Cool, whisper-soft, and silky, this breezy lace cover-up is as comfortable to knit at the beach as it is to wear there. Worked in soft, gently luxuriant Lorna’s Laces Pearl, a 50/50 silk and bamboo blend, Splash knits up quickly with a simple old shale lace pattern that coaxes excellent mileage from the luxury yarn. (And yes, it’s named for the 80s mermaid-themed romantic comedy, but don’t feel pressured to wolf down a whole lobster or flop around in the bathtub when you wear it.)

Worn over a simple cotton slip or sundress, it’s equally at home away from sun and sand. It’s fetching over a short slip that shows leg through the lace or over a longer sundress that peeks out from below the hem.

Splash is knit seamlessly from the top down, with increase rounds that widen the lace pattern along the shoulders every 4 repeats. The same swelling pattern is repeated along just the sides of the body for a subtle flare. The lace is softly clingy, with a gentle drape.

Each of the two sizes fit a wide range. Bust measurement may have positive or negative ease depending on your size, as the soft, lacy fabric will drape elegantly over a smaller bust or expand willingly over a generous bustline. You can get a sense of the range of each of the two sizes from the two models: Charlene (blonde) wears a size 6 and measures 36-28-38, while I (brunette) wear a size 10–12 and measure 40-31-44. I also tested it with a padded push-up bra (taking me up to 43” bust) and the fit was still excellent and relaxed.

Do keep in mind that the wider your bust and hips, the shorter the dress will be on you. Also remember that silk knits often get longer over time. While this minidress won’t become a ball gown, it may creep closer to your knees with wear. Of course, the top-down design means you can frog any excess if you decide later on that you’d prefer it shorter.

**MATERIALS AND SIZES**

- 3(4) skeins Lorna’s Laces Pearl (50% silk, 50% bamboo; 220 yds/100g), shown in Fiddlehead
- US 7/4.5mm 24”–32” (60–80cm) circular needles
- Stitch markers including 1 contrast marker for end of rnd
- Sharp darning needle
- Locking stitch marker or safety pin

**Sizes**

S/M (L/XL) Shown in S/M on both models. About 32” long, with 32(40)” bust (stretches easily 8–10” larger than flat size)

**ABBREVIATIONS**

BO bind off
CC contrast color
CO cast on
K knit
K2tog knit 2 together
(decrease): knit 2 stitches together as one
M1 make 1 (increase): lift bar between stitches and knit it through the back loop to make a new stitch
MC main color
P purl
PM place marker
PU pick up
Sl slip stitch purlwise
SSK Slip, slip, knit (decrease): slip 2 stitches, one at a time, then knit them together as one
St(s) stitches
Pattern

Setup
» CO 120. Join in the round and PM with the contrast marker.
» Rnd 1: K24, PM, K36, PM, K24, PM, K36. This marks off the future sleeves.
» Rnd 2: Purl.

Shoulders
Work next 4 rnds 3 times:
» Rnd 2: K2tog 4 times, [YO, K1] 4 times, [K2tog] 2 times, repeat from * to end.
» Rnd 3: [YO, K1] 6 times, K3, repeat from * to end.
» Rnd 4: Knit.

Increase Set #1
» Rnd 1: *K2tog 2 times, [YO, K1] 4 times, [K2tog] 2 times, repeat from * to end.
» Rnd 2: Knit.
» Rnd 3: [K2tog] 4 times, [YO, K1] 4 times, [K2tog] 2 times, repeat from * to end.
» Rnd 4: Knit.

Work next 4 rnds 3 times:
» Rnd 1: *K2tog 3 times, [YO, K1] 6 times, [K2tog] 3 times, repeat from * to end.
» Rnd 2: Knit.
» Rnd 3: *K3, [YO, K1] 6 times, K3, repeat from * to end.
» Rnd 4: Knit.

Increase Set #2
» Rnd 1: *K2tog 3 times, [YO, K1] 6 times, [K2tog] 3 times, repeat from * to end.
» Rnd 2: Knit.
» Rnd 3: *K6, [YO, K1] 6 times, K6, repeat from * to end.
» Rnd 4: Knit.

Work next 4 rnds 3 times:
» Rnd 1: *K2tog 4 times, [YO, K1] 8 times, [K2tog] 4 times, repeat from * to end.
» Rnd 2-4: Knit.

Size S/M: Skip the rest of this section and jump to Sleeves.

Size L/XL only:
Increase Set #3
» Rnd 1: *K2tog 4 times, [YO, K1] 8 times, [K2tog] 4 times, repeat from * to end.
» Rnd 2: Knit.
» Rnd 3: *K9, [YO, K1] 6 times, K9, repeat from * to end.
» Rnd 4: Knit.

Work next 4 rnds 3 times:
» Rnd 1: *[K2tog] 5 times, [YO, K1] 10 times, [K2tog] 5 times, repeat from * to end.
» Rnd 2–4: Knit.

Sleeves
Note: The last patterned round you worked will be your main pattern round for the rest of the garment (Rnd 1, below).

Work next 4 rnds 3 times:
» Rnd 2: Knit.
» Rnd 3: Purl to first marker, knit to second marker, purl to third marker, knit to end.
» Rnd 4: Knit.
» Rnd 5 (Please review special instructions below before working): BO 48(60) stitches over sleeve, work next section to marker as for Rnd 1, repeat from * to end.

Maintain your pattern alignment by BO the stitches above those earlier purled stitches.

To keep the pattern in line, make sure you BO only the stitches above those purl stitches from two rounds earlier. Don’t start by binding off the first stitch of the sleeve with the last stitch of the previous round — instead, work up to the marker and drop it, then knit 2 and BO the second stitch with the first (counting this as your first BO), then continue binding off, counting each stitch as you bind it off (not as you knit it).

Your second-to-last BO will take you to this point, just over the last purl stitch (arrow). BO that last stitch as well ...

When you BO your last stitch, you’ll have BO all the sleeve stitches and your current live stitch will be sitting right over the first stitch of your pattern repeat (the first stitch not resting above a purl from two rounds back).

To continue your pattern in alignment, slip that stitch back from the right needle to the left ...

... And proceed with the pattern from Rnd 1 (starting with a k2tog, working that slipped stitch together with its neighbor — the first three k2tog of the pattern are shown above). Work in pattern to the next marker and repeat process for the second sleeve.

» Rnd 6: CO 12, PM, K to next sleeve, PM, CO 12, PM, Knit to end. PM for end.
» Rnd 7: Knit
» Rnd 8: P to first marker, K to next marker, P to next marker, K to end.
Body
You’ve set off two side panels (12 sts each) and front and back panels with your stitch markers. You’ll work the Shoulder pattern, complete with increase sections, within those side panels only, and the main pattern along the larger front and back sections. By the end of the shoulder increases, your patterns for both sections will be exactly the same, and from that point, you can drop your extra markers and work the main pattern for the whole thing.

Body with increases at sides:
» Rnd 1: *[shoulder pattern], marker, [main pattern], marker, repeat from * to end.
» Rnd 2: Knit.
» Rnd 3: *[shoulder pattern], marker, knit to next marker, repeat from * to end.
» Rnd 4: Knit.

Rnd 3 will be knit straight across on most rounds, but will also include an increase over just the side stitches every 4th set, as per the shoulder instructions. Once you’ve finished your last increase, drop the markers and work the main pattern all the way around.

Body after side increases:
» Rnd 2-4: Knit.

Finishing
After this point, figure out how much yarn you’re using per round. You can either do this by measuring out a set amount (start with 15’ for a S/M or 20 for a M/L) and tying a slipknot in the yarn, then knitting a round to see how much less/more it uses up; or by knitting a round, tying a slipknot at the end, and frogging that round, then measuring what you used.

(I use the first method, loosely “measuring” the yarn by arms-lengths.)

As you approach the end of your last skein, measure out from the end enough for 4 rounds and tie a slipknot to flag it. Stick a locking stitch marker or safety pin through the loop for good measure. Keep an eye out for the flag. When you reach it (you can go up to a quarter rnd past it, but no further), if you need more to finish your current round, you should tink back to the end of your last round.

» Purl one rnd.
» Knit 1 rnd.
» BO loosely.

Note: Garment will look shorter than expected. It will grow several inches longer after its bath.

Weave in ends. I like to weave in just enough to hold the ends in place, then use the special weaving technique below after blocking.

Soak in water, then press or spin out excess and spread on a flat surface block to a length of at least 32” (mine was 34’), measured from center neckline, and a width of 32(40) — 16(20) inches flat — at the bust.

If you need to adjust the shape of the scallops or remove the blocking crease after it’s dry, use a steam iron and a soft touch.

Special weaving technique
For slippery plied yarns and lace patterns, I like to use a special technique to weave in the ends securely without adding bulk. I find this is not only more delicate looking, but less apt to unravel.

Before blocking, weave in ¼" or so of each end — just enough to hold pattern in place — leaving long tails loose. You can skip the CO and BO ends entirely for now.

Pull end taut. Note plied appearance.

Twist yarn against the ply so that it unravels and the plies run fairly straight up and down (they’ll twist together again if you let go).

Gently separate plies with a knitting needle or the blunt end of your darning needle.

Using a sharp darning needle and working through yarn (splitting the yarn or sewing through it, not weaving around it), work in each ply as a separate end.

Work each ply in a different direction to avoid building bulk, then snip end close to the fabric.
**Wearing Variations**

If you prefer something firmer to the flexible, off-the-shoulder neckline, or if you just want an extra little decorative touch, weave a ribbon along the top edge and finish with an off-center bow.

You can use the same technique under the bust or at the waist to add figure definition and a decorative touch. This example uses a wider ribbon, just the eyelets, and skips every other set.

Wear over a longer dress with the skirt showing for a casual look, or over a shorter slip or sheath for a sexier cocktail look.