

Star Illusion Blanket

by Fidget :: Katie Ahlquist



Yarn:

Brown Sheep Cotton Fleece

80% cotton, 20% wool

100 g / 215 yards (196 meters)

6 skeins: 3 in foreground color(s) (FC), 3 in background color(s) (BC)

Needles: US 6 / 4 mm (or as needed to obtain gauge)

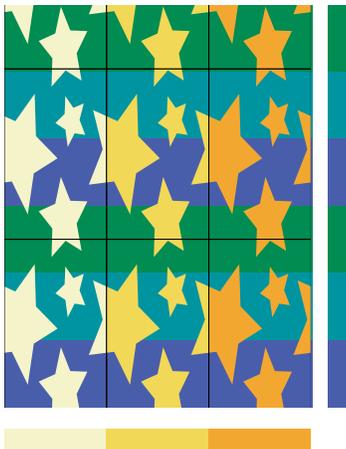
Gauge: 20 sts = 4 in / 10 cm (over garter stitch)

Finished dimensions: Approximately 32 x 40 inches (81 cm x 101 cm) This does not include the binding.

Other supplies: 2 stitch markers, tapestry needle for seaming, 1 yd or 1 m flannel or other backing fabric; satin blanket binding (you will need about 4.5 yds/m), sewing needle, sewing thread to match the binding.

Design considerations:

This blanket is constructed from 3 strips, sewn together after they are completed. The star pattern will “tile” without interruption across the seams and vertical repeats. If you would like, you can buy 3 different foreground skeins, working 1 strip in each. You can also buy 2 or 3 background colors and stripe them at regular intervals, either matching across the strips or staggering them. Have fun with it - for a big project like this I always enjoy mixing in as many colors as possible to fight monotony. Babies love contrasting colors!



Note: First and last sts are selvage stitches. Seaming the strips together perfectly will be much easier with the following selvage pattern:

On RS rows (chart), K first st, P last st.

On WS rows, P first and all sts until 1 st rem, K last st.

Directions (Make 3):

Using BC, CO 54 sts.

Row 1 (WS): P 18, place marker, P 18, place marker, P 17, K1 for selvage.

Row 2 (RS): See chart. Slip the markers as you come to them - they are just there to aid in counting across the chart rows.

Row 3: Change to FC, P to last st, K1.

Row 4: See chart.

Continue in this manner, following the chart for RS, purling on the WS, remembering to P or K last st for selvage, and switching colors (at the beginning of WS rows) every 2 rows. (There's no need to cut the yarn between color changes - just carry the unused yarn up the side.)

If you are using 3 background colors, knit 30 rows (15 two-row stripes) in BC 1, and then switch to BC 2, and so on. (Keep in mind that there will be 15 two-row stripes of FC alternated with the BC stripes.) If you want to stagger the background stripes, start with BC 2 for the second strip, and start with BC 3 for the 3rd.

When you have worked through the chart, start again at the beginning. Finished strip will be 360 rows (90 foreground stripes), or a bit more than 2 repeats. As long as you start each strip at row 1 of the chart, the pattern will line up.

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Seaming

When you have completed 3 strips, line up the CO edges and use mattress stitch to seam them together. The selvege edges should match up perfectly, insert your needle under each garter bump in a zig-zag across the seam. It may take some trial and error in the first few inches to get the FC/BC stripes to match up, but once you get it they will match up the rest of the way. Weave in ends (it's not critical that they be visually neat, since the backing will cover them, but make sure they are secure and not bumpy.)

Backing

It's a good idea to pre-wash and iron the fabric backing. Lay it out smoothly, wrong side up, on a large flat surface and lay the blanket wrong side down on top of it. Square up the blanket and straighten the edges, and pin it at regular intervals around the edges and across the width. Using sewing thread, baste the blanket and backing fabric together all around edge. Take some leftover strands of Cotton Fleece, fray them into 1 or 2 strands, and use this "thread" to tack the blanket to the backing at about 10 or 12 places - seam/stripe intersections are a handy way to space these out. I tied my tacks on the backing side so they would be invisible on the knitted side.

Binding

Trim the excess binding fabric all around the blanket edge, so that it extends about 1/2" past the knitted selvages. Pin the satin binding all around the edges, mitering the corners. I felt safest with hand-sewing the binding; I used a zig-zag kind of back-stitch but you could just use running stitch or some other decorative stitch.

Blanket Care Instructions

When I gave the original Star Blanket to my friend for her newborn son, I was a bit torn between the heirloom quality of it and wanting him to love and enjoy his "blankie." I enclosed a large mesh sweater-bag with the gift and recommended that she machine-wash it in cold water, tumble-dry low until damp-dry, and lay flat to dry the rest of the way.

Chart Tips

Odd-numbered rows are Wrong Side (WS) and are not numbered. Even-numbered rows are Right Side (RS) and are the second row worked in the 2-row color stripe. Purl bumps create the illusion effect, so follow the chart carefully to create the star image. Solid bars indicate purl sts, blank boxes indicate knits. On WS rows, just purl every stitch, except the last one - knit it to create a garter-stitch selvege edge for easy sewing later.

Markers placed between sections of 18 stitches will help you visually count the knits and purls on the RS rows.

The chart is in two sections on the following pages.

foreground color

 knit (purl on WS)

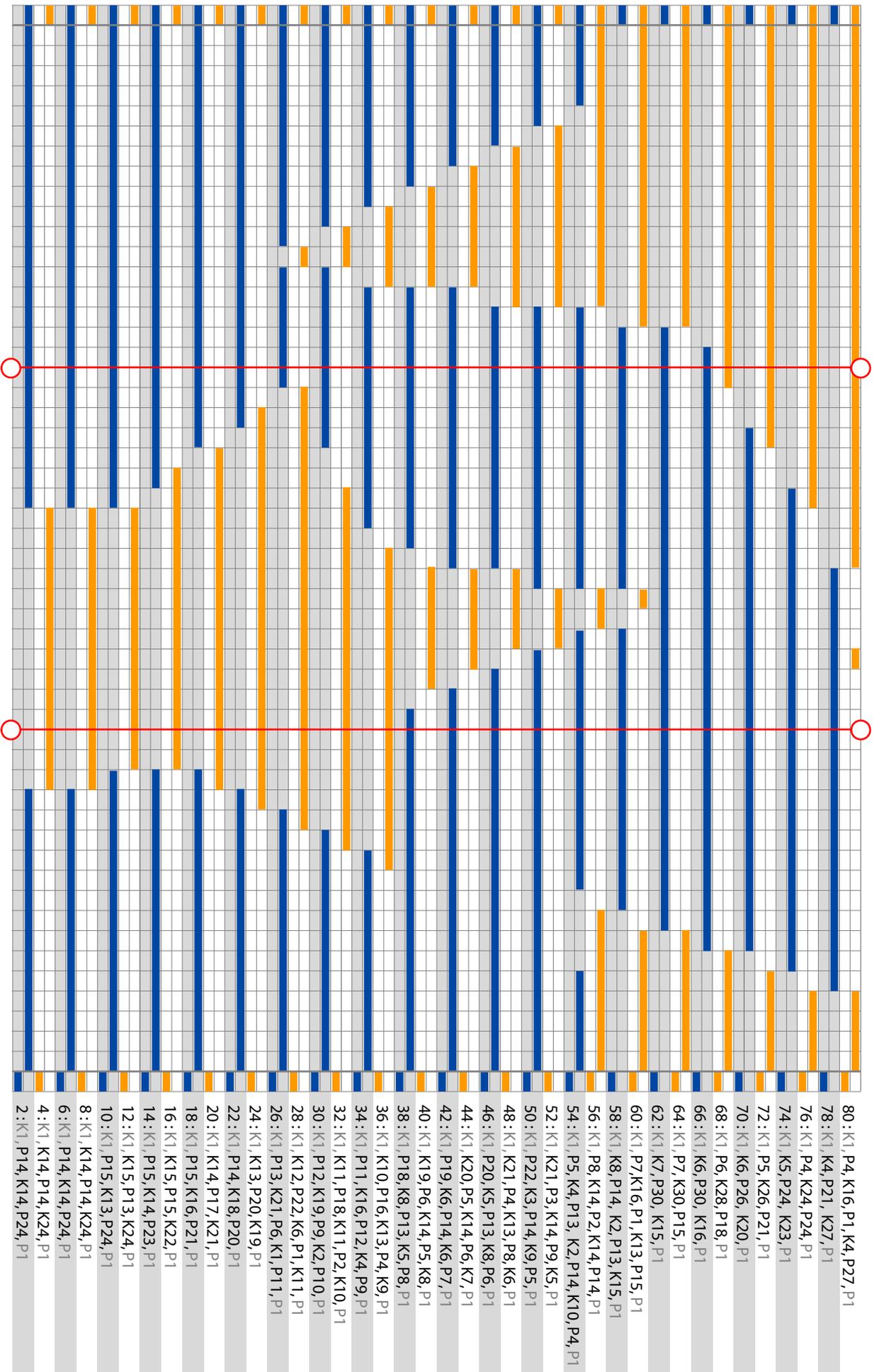
 purl

background color

 knit (purl on WS)

 purl

 sanity markers



Star Illusion Blanket : : Chart - Rows 1 - 80
by Katie Ahlquist

foreground color
 knit (purl on WS)
 purl

background color
 knit (purl on WS)
 purl

sanity markers

Star Illusion Blanket : : Chart - Rows 81 - 164

by Katie Ahlquist

foreground color
 knit (purl on WS)
 purl

background color
 knit (purl on WS)
 purl

○ sanity markers

