

Kurrajong Handcrafts

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## Sunday Spin-A-Long #1: Crinkle-Cut

**The short story:** Spin one thick single and one thin single, ply them together.

### The long story...

I spotted this effect when I was visiting Jan last weekend. The yarn was in a skein, a dark colour, and the bobbly texture was well displayed and caught my attention immediately. Fast forward to Monday when I was sampling some Suffolk roving that Rachel sent me – I had done a bit of lumpy bumpy singles and wasn't really hooked on the idea of plying it back on itself. Gazing around for inspiration I spotted some ancient Shetland singles which had been left on a bobbin at the end of a 2-ply (see there's always a reason to keep it). What if... I thought, and the new yarn was plied up and instantly declared a winner.



I played with crinkle-cut yarn (just like potato chips you see) all week and came up with a few discoveries:

1. The bigger the contrast the better: Spin your thin single really thin – make your thick single soft and bouncy using a woollen method. Some samples I produced didn't really look crinkly, just uneven, and the ones where the thick single was worsted-spun were kind of limp and really refused to play.
2. Ply a lot of twist in: The more you ply it the more the singles wrap around each other and you get more bumps in your yarn. This implies adding more twist to each single originally which I somewhat did, but in general, don't expect this yarn to balance perfectly – Nearly all my mini skeins were a bit twisty but behaved after a good shock-and-whack.



3. Experiment with the angle when plying: Holding the thick single to the side makes it wrap around the thin one; holding the thin single to the side makes it wrap around the thick one. Subtly different effects each time – have a play. Try pushing the thick single up the thin one a bit after plying but before they wind onto the bobbin. (Pic: *Thread held out to the right while plying*)

4. Encourage bounciness: Of all my samples, the one I like best was plied simply with both singles in my left hand. The trick to that one, I'm pretty sure, was pushing it forward



onto the bobbin as I plied, i.e. I didn't try to hold it back taut and smooth. Similarly, I didn't put any tension on it in the skein either. There must be air and bounce in the thick singles for the crinkle effect to happen, if you stretch it out it will be simply a 2-ply.

I loved this yarn already as a yarn but how does it knit? I picked my favourite mini skein for a swatch and knitted up a little square: It's great! The bouncy, textured yarn creates a bouncy, textured fabric with a lot of character. I could see myself wearing a pullover or vest in this style of fabric, or perhaps working alternating stripes or panels with a smooth yarn for an interesting effect.



**To sum up?** Ply anything with anything, as long as the contrast is striking and your thicker single is nice and bouncy. Don't stretch the life out of the yarn – it will not love you for it.



*From left: Mystery stash fibre plied with spindle-spun pure silk, Suffolk plied with Shetland, slubby Merino plied with Merino single, Suffolk plied with sparkly commercial thread, BFL plied with itself, Polwarth plied with itself - this one didn't want to play.*

**For Spindlers:** All the above should be just as easily accomplished on a spindle, except perhaps the plying angle variations. Maybe you could get a friend to spin your spindle while you hold one single in each hand if you want to try some.

**What now?** Spin your sample (or a whole sweater if you're inclined), send me a photo and a comment, wait and see if you win a fab prize. Email me with pics no larger than 50k at: dianemulholland AT gmail DOT com

**P.S. A question:** Anyone who has a brilliant idea as to how to judge your spinning to get two completely different singles the same length, I'm all ears.