

RED DIAMONDS BABY BLANKET

A knitting pattern

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Why red? I happen to like bright colors for babies. Regardless of ethnic origin, babies are such pallid, helpless creatures to begin with, giving them a jewel like surround seems warranted. But I am violating a core precept – the yarn I used is marked as hand wash in cool water. I generally avoid hand-wash yarns for baby gifts, but the 50% acrylic content makes me want to risk it. One sign that shrinking/fulling will be less of an issue – I can't spit-splice this yarn. I will be washing this prior to giving it to the recipient, just to make sure that the red stays where it's supposed to and there are no other laundry surprises.

Materials

- Approximately 550 yards (about 500 meters) of a lofty wool/acrylic blend super bulky weight yarn, with a native gauge of 12 stitches and 18 rows to four inches. Washable is better.
- One US size 10.5 circular needle at least 24 inches long.
- Four stitch markers.
- Tapestry needle for darning in ends.

Gauge and Dimensions

Dimensions: About 26.6" x 36"

Just over 2 stitches per inch in stockinette.
(Approximate gauge is good enough on a blanket).

Method:

Cast on 77 total stitches but to make life easier when knitting the repeats cast on 5, place marker, cast on 22, place marker, cast on 22 place marker, cast on 23 place marker, cast on 5.

Slip the first stitch purlwise, then continue across the row in K1, P1 seed stitch; knit the last stitch of the row the back of the loop (In seed stitch you make a bumpy texture. If knitting in the flat, you knit every stitch that presents as a purl, and purl every stitch that presents as a knit. If you get ribbing you need to rip out your offending row and begin it again using a knit if you started with a purl or a purl if you started with a knit). Repeat this start-up row 7 times for a total of 8 rows of seed stitch. This will make a nice no-curl lower edge with a neat slip stitch selvedge.

Continuing in seed stitch pattern and making sure to continue the slip stitch selvedge, work seed stitch until you reach marker #1. Then work the white stitches in Row #1 of the following chart. On the final repeat just before the final marker, work the blue stitch in Row #1, then finish with seed stitch, continuing the established pattern of the lower edge.

Flip the work over. Remember that you're going to be working the wrong side of the blanket and on this row (Row #2 of the chart) and all even side rows thereafter, you need to follow the WRONG SIDE directions for the chart. Again slip that first stitch, work

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seed to the first marker, now work the blue stitch on the chart (wrong side version), and continue across the chart Row #2. After the last marker finish the row out in seed stitch, knitting the final stitch of the row through the back of the loop.

Continue in this manner until you have worked four full vertical repeats of the chart.

Finish off the blanket with another 8 rows of seed stitch with slip stitch edges, and bind off loosely. Darn in all ends.

Finishing Hints

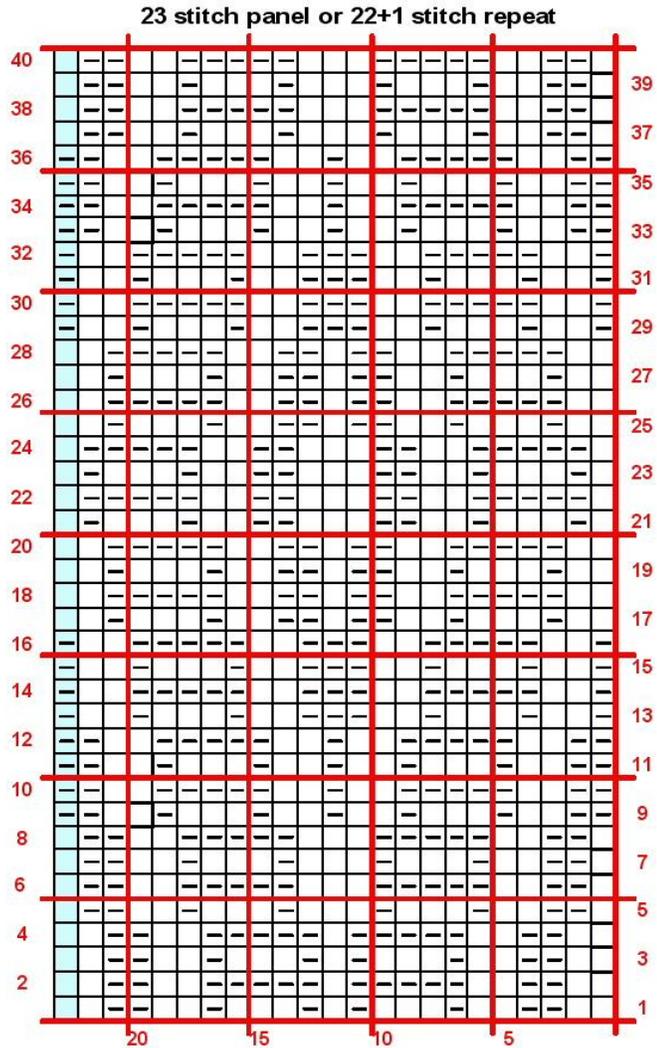
There are a lot of ends when you make something – especially a large something – out of a yarn that is only 60 yards per skien; and bulky yarn when darned in can look like large, creepy, and dreadfully obvious caterpillars crawling on the knitting’s surface.

While I can’t do anything about the sheer number of ends, I can make the darning in way less obvious. This fix works for any yarn that is made up of two or more constituent plies. It won’t work for a single.

Here you see my target end. Because this baby blanket will be seen from both sides, it really doesn’t have a front and back. Therefore for each end pair, I threaded one end to each side – at each new yarn ball join point one strand peeks out on the front, and the other peeks out on the back:



Barbara Walker's Elongated Diamond Pattern From B. Walker, *A Treasury of Knitting Patterns* , p.35



For panel, cast on 23

For repeat, cast on a multiple of 22 stitches +1

Right Side **Wrong Side**

Knit Purl

Purl Knit

Original pattern from Walker, Barbara. *A Treasury of Knitting Patterns*. New York: Charles Scribners Sons, (c) 1968, page 35

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You can see my yarn is a thick, noodly cable style strand. Here I've separated the six plies into three two-ply bunches:



More bizarre color migration, but you can see the burial idea. And here's the final result. Ends darned in near invisibly in spite of the yarn weight:



Why the color is so different in this shot, I haven't a clue, but I have lousy camera skills. Still, if you squint you can make out that I've frayed the end into three sub-units. I then end off each of them individually, burying them in the surrounding stitches for about an inch, then doubling back, still buried to anchor them off; and finally clipping the ends close to the surface.

