# North Truro Counterpane

**A knitting Pattern**

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Although I prefer to finish a project before posting the pattern, as you can see from the dates on this one, it's been in process a long time, and bodes to continue on even longer. I haven't given up. I do however tend to work on it only in the summer, and with my goal of a queen-size spread in mind, there are LOTS of pieces to work up and then sew together. LOTS.

So, in spite of myself and in hope that someone else is nuts enough to tackle this one, I share this design.

Why so many units?

I wanted to play with non-uniform tessellations. In a hex pattern, everything is a hex, stacked neatly like the cells in a beehive. Octagon patterns usually use octagons and squares. But what about combos of more shapes? Quilters do it all the time. Why not knitters?

I warn anyone wanting to make this. You gotta love working in ends…

## Questions and Answers

### How do you start the hexes?

There are quite a few ways to start off a flat knit piece done both in the round and center out. I keep gravitating back to the I-cord method.

This piece is a hex, so I start by casting on a three-stitch I-cord, and working one round (I'd start off an octagon with four stitches). On the second round of the I-cord, I take my first needle and knit one, then make an increase in the space between the just worked and next stitch. If I want a more open center I'll do a YO. If I want a more solidly filled center, I'll do a make 1 lifted bar increase (a devil to do on the second round of an I-cord). Then I'll take another needle and repeat the K1, increase 1 unit. And again on a third needle. Now I have three needles in the work, each bearing two stitches, plus one in the hand to work with. At this point I flip over and begin following my pattern. For an octagon, I'd do much the same, but with a set of five instead of four needles.

### *Why bother with the multiple units when you can just assemble the hexes into a perfectly good counterpane?*

For pretty much the same reason I make cassoulet instead of being happy with franks and beans.

### *How big are your motifs?? How many are you planning on making?*

It's difficult to get a gauge on this stuff, but if forced, I'd say I'm getting approximately 6 stitches and 8 rows per inch over the stockinette areas. Unblocked, my center most hexes are about 10 inches across at

the widest point. The squares are about 5.5 inches on a side. The bases of the triangles are also about 5.5 inches across. One entire meta-unit of hex surrounded by squares and triangles (unblocked) is about 21 inches across. I haven't measured my bed yet, but it's only a queen size. Given the vague bed linen sizes posted here and there, my counterpane should be a square or a rectangle something between 85 and 100 inches on a side. I'll need at least 4 units across and 5 units head to foot. Given my chosen layout, that's about four rows of four units, plus three rows of three units, or 28 units. That adds up to 28 hexes plus 168 squares and 168 triangles. Plus half hexes, and the smaller units needed to square out the edges somewhat (they're never going to be exactly linear), and an edging of some unknown depth. I'm not quite sure how many of the other shapes I'll need yet.

Doing the same size counterpane using only the hex units would mean making about 10 rows of 8 units, and 9 rows of 7 units – that's 142 hexes, plus edge half hexes and a border.

### Why aren't you blocking the motifs before sewing them together?

Good question. Sometimes I do block the motifs before I assemble them. This time I didn't. This particular no-name yarn and needle combo seem to produce motifs that lie relatively flat, showing the openwork well without the block. I suspect my squish problem WOULD be partially fixed by blocking, but leaving the hex motif live on the circular as I finish out the squares isn't exactly conducive to the knit-block-assemble production method. Plus pinning out each night's production means leaving the ironing board up to do the blocking, and I don't want to trip over it for the next umpteen months.

### Are you going to leave the edges wavy?

I could. You can see that the lower edge makes a nice gentle wave. I could leave the thing raw, edge it with I-cord, or sew on a (yet to be designed) complementing edge strip just as it is. But I probably won't.

Just on the principle that the biggest fun comes from the most abstruse and useless effort, I'll probably do up half hexes and half squares to produce a nice straight edge, then affix that as yet mythical edging to it.

### Lovely crib blanket! You're nuts for spending so much effort on a baby blanket.

Huh?

This is destined to be an oversized Queen-size spread for my own bed. (I've knit a blankie for each of the kids, why can't I have one, too?)

If you think I'm addled for attempting this as a mini-throw, I'm sure you think I'm a gibbering raving loon for doing one that/s this big.

### Aren't you going to have a bushel of ends to deal with?

Two bushels. Even though I'm knitting the squares out from the hex center, there's two for the center hex, plus two for each for six squares, plus two each for six triangles, minus one for the hex end I use to do the first square, and one for the end that doesn't get started at the outset of that first square. 24 in all for each motif. As you can see in the pix, I like to leave them long so they're available for sewing the motifs together.

As I get further into the thing, I'll know WHICH I need to leave particularly long, and which I can plan to be shorter. Still, I plan on darning in ends incrementally as I go along rather than waiting for the end of the entire project.

### How do the motifs join together?



### Do the units need to be put together in the same way you are using?

Nope. At the end of the pattern I present several alternative layouts.

## Instructions

Please note that as a pattern, this is still in Beta stage. I have no yarn quantities, gauge estimates, or recommended needle sizes. I have not yet drawn out the companion half hexes or other shapes required to square out my main body, nor have I figured out a companion edging. When I do, I'll update this pattern and post about it

There also may still be an error lurking in the upper right double moss area on rounds 35-43, after the centered leaf motif. I think I've corrected it on this version, but since I mostly work my motifs on autopilot at this point, I can't swear that I've payed close enough attention to test-knitting this particular edition of my graph. If you run into oddness, remember that the double moss area on each side of the center leaf should mirror. If it looks like you're

developing a rib on row 37 or 39, invert the knits and purls after the center leaf and all will be well.

## Materials

In terms of materials, I can say that I'm using an insanely inexpensive unnamed coned cotton flake yarn found in the back room at Webs. It's soft, with some open and relaxed sections, rather than a tightly spun mercerized cotton. In terms of weight it's probably closest to fingering, with occasional puffy bits making it hard to describe. I'm getting 16-17 wraps per inch.  I have a ton of this stuff, so I won't be running out.

For needles, I'm using 3mms. NOT US #2s, which tend to be 2.75 mm, but true European 3mm needles. I've got a mix of 10-inch and 8-inch long steel DPNs of that size, and am working my hexes on four, moving to seven when the number of stitches on the needles makes that more comfortable (one needle per side, plus one to knit with). Now not everyone is as DPN happy as I am, so if you prefer using one or two circs, try starting out with a set of 4 DPNs, (two hex sides per needle), and using them until the piece is large enough to make the transition practical – probably around round 23 or so.

## Hexagon

Please remember to note the one-stitch transition on round 35.

I shunt the beginning of the row one stitch to the left on that round. You should knit the first stitch of Round 35 onto the last needle of Round 34, then work around, doing that terminal K2tog on the last stitch of each repeat and the first stitch of the next one. If you're using circs and markers, move the marker to after that K2tog. The final repeat of Round 35 will work out even – the last K2tog will combine the previous final stitch of that repeat plus that stitch you knitted and transferred at the beginning of the row.

### Swirl Hexagon Unit for North Truro Counterpane
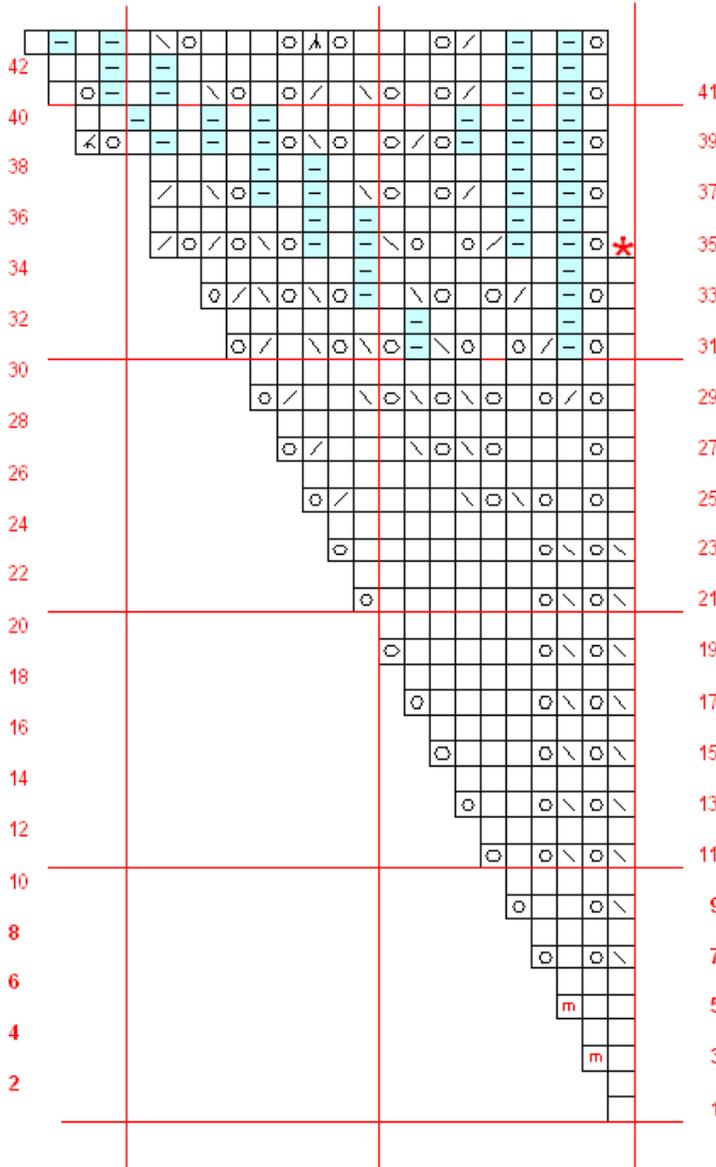
One sixth of the hex is shown. Cast six stitches onto DPNs. Work graph six times around to make full hex .

*Note on round 35 . After completing Round 34, knit the first stitch of the new round onto the last needle of Round 34. Work Round 35 starting with the second stitch, continue working around, working the first stitch of each pattern unit together with the last stitch of the preceding unit until the end of round 35 is reached.

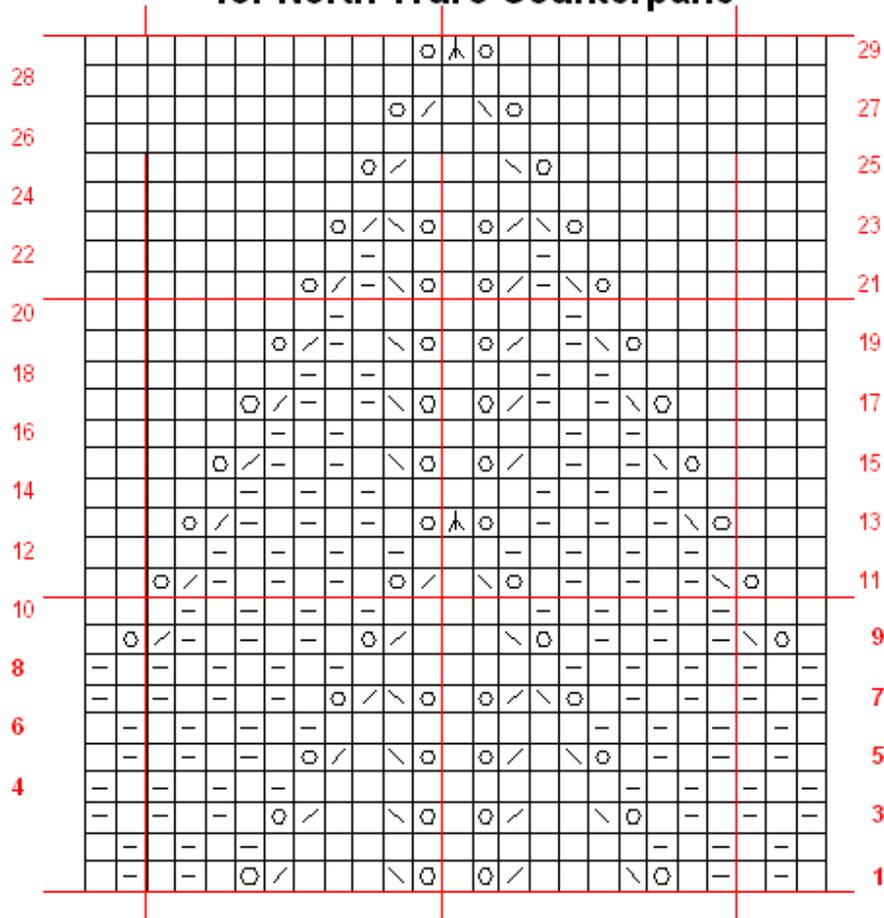| | |
|---|---|
| □ Knit | ╱ K2tog |
| ─ Purl | ⅄ K3 tog |
| ⊙ Yarn over | 人 S2, K1, P2sso (center double decrease) |
| ╲ SSK | m M1 (invisible increase) |

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## Square

The square is knit flat, back and forth on straights. I use two of my longer DPNs for all the smaller units. Since these are quick and almost never languish on the needles, don't bother finding a pair of traditional straights with end buttons.



### Square Companion Unit
### for North Truro Counterpane

Cast on 25 stitches

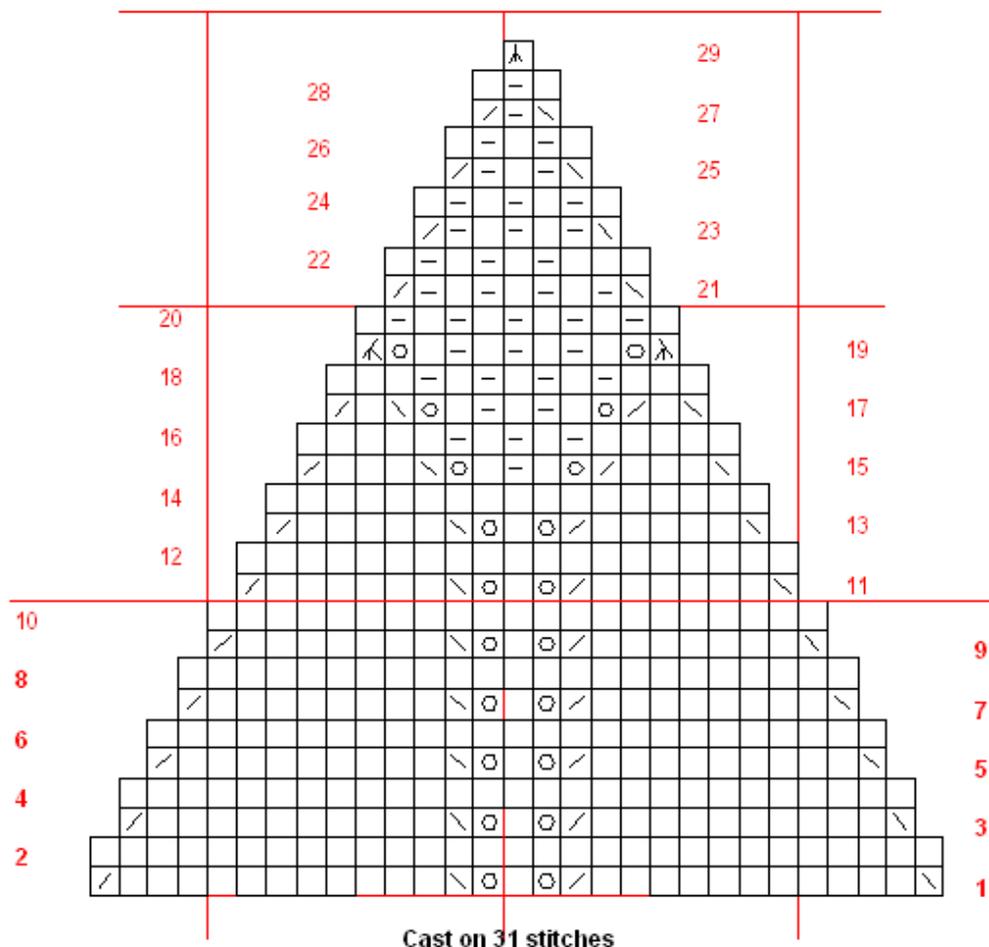| | Symbol | Description |
|---|---|---|
| | Knit | |
| | Purl | |
| | Yarn over | |
| | SSK | |
| | K2tog | |
| | K3tog (right leaning double decrease) | |
| | S2, K1, P2sso (center double decrease) | |
| | S1, K2tog, Psso (left leaning double decrease) | |

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## Triangle

Like the square, the triangle is knit flat and is quite straightforward. In addition to the patterned piece graphed below, I also make some plain triangles to fit in between the larger meta-motifs. In essence they are the triangle graph below, but without any patterning. To make them I cast on 31, then work entirely in stockinette, employing only the shaping directions shown at the ends of the right-side rows.

## Triangle Companion Unit
## for North Truro Counterpane



Cast on 31 stitches

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Knit | ╱ | K2tog |
| ▬ Purl | ⟋⟍ | K3tog (right leaning double decrease) |
| ⟐ Yarn over | ⋏ | S2, K1, P2sso (center double decrease) |
| ⟍ SSK | ⟍⟋ | S1, K2tog, Psso (left leaning double decrease) |

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## Block Layout Diagrams

The one I'm using is at the lower right, but the units can be assembled in many ways.  Here are a few:
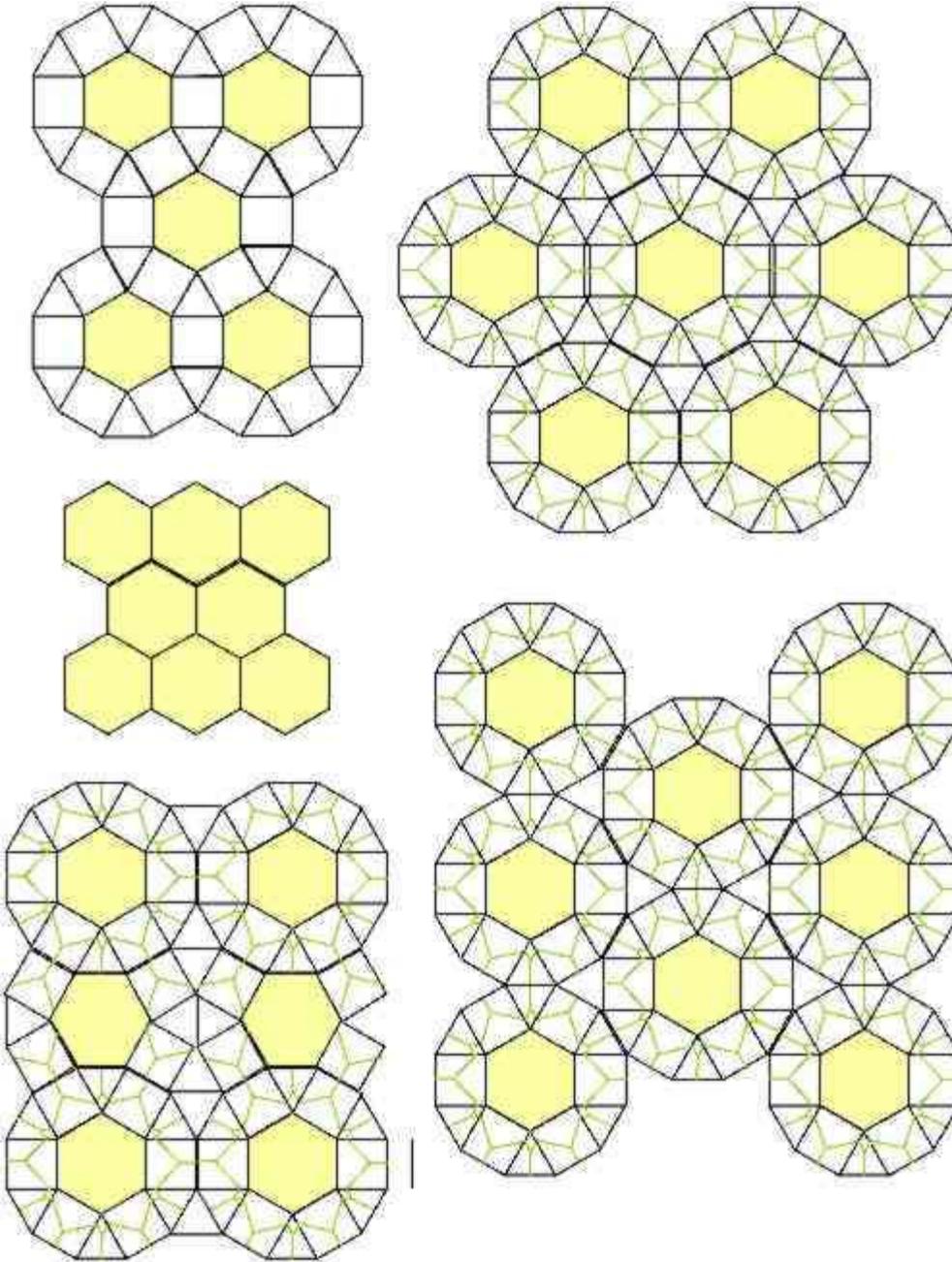
Note that there's a PLAIN TRIANGLE in most of these   To make one, cast on as if you were making a normal eyelet-bearing triangle.  But instead of working the eyelets, just knit the triangle up in plain old stockinette, following the decrease pattern indicated.