

What are those seven things, you may ask? The cast-on edge, ribbing increases, slanting decreases, invisible increases, blocking, picking up stitches for bands, and buttonholes. While the book focuses on these concepts as they relate to sweaters, they can be easily extended to many other types of knitting projects.

Simple Structure

In keeping with the "seven" theme, Fisher divides the book into seven chapters: one for each "thing." She clearly and succinctly presents the issue—for example, picking up stitches to create even and smooth button bands—and then gives you tangible techniques for doing it well. Not only do you learn the techniques, but you understand *why* the techniques work and when and where you'll want to use them. Abundant and extremely clear color photographs illustrate each point along the way.

Following those seven chapters, Fisher provides seven sweater patterns. The first—a baby sweater—is an especially helpful tutorial project that gives you a chance to practice each lesson learned from each chapter. Designed for women, the remaining six sweaters use fairly classic styling and let you practice at least one technique from the book as well.

Clarity of Course

This clean, well-conceived book never strays from its purpose. Fisher makes a reasonable promise and she delivers on that promise. Read this book, and practice each new technique using the practice baby cardigan pattern, and you *will* gain knowledge that will make your next sweaters look better. Simple.

Even the writing shows economy and restraint—that's perhaps more notable if you consider that Fisher published this book herself and *could* have written anything she wanted. (Though I'm guessing a publisher would've changed the title so that "Make or Break" wasn't in quotation marks, but that's just me.)

Her clean, factual writing style is infused with warmth and encouragement. She wants you to learn new options and understand why they work, but she never says, "You must do it this way." She concludes, "The real bottom line is that in your sweater, you get to decide what looks best and what works for you." It's all about choices, and she gives you plenty.

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