

Influencing a Combo Spin

The whole reason for combo spinning is the fun of unexpected color changes and combinations, so embrace the randomness, even if it means stepping out of your comfort zone!

But sometimes, you may want to achieve a specific effect, or need to take smaller steps as you learn to let go. Consider these tips to influence – not control! - the outcome. Your combo spin will still provide you with many pleasant surprises.

Stripe width on a sweater: Spin longer stretches of the same color(way) for wider stripes, or break the strips into smaller sections for narrower stripes. All other things being equal, the sleeve stripes **will** be wider than the body stripes.

Distinct stripes: Select braids with lots of contrast, in color and/or value; try to include at least 1 dull, 1 bright, 1 dark, 1 light in your combo.

More tweedy, less striping: Select braids with less contrast (similar colors, or all light or all dark, for example). Break strips into smaller sections, and/or consider using a slip stitch or textured knit/purl stitch pattern for the item instead of stockinette. Or spin a 3-ply yarn.

For small projects: Break strips for one or both plies into smaller sections for faster color changes through the item.

Accent color you don't like? Don't take it out! These are the colors that really spark up an item and enrich the main colors! But if you want to keep it in check, try one or both of the following: break it into small (even down to finger-sized) pieces, and/or make sure to spin it into only one ply so there won't be any solid areas of that color. If there's a LOT of the color and it bugs you, find the braid a different home with someone who will love it.

Similar sleeves: Set aside enough yarn for the sleeves, divide the skein(s) roughly in half, and use them in the same order and for about the same number of rows for each sleeve. The results will depend entirely on the yarn; if spun with long color changes, the sleeves may still look completely different.

Matching sleeves: This is fairly extreme, but if it's what you want... knit both sleeves at the same time, working in the round and using two steeks. For top-down (otherwise) seamless sweaters, it's less cumbersome to put the body stitches on waste yarn when you divide for the sleeves, and knit the twinned sleeves first. When finished, cut the steeks and stitch the sleeve seams.

Two plies or three? There will be more optical blending of the colors in a 3-ply yarn than a 2-ply; individual hues won't stand out as much, and you can expect more subtle color changes. The exception could be chain-plied yarns, which might have significant areas of solid colors.

Don't have enough combo yarn for a whole project? Choose yarn in a solid color that is included in the combo to use for edging, or edge a solid item with combo. Or choose a solid color that contrasts with ALL of the colors in your combo (maybe black or white) and knit stripes or a stranded pattern. Or make a 'combo-combo', with stripes of leftover or purpose-made yarns from multiple spins!

