

JUSTIN'S OCTAGON CRIB COUNTERPANE

A knitting pattern

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This crib-sized counterpane is based on the basic pinwheel octagon unit. It's about as simple as you can get. My variation on the classic theme lets the knitter make the "in-between" squares at the same time as the pinwheel is knit - cutting down on a small bit of seaming. These in-between squares and edge triangles are done in double moss stitch. The edging is a wide mock cable with an openwork bar sawtooth. The edging has a slight curve to it, making it look full but not so full that it ruffles. Twelve octagons, six knit with the attached "in-between" square and six without make up the center of a crib-size blanket.

A special caution - The particular cotton yarn I used is very unyielding. Knitting it might be difficult if you have wrist and finger mobility or pain problems. Although the Southmaid cotton was very uniform with no breaks or knots, it isn't a mercerized cotton, and is more prone than harder finish cottons to shrinking and fuzzing. Although Justin's blanket has held up well since it was first knit four years ago, it did look "used" pretty quickly. Feel free to substitute another cotton yarn that knits to a similar gauge.

And yes, that's my nephew Justin smiling it up under his blanket at Grandma's house!.

Materials

- About 16 skeins Southmaid Cotton/8 2.5oz (70g) There was no yardage listed on the skeins. The label recommends gauge of 22st over 10cm using US # 5 needles. I paid \$1.74 per skein at Walmart in 1996.
- 5 12-inch long DPNs - US #4 (3.5cm) You could probably begin this on shorter DPNs and switch to a circular, but I had two sets of longs on hand. All sections are knit on the same needles.
- Straight pins and a blocking surface (an ironing board works well)
- Tapestry or yarn needle for sewing motifs together.

Gauge:

Approx 22 stitches = 10 cm in double moss stitch.

Note that this is a blanket and not a fitted garment, so exact gauge isn't mandatory. But if you deviate significantly from the suggested gauge remember that your yarn consumption

Morgan's Mountain Laurel Crib Counterpane

may vary from mine, and your project may end up using more (or less) than mine.

The blanket doesn't end up being a "standard" definition size. It is a bit larger than commercial blankets labeled "crib size." Each finished octagon is approximately 11 inches in diameter. The edging is approximately 3.5 inches wide at its widest point.

Special Instructions

These abbreviations and symbols are used in this pattern.

K - Knit

P - Purl

YO - Yarn over (make an eyelet increase by laying the yarn on top of the needle).

M1 - Knit into the back of the bar between the stitch just knit and the next one to be knit. Note: Any increase that doesn't produce an eyelet may be substituted.

S1 - Slip one stitch as if to knit

K2tog - Knit two stitches together.

SSK - Slip one stitch knitwise; slip 1 stitch purlwise. Return both stitches to the other needle, then knit them together. This forms a decrease equivalent to K2tog, but slanted in the other direction.

SSP2togB - Slip two stitches as if to knit, put them back on the left hand needle, then purl them together through the back of the loops (This is quite awkward. The goal is to make a decrease that looks like SSK on the front).

Double Moss Stitch:

Row 1 - *K2, P2* Repeat

Row 2 - *K2, P2* Repeat

Row 3 - *P2, K2* Repeat

Row 4 - *K2, P2* Repeat

Octagon Motif

For "keyhole" shape motifs do all rows. For plain edge octagons without the in-between square, do rows 1 through 43, then cast off all stitches knitwise.

Preparation Cast on 8 stitches. Distribute over 4 needles

Row 1 and odd rows to 43: Knit all the way around

Row 2 *YO, K1* Repeat unit between * twice per needle

Row 4 *YO, K2*

Row 6 *YO, K3*

Row 8 *YO, K4*

Row 10 *YO, K5*

Row 12 *YO, K6*

Row 14 *YO, K7*

Row 16 *YO, K8*

Row 18 *YO, K9*

Row 20 *YO, K10*

Row 22 *YO, K11*

Row 24 *YO, K1, YO, SSK, K9*

Row 26 *YO, K1, YO, K2tog, YO, SSK, K8*

Row 28 *YO, K1, **YO, K2tog** 2 times, YO, SSK, K7

Row 30 *YO, K1, **YO, K2tog** 3 times, YO, SSK, K6

Row 32 *YO, K1, **YO, K2tog** 4 times, YO, SSK, K5

Row 34 *YO, K1, **YO, K2tog** 5 times, YO, SSK, K4

Row 36 *YO, K1, **YO, K2tog** 6 times, YO, SSK, K3

Row 38 *YO, K1, **YO, K2tog** 7 times, YO, SSK, K2

Row 40 *YO, K1, **YO, K2tog** 8 times, YO, SSK, K1

Row 42 *YO, K1, **YO, K2tog** 9 times, YO, SSK

Row 44 Cast off knitwise until only 22 stitches total remain, purl to end of row

Row 45 Knit 22

Row 46 *K2, P2* 5 times, K2

Row 47 *P2, K2* 5 times, P2

Row 48 *P2, K2* 5 times, P2

Row 49 *K2, P2* 5 times, K2

Rows 50-82: Repeat rows 46-49 eight times

Bind off loosely knitwise. Break off the yarn leaving a very long tail. This tail will be used to sew the motifs together.

Edge Triangle

Note: This companion piece is knit flat on two needles

Preparation - Cast on 22 stitches.

Row 1 Purl

Row 2 *K2, P2* 5 times, K2

Row 3 SSK, *K2, P2 5 times

Row 4 *P2, K2* 4 times, P1

Row 5 SSK, P1, *K2, P2* 4 times, K2

Row 6 *K2, P2* 5 times

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Row 7 SSK, *P2, K2* 4 times, P2

Row 8 *P2, K2* 4 times, P2, K1

Continue in this manner in double moss stitch, decreasing one stitch at the left hand edge every other row until only one stitch remains. Cast off. Break off the yarn leaving a very long tail. This is later used to sew the motifs together.

Mock Cable and Lace Edging

I tinkered together a couple of separate lace edgings to make this one. The ten-row repeat is quick to do and easy to memorize.

Preparation - Cast on 22 stitches. Purl one row.

Row 1 (right side) S1, K2tog, YO, K3, SSK, K9, YO, K1, YO, K2tog, YO, K2

Row 2 P15, SSP2togB, P3, YO, P1 then K1 into next loop, P2

Row 3 S1, K2tog, YO, K2, YO, K3, SSK, K7, YO, K1, *YO, K2tog* 2 times, YO, K2

Row 4 P15, SSP2togB, P3, YO, P6

Row 5 S1, K2tog, YO, K4, YO, K3, SSK, K5, YO, K1, *YO, K2tog* 3 times, YO, K2

Row 6 P15, SSP2togB, P3, YO, P8

Row 7 S1, K2tog, YO, K6, YO, K3, SSK, K3, YO, K1, *YO, K2tog* 4 times, YO, K2

Row 8 P15, SSP2togB, P3, YO, P10

Row 9 S1, K2tog, YO, K8, YO, K3, SSK, K1, YO, K1, *YO, K2tog* 5 times, YO, K2

Row 10 Cast off 10 stitches purlwise, P4, SSP2togB, P3, YO, P12 (22 stitches)

Repeat Rows 1 through 10 until you have a long enough strip to go completely around the blanket. Bind off loosely knitwise.

Assembly

You can block each unit as you finish it. For this blanket, I didn't bother. Using the long tails I left when I cast off, I sewed each piece onto the growing blanket as I completed it.

I didn't measure the yardage of the border lace trim because after about ten feet or so was completed, I sewed it on foot by foot as it was knit (without blocking it first.) I started attaching it just past a corner and sewed it on at a ratio of about 2 edging border stitches to every 3 blanket body stitches. I did a lot of gathering at the corner octagon points to bring the edging smoothing around without puckering. When I got all the way around the blanket, I fudged the stitching-on ratio in the final corner so that my 10-row repeat came out even, then grafted the last row to the first - making a mostly invisible join.

After the whole thing was assembled and the remaining dangling ends darned in, I wet down the counterpane and pinned it out for a final blocking, making sure that all the lace edging points were nicely splayed out. (I needn't have bothered with this step - the points won't stay stiff and triangular without starching).

Layout for Assembly

Orange units are octagons. Blue are edge triangles, and the others are octagon keyhole variants.

