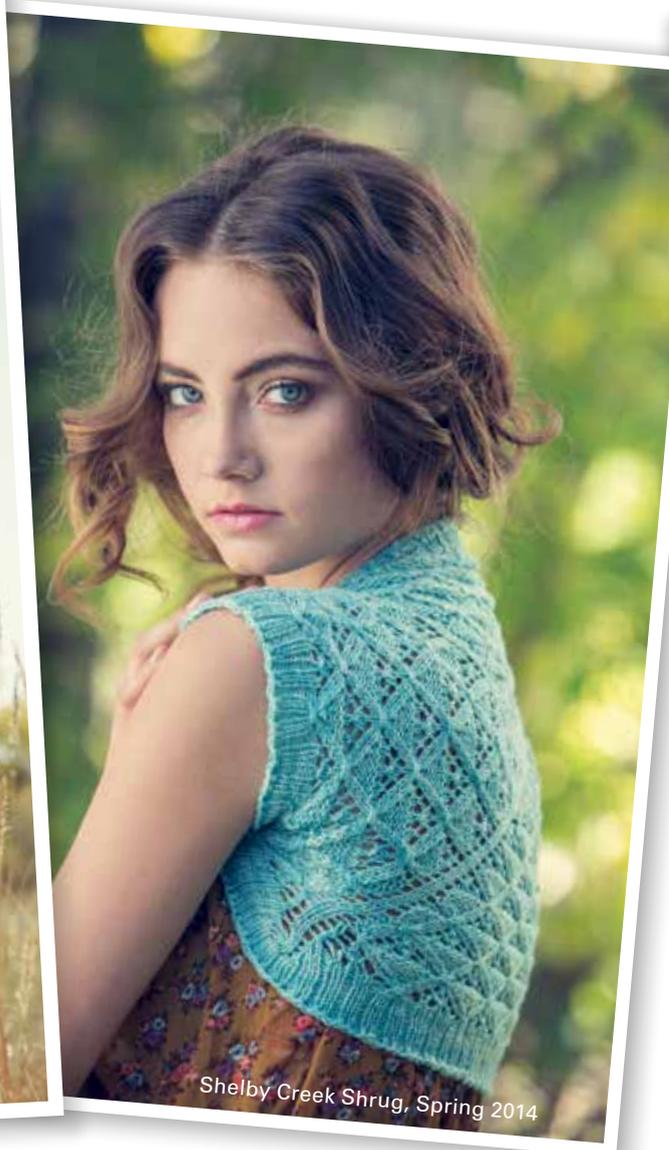
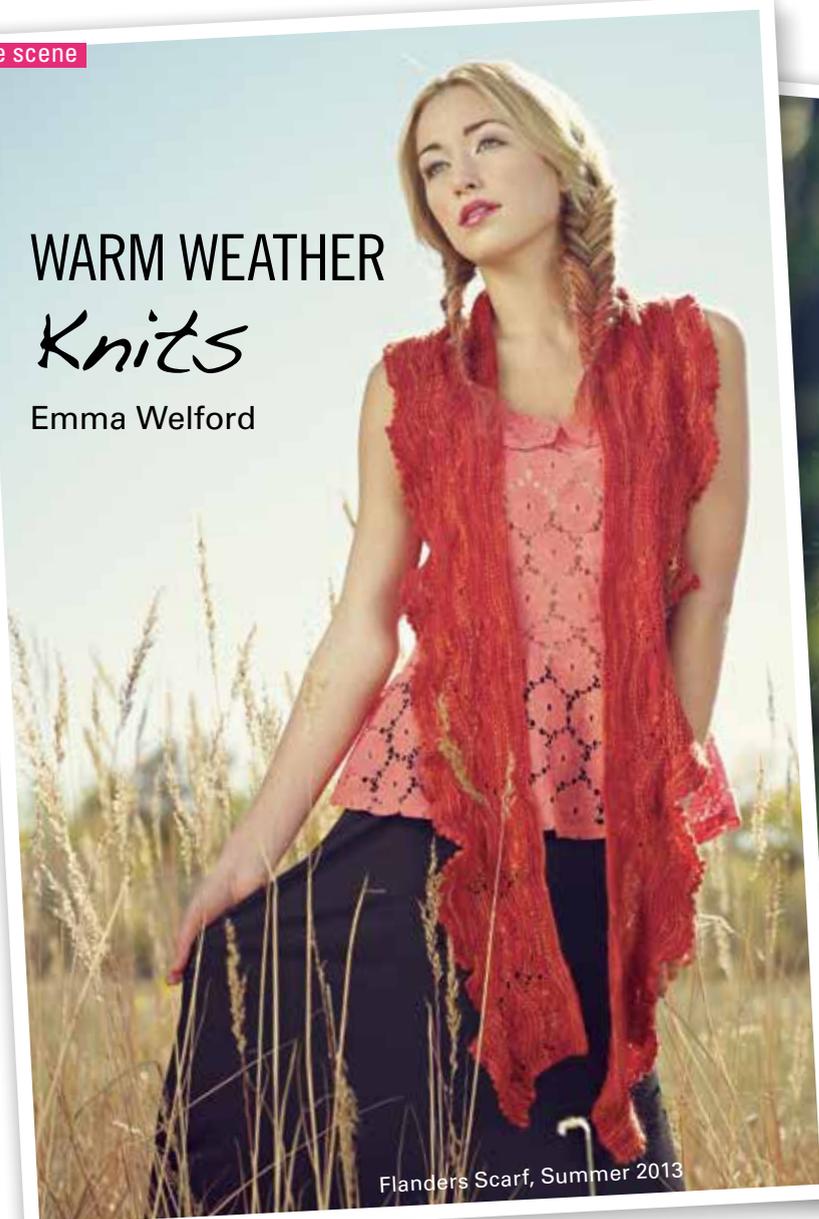


WARM WEATHER

Knits

Emma Welford



What's a knitter to do when the temperature starts to rise?

We could put our knitting aside and dream wistfully of woolies for a few months, maybe invest some quality time in our other hobbies... (What other hobbies, you say?) Let's face it: when you're addicted to knitting, it's hard to let go of that love for even a few days, let alone weeks or months, due to silly, practical constraints like sweatiness. How can we reconcile a love of wool with the rising mercury and the call to reveal one's beach body? Is it possible to revel in our knitterliness under the summer sun, or are we doomed to packing those sweaters away until after Labor Day? Consider this instead: a guide to rocking those handknits year round, regardless of the weather!

STEP 1

Fiber Content. For summer-only tanks, tees, and loose cardigans, you'll need to become acquainted with the wide and wonderful world of plant fibers. Cotton, linen, and bamboo are perfect for steamy summer days since they lack the insulating properties of animal fibers and often look best in flowing, drapey designs. But for the in-between days of spring, why not try a blend of plant and animal fibers? A cotton-wool blend will cover multiple bases, from crisp fall days to late spring nights, since the cotton tones down the wool's coziness. The wool lends a hand by adding memory, making it ideal for new wardrobe staples like cabled pullovers and fitted cardigans. On the other side of the spectrum,



Stoxa Tank,
Summer 2014



Windsor Cardi,
Summer 2011

Joe Coca



Biarritz Cloche,
Spring 2013

I find wool and silk (an animal-animal blend) to be scrumptiously decadent and surprisingly versatile, thanks to the silk, which remains cool in warm weather but holds warmth on chillier days. Whip up a dressy wrap or open-front cardigan for a warm-weather wedding with this combination, and let it insulate you during the holiday season while dazzling your relatives.

STEP 2

Gauge, Gauge, Gauge—and Pattern Choice. Loose and open fabric provides comfortable amounts of ventilation—no surprise there! Even 100% wool knit at a generously mesh-like gauge will be warm-weather wearable in a way that tightly knitted cable numbers are not, so

look for patterns that call for larger-than-usual needles when compared to the yarn's suggested needle size. Speaking of cables, you'll want to avoid those heavily cabled fisherman sweaters or traditional stranded fair-isle yoked sweaters for your spring-to-summer wardrobe. Lace is a summer staple for a reason: It works. Sometimes it's best not to reinvent the wheel but if you must, keep yarn-intensive (and thus heat-intensive) details to a minimum as trims or small panels.

STEP 3

Creativity! Think outside the box about how to work your existing pieces into as many situations as possible rather than dividing your precious knitting time

into creating two separate wardrobes. One of my favorite ways to get extra wear out of lighter-weight tops is to layer them over long-sleeved pieces. When layered, a tank top instantly becomes a chic vest, and a knit tee paired with long sleeves can be the centerpiece of a grunge throwback look. If you're daring, wear a lacy fall pullover with just a bandeau, bikini top, or pretty crop top underneath to keep the focus on your knitted handiwork and prevent overheating. Beach cover-ups can breathe new life into your cold-weather wardrobe—let a winter thermal peek through lacy tunic tops, or throw a crocheted tank dress over a floral dress for textures galore. Of course, don't underestimate accessories! Shawlettes and wraps can be thrown on over any outfit while battling overzealous



Lea Pullover, Summer 2014



Loop Pullover, Spring 2013



Radian Yoke, Summer 2011

Joe Coca

air conditioning and double as potential scarf options in the fall and winter. Add a slouchy, cotton hat for a chic, trendy vibe without inducing heatstroke, and win extra cool points for your DIY prowess.

It's time to ignore the calendar and start following your needles to year-round happiness! Start with these three steps—consider them a guide to experimenting with your wardrobe and your definition of warm-weather knits, whether you recycle and restyle current favorites or add new pieces. Tradition may dictate that we wear wool sweaters in winter and abandon our knitting in the summer, but I've never been afraid to break with tradition, and I don't think you are, either. ♥

Emma Welford recently made the transition to full-time, self-employed designer, and spends most of her time self-publishing and submitting designs. When she's not working a few hours a month at Webs, she's blogging about her journey at www.emmawelford.com. ♥



WANT MORE
Knitscene?

Check out our compilations at interweavestore.com