

Scraps Make Me a Better Knitter

I have found that I am a thrifty knitter. Well, scratch that - I buy incredibly expensive yarn. But I am very committed to using up all the yarn that I do buy.

A little while ago, I made a baby sweater and booties for a friend's baby - dad was very appreciative, which is always nice. And then I found out that a co-worker at the YMCA is also having a baby. Not a close co-worker, which would mean a special trip to the yarn store, but someone that certainly would deserve a knitted something. So I found the leftovers and pondered. Too much for just booties, not enough to do both a hat and booties.

Here's what I did. I had various scraps, so I decided to make the hat out of the leftovers, and then pulled a skein of Cascade fixation - nice and stretchy with the elastic in it, and made the booties out of that, with the scrap yarn for accents.

One key to using up color scraps is to figure out how to repeat a pattern that will look like a design, and not an *unfortunate knitting accident* (UKA -- I'm sure this is a real knitting acronym. If it isn't, it should be!) In this case, I used stripes in stockinette, punctuated with bright garter ridges in the yarn I had very little of, to make a repeating pattern. I also used purple at both the rolled brim and at the very top of the hat - a knitted I-cord that got turned into a small knot, and at the top of the bootie for a ruffle - these are for a girl - to pull the items into a more cohesive look, in the wild chance that these newbie parents would actually remember that these items can match for an outfit.



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Learning to use scraps has helped me as a knitter - thinking about how to use yarn - as well as dip my toe into the world of designing.

The bootie pattern is the Karen Alfke's [Stay-On Baby Booties](#). The hat pattern is a basic rolled brim - one could use this free pattern - [Sweet and Simple Baby Hat](#) - to come up with a similar result.