

# Jean Greenhowe's Cup and Birdie Game



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## JEAN GREENHOWE'S CUP AND BIRDIE GAME

Previously known as the 'cup and ball' game. Amazingly, this entertaining toy has been a favourite among children and adults for centuries. The traditional version is usually made out of wood, with a stick handle and a cup on top. The ball is tied to the stick and with a swinging movement the ball is thrown upwards. The aim is to catch the ball in the cup. In my 21st century version, the balls are comical knitted Birdie characters. It requires dexterity, eye-to-hand co-ordination and practice to catch the ball in the cup. The game rules – to see how many catches there are in a set number of throws by opponents.

The basic cups are made from the cardboard tubes which are inside kitchen paper towel rolls. Decorated with coloured paper and trimmed with knitted pieces, the toys make amusing presents for youngsters and grown-ups alike.

There are two versions in Christmassy colours, great for stocking-fillers – and two more suggesting alternative colour schemes. Enjoy making these novelties and then join in the fun – you won't be able to resist!

**Measurements:** The finished cups are just over 5cm [2in] across the diameter and 4.5cm [1¾in] in height. The balls measure about 2.5cm [1in] across the diameter.

### MATERIALS

**Knitting yarn:** Small oddments of double knitting, [USA Astra or Bonus DK: Australia 8 ply] in colours illustrated, or colours of your choice.

**Stuffing:** Only small amount required.

**Knitting needles:** A pair of 3mm [No 11, USA 2].  
A larger knitting needle about 5mm [No 6, USA 8], for making a channel through the stuffed ball, in order to add the 'wings'.

**Plastic glue-on wiggle eyes:** [Also known as joggle eyes, or moveable eyes in the USA], two 5mm diameter for each character.

**A cardboard tube:** From a paper towel roll, measuring about 5cm [2in] across the diameter. One tube will make two cups.

**Small bits of cardboard:** About the same thickness as used on note pad backing pieces.

**Coloured paper:** For covering the cardboard pieces.

**Glue:** A quick drying adhesive such as all purpose UHU.

**Bits of sticky tape.**

**Compasses:** For drawing circles.

**Curly gift wrap ribbon:** For decorating the cups.

### NOTES

**Abbreviations:** K = knit; P = purl; st[s] = stitch[es]; st-st = stocking stitch [K on the right side and P on the wrong side]; g-st = garter stitch [every row K]; cm = centimetres; mm = millimetres; in = inch[es].

## USA glossary

### UK

Cast off  
Stocking stitch  
Tension  
K wise

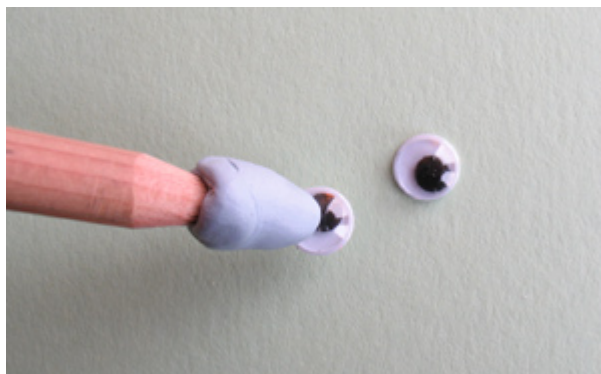
### USA

bind off  
stockinette stitch  
gauge  
K ways

**Tension:** Using 3mm [No 11, USA 2] knitting needles, the tension for double knitting yarn is 26 sts = 10cm [4in] in width over st-st.

**Casting on:** The thumb method is recommended.

**Applying the wiggle eyes:** Wiggle eyes are fiddly to handle, but they can be applied easily as follows. You will need a bit of reusable putty adhesive such as Blu Tack [USA: Elmers Tack]. Mould the putty adhesive around the pointed end of a pencil. Pick up the front side of the eye with the adhesive-covered pencil point. Now apply a little glue on the flat side of the eye directly from the tube. Alternatively, put a blob of glue on a piece of paper and dip the flat side of the eye in the glue. Press the eye in position on the knitted piece. Release the eye from the pencil point with your finger-tip. Press the eye firmly in place.



## TOY SAFETY

The items in this pattern are not suitable for babies and very young children. The materials used for the designs in this pattern are – knitting yarn, plastic glue-on wiggle eyes, toy stuffing, cardboard and paper. It should be noted that the packaging on plastic glue-on eyes is labelled '**Warning**, not suitable for children under 3 years of age'. Do not add any other materials such as wire, pipe cleaners, buttons or beads.

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## THE CUP

### To make the cardboard cup

Cut the cardboard tube along the length in a straight line from one end to the other. Flatten the tube carefully, with the outer side uppermost. Holding the tube piece flat, use a ruler to measure, then draw, a line across the width 4cm [1½in] away from one short end. Cut off this piece.

Glue the inner side of the piece to a piece of the chosen paper. Cut out the paper level with the cardboard edges, but leave 1cm [¾in] extra on the paper at one short end, for the overlap. Bring the cardboard ends together, forming the tube-shape. Glue the paper overlap in place on inside of the tube. Secure the butted ends of cardboard together, with sticky tape.

Cut another piece off the cardboard tube as before. This extra piece strengthens the cup. Glue the piece tightly around the cup, making sure that the ends are in a different position from the first piece ends. Note that the short ends will not meet. Secure these ends with sticky tape.

#### **To cover the outer surface**

Cut a 4cm by 18cm [1½in by 7in] strip of paper and glue it around the cup, overlapping the short ends.

#### **To make the base piece**

Place the cup on a piece of cardboard, then draw around base of the cup. Cut out the circle. Now glue circle onto a piece of paper and cut out paper level with circle. This side will be underside of cup base.

Now use compasses to draw, then cut out a 5cm [2in] diameter circle of paper. Glue this onto other side of the cardboard circle. The compasses' pin hole is centre position for the yarn cord. Push a darning needle through the pin hole to make hole larger.

#### **To glue on the base piece**

Spread glue around inner surface of base piece, close to the edge. Place cup in position on base and press it onto the glued edge. Lay the cup aside until glue dries. The exposed edges of cardboard will be covered by the knitted piece.

#### **Lower edge knitted piece**

Begin at lower edge and using the colour required cast on 44 sts.

K 1 row.

Cast off loosely K wise, noting that cast off row is wrong side of the piece. Oversew row ends together then turn right side out.

Place the piece on cup at lower end and push it upwards away from the base. Spread a little glue around cup near to base. Slide knitted piece down onto the glued section, so that cast on edge is level with the base. Press the knitted piece onto the glue.

#### **Top edge knitted piece**

Begin at lower edge of the outer section and using the colour required cast on 44 sts.

Beginning with a K row, st-st 3 rows.

**Next row:** K, for top edge fold line.

Beginning with a K row st-st 3 rows, for the inner section.

Cast off K wise.

Oversew the row ends together, then turn right side out. Place the knitted piece on top of the cup, with outer section in position and fold line level with top edge of the cup. Spread a little glue along inside of cast off edge of inner section, then fold it down and press in place. Leave glue to dry.

Now turn up the outer section to show wrong side. Spread a little glue along inside of cast on edge, fold down and press in place. Glue a strip of gift wrap ribbon around centre of the cup.

#### **THE WEE BUG SPECTATOR**

Begin at lower edge and using colour required cast on 6 sts. K 1 row, then cast off K wise, noting that cast off row is wrong side of the piece.

Sew tail-ends of yarn into wrong side and trim off excess length. Glue on the wiggle eyes. Glue bug to top inside rim of the cup as shown.

## THE BALL

### Main piece

Using the colour required cast on 7 sts loosely. Note that first knitted row is right side of the piece.

G-st 31 rows, then cast off loosely K wise.

Oversew cast on and cast off edges together, for centre back seam. Gather round one set of row ends, pull up tightly and fasten off. Turn right side out. Stuff the piece to measure 8.5cm [3<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>in] around. Gather round the remaining set of row ends, pull up gathers then check measurement around again. Adjust the stuffing as required then pull up gathers tightly and fasten off. Glue on the wiggle eyes at front of the ball, about half way up and side-by-side.



### Wings piece

Using the colour required cast on 14 sts, then cast off. Sew one tail-end of yarn into the piece, then trim off excess length.

Make a channel through the stuffing, by pushing a 3mm [No 11, USA 2] knitting needle through the ball from one side to the other, just below level of the eyes. Push the needle back and forth, then use the larger needle to enlarge the channel.

Thread the remaining tail-end of yarn into a sewing needle and pass it through the channel. Pull arms piece through to make equal wing lengths at each side. Now sew the remaining tail-end into the wing and catch the piece in place on the ball to secure.

### Top feathers

Using contrasting yarn, work two small loops in the gathered row ends at top of the head.

### Beak

Use a 30cm [12in] length of yarn in the required colour. Make a small horizontal back stitch just below and between the eyes, leaving equal tail-ends of yarn at each end of back-stitch. Now tie a single tight knot on the back stitch, then another tight knot. Sew each tail end of yarn through to back of the ball, at each side of the beak and leave for now.

Put a dot of glue on the beak and leave for a minute or two, then pinch the beak into a flat pointed shape. Snip off any hairs at the point. Pull tail ends of yarn and snip off close to the knitted stitches. Ends will disappear into the stuffing.

### **TO ATTACH THE BALL TO THE CUP**

The length of the yard cord depends upon the skill required to play the game. The longer the cord, the more difficult it is to catch the ball. For youngsters and beginners, allow a 13cm [5in] length of yarn, below base of the cup.

To begin with, cut a 35cm [14in] length of yarn to match the ball. Secure one end in base of the ball at position of the gathered row ends. Thread a sewing needle with the other end of yarn and pass it up through the hole on underside base of cup. Pull yarn through, then decide what length below the base is suitable.

Mark the position on the yarn with a pen, where it passes through the base. Pull yarn up and tie a secure double knot at marked position, then trim off excess length. Put a spot of glue on the knot to prevent unravelling. Pull the ball and cord downwards, to locate knot on the base.



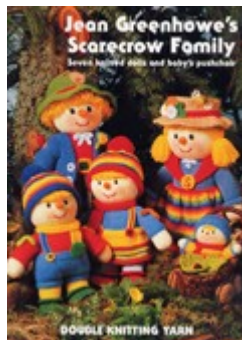
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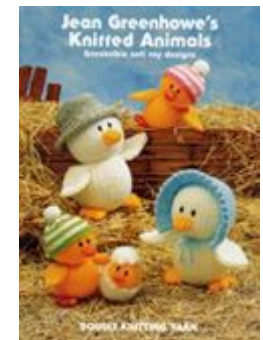
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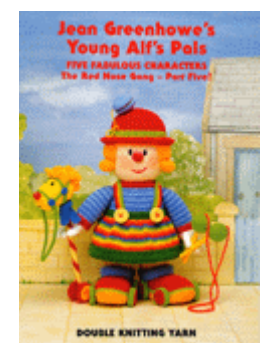
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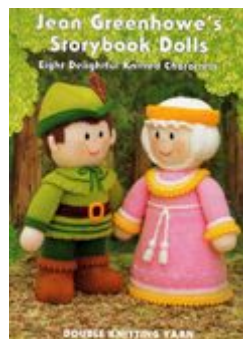
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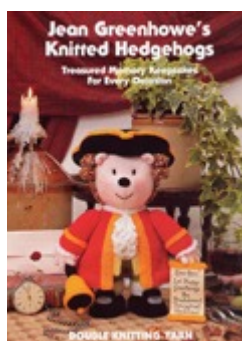
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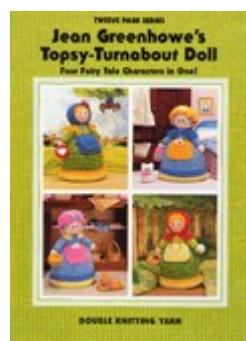
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