Cora's Knitted Dress and Matching Panties
Hand knitting pattern for lovers of Sasha dolls, free of charge.
By Susanna Lewis, ©March, 2018

This is Cora 4-109. She is from the English production, manufactured from 1972-1974. She is dressed in an existentialist-style outfit of white knitted dress, matching panties, and red leather sandals, which is her original outfit from the factory. She also wears a large silver wrist tag.

In recent months I have had several requests for a knitting pattern, for making reproductions of Cora's dress and panties to use as replacements for her original outfit. It is unrealistic for hand knitters to expect to make reproductions of factory garments by hand. This is because they are made on knitting machines, using finer yarn and finer gauge than most hand knitters use, and in some cases, industrial fabrics not possible to make by hand. But it is possible to make a copy of Cora's garments, remaining faithful to the fabrics and styling of the original, but using yarn and gauge appropriate for hand knitting.

You can make a copy for Cora from white or off-white yarn, but I want to encourage hand knitters to try different colors and textures of yarn with this pattern, and maybe add some of your own decorative ideas depending on your desires and knitting expertise. I made caps to go with mine. Maybe a cardigan would look nice, too. My caps are not included in the instructions, but the cap on the brunette girl can be found in our book, *Sasha Dolls: Clothing and Patterns.* It is hat pattern #10 on pages 126-127. Use the same yarn and needles as for the dress and panties.

The dress and panties are very simple garments, made flat with the same number of stitches throughout each piece. Widening and narrowing is accomplished by changing the fabric - 1x1 rib (knit 1, purl 1 rib) made on smaller needles for a narrow fabric, and fisherman rib made on larger needles for a wide fabric. Both dress and panties have side seams to sew.

As a machine knitter, I made many spin-off Cora dresses on my knitting machine, and sold them at festivals during the 1990s. I made them in many colors and often added decorative details. Occasionally my machine-made spin-offs come up for sale when older collections of clothing are sold.

Yarn: 1¼ oz (35gm) fingering weight wool or wool blends such as sock yarn.

Needles: single point needles for flat knitting
3.00mm for fisherman rib (US 2 or 3, UK 11)
4.00mm for CO fisherman rib (US 5 or 6, UK 8)
2.25mm for 1x1 rib (US 1, UK 13)
3.25mm for CO 1x1 rib (US 3, UK 10)

Markers: Small safety pins to mark the start of each garment section, and armholes on the dress. In each section, after the first

Abbreviations
CO, BO = cast on, bind off
R side, W side = right side, wrong side
k, p = knit, purl
kwise = knitwise
sl = slip
ndls = needles
sts = stitches
*. . . * = repeat instruction between *'s across the row.

two rows are made, mark a stitch on the first of the two rows (always on the R side) with a pin so you can easily count the rows you have made in each section.

Gauge: In 1x1 rib (knit 1, purl 1 ribbing) with 2.25mm ndls, 22 rows = 5 cm (2 inches). If you cast on 35 sts with 3.25mm ndl to make your swatch, it should stretch comfortably across the torso from armpit to armpit. Measure the swatch for gauge before washing it, and measure it again after washing it. Washing removes the spinning oils from the yarn, and fluffs and relaxes the stitches. For many yarns, the gauge can be quite different before and after washing. This pattern is designed for Sasha girls of the 1960s and 1970s. For girls from the 1980s or 1990s, which have slightly larger bodies, you may need to add 2 sts to each piece, and about 4 1x1 rib rows to the bodice on the dress.

Cast on method: Use a cast on that makes a row of knitted stitches, such as "Thumb," "Two-strand," or "Long Tail," leaving an unused length of about 12 inches for sewing up during finishing.

Practice fisherman rib: In case you are not familiar with this reversible brioche fabric, make a practice swatch. With 4.00mm ndl, CO an odd number of sts. Change to 3.00mm ndls and knit 1 row.
1. R side: Sl 1 kwise, *k1, k1 in row below* to last 2 sts, k1, p1.
2. W side: Sl 1 kwise, *k1 in row below, k1* to last 2 sts, k1 in row below, p1.
Repeat rows 1 and 2.
   When you knit a stitch in the row below, you are unknitting the stitch above it. Since alternate sts are being unknitted on both sides of the fabric, it takes two rows of knitting in order to complete one row in the fabric. The selvedges are similar, purl the last st in every row, and slip it knitwise on the next row. Run the yarn end through the open sts to remove the swatch from the ndls. Wash the swatch and let it dry flattened and relaxed, do not stretch or block it.
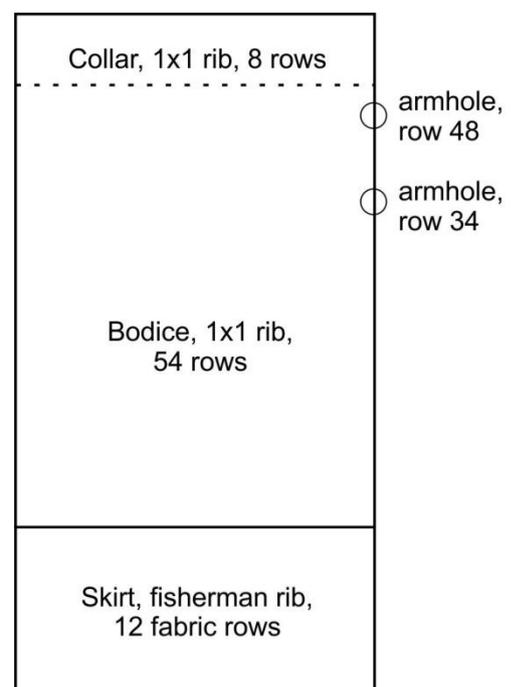
Dress
Make two pieces alike.

Skirt in fisherman rib
With 4.00mm ndl, CO 35 sts, leaving a tail for sewing up. Change to 3.00mm ndls and knit 1 row.
1. R side: Sl 1 kwise, *k1, k1 in row below* to last 2 sts, k1, p1.
2. W side: Sl 1 kwise, *k1 in row below, k1* to last 2 sts, k1 in row below, p1.
3-24. Repeat rows 1 and 2, for 12 rows fisherman rib (2 knitted rows = 1 fabric row). Change to 2.25mm ndls for the bodice.

Bodice in 1x1 rib
1. R side: Transition to 1x1 rib. K1, *p1, k1 in row below* to last 2 sts, p1, k1.
2. W side: *P1, k1* across, end p1.
3. R side: *K1, p1* across, end k1.
4-54. Repeat rows 2 and 3, ending with row 2. Place markers at the selvedge on rows 34 and 48 for armhole. Change to 3.00mm ndls for the collar.
55-62. Continue with 1x1 rib. Change to 4.00mm ndls and BO all sts in knit, from the R side. Cut yarn, leaving a tail for sewing up.

Collar, 1x1 rib, 8 rows

armhole, row 48

armhole, row 34

Bodice, 1x1 rib, 54 rows

Skirt, fisherman rib, 12 fabric rows

CO 35 sts
DRESS

Finishing

Place the two pieces W sides together and using the yarn tails, sew the side seams from the hem to row 34 armhole marker with mattress stitch, taking ½ selvedge st each side into the seam. Turn the garment inside out so R sides are together. Using the yarn tails, sew the side seams from the BO down to row 48 armhole marker. Turn right side out, wash and dry the dress. For girls with long hair, I find it easiest to pull the dress onto the nude doll over its feet, then turn down the collar to the top of the armholes.

Matching Panties

Front and Back made in one piece.

Front rib

1. With 3.25mm ndl, CO 25 sts, leaving a tail for sewing up. Change to 2.25mm ndls for 1x1 rib.
2. W side: *P1, k1* across, end p1.
3. R side: *K1, p1* across, end k1.
4-6. Repeat row 2, row 3, row 2. Change to 3.00mm ndls for fisherman rib.

Front

1. R side: Sl 1 kwise, *k1, k1 in row below*to last 2 sts, k1, p1.
2. W side: Sl 1 kwise, *k1 in row below, k1* to last 2 sts, k1 in row below, p1.
3-20. Repeat rows 1 and 2. At the end of 20 rows you will have 10 rows of fisherman rib. Change to 2.25mm ndls for 1x1 rib.

Crotch

1. R side: Transition to 1x1 rib. K1, *p1, k1 in row below* to last 2 sts, p1, k1.
2. W side: *P1, k1* across, end p1.
3. R side: *K1, p1* across, end k1.
4-26. Repeat rows 2 and 3, ending with row 2. Change to 3.00mm ndls for fisherman rib.

Back

1. R side: Sl 1 kwise, *k1, k1 in row below*to last 2 sts, k1, p1.
2. W side: Sl 1 kwise, *k1 in row below, k1* to last 2 sts, k1 in row below, p1.
3-28. Repeat rows 1 and 2. There will be 14 rows of fisherman rib in the fabric. Change to 2.25mm ndls for 1x1 rib.

Back rib

1. R side: Transition to 1x1 rib. K1, *p1, K1 in row below* to last 2 sts, p1, k1.
2. W side: *P1, k1* across, end p1.
3. R side: *K1, p1* across, end k1.
4-5. Repeat rows 2 and 3. Change to 3.25mm ndl. BO in rib from W side. Cut yarn leaving a tail for sewing up.

Finishing

Fold panties with W sides together. Use the yarn tails each side to sew the selvedges together from the R side with mattress stitch, taking ½ selvedge st each side into the seam, from the rib down to about 7 stitches into the fisherman rib. If needed, thread an elastic cord or double strand of elastic thread through the edge of the waist. Wash and dry the panties.

1x1 rib, 6 rows
Back, fisherman rib, 14 fabric rows
Crotch, 1x1 rib, 26 rows
Front, fisherman rib, 10 fabric rows
1x1 rib, 6 rows

CO 25 sts
PANTIES