remain on the needle.

Break off yarn, thread end into the yarn needle, and draw yarn through all 12 stitches twice. Tighten and then weave in ends.

## Stitch Pattern Options for 6-stitch Panels:

If using the straight needle option, work the stitches as they are already established on the odd-numbered rows.

Knit stitches are shown in yellow. Purl stitches are shown in blue.

Stitch patterns derived from Barbara Walker's Treasury of Knitting Patterns, Vol. I and Vol. II

**Left  
Pennant Stitch**

22						
21						
20						
19						
18						
17						
16						
15						
14						
13						
12						
11						
10						
9						
8						
7						
6						
5						
4						
3						
2						
1						

**Right  
Pennant Stitch**

22						
21						
20						
19						
18						
17						
16						
15						
14						
13						
12						
11						
10						
9						
8						
7						
6						
5						
4						
3						
2						
1						

**Garter Stitch  
Zigzag**

22						
21						
20						
19						
18						
17						
16						
15						
14						
13						
12						
11						
10						
9						
8						
7						
6						
5						
4						
3						
2						
1						

**Spiral Columns**

22						
21						
20		±	±			
19						
18		±	±	±		
17						
16		±	±			
15						
14		±	±	±		
13						
12		±	±			
11						
10		±	±	±		
9						
8		±	±			
7						
6		±	±	±		
5						
4		±	±			
3						
2		±	±	±		
1						

± k2 tog but do not drop from the left-needle;  
knit the first stitch again and slip both together from the needle

Six Stitch Cable

22										
21	Ш									
20										
19										
18										
17										
16										
15	Ш									
14										
13										
12										
11										
10										
9	Ш									
8										
7										
6										
5										
4										
3	Ш									
2										
1										

Six Stitch Random Cable

22										
21	Ш									
20										
19										
18										
17	Ш									
16										
15										
14										
13										
12										
11										
10										
9										
8										
7	Ш									
6										
5										
4										
3	Ш									
2										
1										

Six Stitch Random Cable

22										
21	Ш									
20										
19										
18										
17										
16										
15	Ш									
14										
13										
12										
11	Ш									
10										
9										
8										
7										
6										
5										
4										
3										
2										
1	Ш									

Ш slip 3 sts to cable needle, hold in back, knit 3 stitches, then knit 3 stitches from cable needle

### Gull Stitch

22						
21	c	c		c		
20			sb	sb		
19			sb	sb		
18						
17	c	c		c		
16			sb	sb		
15			sb	sb		
14						
13	c	c		c		
12			sb	sb		
11			sb	sb		
10						
9	c	c		c		
8			sb	sb		
7			sb	sb		
6						
5	c	c		c		
4			sb	sb		
3			sb	sb		
2						
1						

### Triple Gull Stitch

22						
21						
20						
19						
18	c	c		c		
17			sb	sb		
16	c	c		c		
15			sb	sb		
14	c	c		c		
13			sb	sb		
12						
11						
10						
9	c	c		c		
8			sb	sb		
7	c	c		c		
6			sb	sb		
5	c	c		c		
4			sb	sb		
3						
2						
1						

**sb** slip 2 stitches with yarn in back  
 for straight needle version - sb in even number rows  
 is slip 2 stitches with yarn in front instead of in back

Row 5 and all similar rows with c, c, l, c, l, l  
 slip next 2 stitches to cable needle and  
 hold in back, knit 1, then knit 2 from cable  
 needle; slip next stitch to cable needle and  
 hold in front, knit 2, then knit 1 from cable needle