

MOTLEY

A knitting method discussion

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This is a working method description, not really a pattern with quantities and gauge. It's written this way because Motley is intended to be a scrap project, applicable to any gauge and yarn amount.

My Motley was done in mostly fingering weight yarn, left over from years and years of sock knitting, with a small amount of new yarn tossed in for the uniform black framing element prior to application of the final edging.

Native gauges (the gauge on the yarn label) vary for the leftovers I used. Some were classic sock weight yarns like Socka, Regia Ringel, Fortissima, and Opal. There are a couple of lighter weight sock yarns in the mix, like Brown Sheep Wildefoot, and Kroy 3-Ply. And there are a few small remnants of heavier yarns, including Koigu, and some older Stahl yarn marked as DK, that really knits up more at Gansey weight (6 spi instead of 5).

Because of the wide variation in native gauges, I chose to work this throw on needles that are much larger than those normally used for fingering weight yarn. This is a blanket, and does not need to have the tight firmness of a sock. Using very large needles

evens out the differences among the yarns, and allows them to be used in combo, without cupping.

In total, the lap blanket shown above is approximately 5.5 feet long by 3 feet (the floor tiles beneath it are 1 foot square). As shown, this Motley weighed in at 650 grams of assorted sock leftovers.

Materials

- Approximately 650 grams of assorted sock weight yarn leftovers. If a single-color framing strip of the dimension shown is knit, approximately 160 grams of that color will be required. The 160 grams of framing color are included in the total yarn weight, above.
- Two US #8 (5mm) needles. I used DPNs because it was convenient, but any straight or circular needle can be used.
- If filling in the ends and working a frame only: One spare DPN of any size to hold six or sixteen stitches temporarily.
- One safety pin, bread tag, or other moveable marker, capable of being attached to the work in

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progress, rather than a marker that sits on the needle.

- Tapestry needle for darning in the ends

Gauge and Dimensions

Approximately 5 stitches per inch in garter stitch.
Approximately 6 garter ridges per inch.

Blanket as shown, roughly 5.5 feet x 3 feet,
unblocked.

General Directions

Motley's center section is knit first. Each successive zig-zag stripe is joined onto the previous one. Cast ons are kept loose because stitches will need to be picked up in them later.

The blanket can be worked one-sided, with the ridge formed by the joining stitch all kept on one side of the piece, or two-sided, with the ridges appearing on alternate rows. I chose the latter.

Colors can be changed at any time in a strip, however beginning and ending colors works best at the ends of rows, rather than mid-strip. This allows all ends to be buried in the joining ridge when they are darned in.

The edging is also applied as it is knit rather than being knit separately then sewn on later.

I have provided instructions for the blanket as shown. One variant that may be easier at the edge fill-in and frame stage would be to continue on for one-half of the zig-zag unit beyond the directions as written.

Instructions

First strip:

Using US #8 needles, and any color desired, cast on 12 stitches using a loose cast-on. Two-needle knitting on or half hitch cast on are recommended.

Work the zig (strip section that heads right):

- **Row 1:** Knit 12
- **Row 2:** Slip the first stitch knitwise, knit into the front and back of the second stitch; k7, K2tog, k1.
- **Row 3:** Slip the first stitch knitwise, K11.
- Repeat Rows 2 and 3.

Continue working until you have 10 garter stitch ridges. Place a safety pin, bread tag or other moveable marker into this ridge to simplify counting.

Work the zag (strip section that heads left):

- **Row 1:** Slip the first stitch knitwise, K2tog, K7, knit into the front and back of the next to last stitch; k1.
- **Row 2:** Slip the first stitch knitwise, K11.
- **Rows 3 and 4:** Repeat Rows 1 and 2.

Continue working until you have 10 garter stitch ridges AFTER the one marked. When 10 ridges are complete, move the marker to the just-completed ridge, and work another zig.



Continue alternating zigs and zags until your strip is seven zig-zag units long, or until it has reached your desired width. Cast off AFTER the last completed garter stitch row. See instructions below before breaking off yarn.

Second strip

At this point you have two choices. You can continue using the current yarn, or you can start a new color. I did both on my sample, but after a couple of strips decided that I liked beginning a new color better.

If using the same color - using the final loop produced by casting off the previous strip, cast on 11 more stitches.

If using a new color – break the yarn for the previous strip, then attach the new color and cast on 12 stitches

Determine whether you are mirroring a prior zig or zag. You want to mirror the previous strip's directionality:

Joining a zig and continuing

- **Row 1:** Knit 11, pick up one loop in the selvedge edge of the prior strip. Pass the last stitch over the picked-up loop
- **Row 2 and 4:** Purl 2 together; Knit 10.
- **Row 3:** Slip the first stitch knitwise, knit into the front and back of the second stitch; k7, K2tog. Pick up one loop in the selvedge edge of the prior strip. Pass the last stitch over the picked up loop.

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- Repeat Rows 3 and 4.

Continue working until you have 10 garter stitch ridges. Place a safety pin, bread tag or other moveable marker into this ridge to simplify counting.

Joining a zag and continuing:

- **Row 1:** Slip the first stitch knitwise, K2tog, K7, knit into the front and back of the next to last stitch; . Pick up one loop in the selvedge edge of the prior strip. Pass the last stitch over the picked up loop.
- **Row 2:** Purl 2 together, Knit 10.
- **Rows 3 and 4:** Repeat Rows 1 and 2.

Continue working until you have 10 garter stitch ridges AFTER the one marked. When 10 ridges are complete, move the marker to the just-completed ridge, and work another zig.

I found it helpful to COUNT the number of available selvedge edge loops prior to starting a zig or a zag. Occasionally I had one too many, due to inattention. But rather than ripping back, I skipped one attachment point at the deepest part of a valley. Unnoticeable, and lots easier than ripping back two strips to set everything right.

Continue mirroring zigs and zags until your second strip is the same length as your first. Cast off AFTER the last completed garter stitch row. Again, you can continue with the current yarn or switch at the end of a row.

Third and Subsequent Strips:

Work as for the second strip. HOWEVER, the third strip presents another option point.

You can work the next strip from either end of the established piece, such that all of the attaching ridges fall on the same side of the blanket, or so that the attaching strips alternate front and back. I chose to alternate. Whichever you decide, note the orientation and preserve your pattern of work from here on.

Continue adding to your strips until your blanket's center has reached your desired dimension. If you want to duplicate my dimensions, that's 25 strips.

You can stop here and have a perfectly good end product. Or you can continue...

Squaring Out the End and Framing

If you have worked your blanket with full zig-zag units as I did, your blanket will have two different ends, left and right. The discussion below is based on the orientation shown in the cover photo.

Right edge (begins with a valley) - downhill

Attach yarn. Cast on 6 stitches.

- **Row 1:** Knit 4, knit in front and back of next stitch, pick up one loop in the selvedge edge of the prior strip. Pass the last stitch over the picked-up loop
- **Row 2 and 4:** Purl 2 together; Knit to the end of the row.

- **Row 3:** Slip the first stitch knitwise, Knit until 1 stitches remain. knit into the front and back of the next stitch. Pick up one loop in the selvedge edge of the prior strip. Pass the last stitch over the picked up loop.

Continue working rows 3 and 4 until you have a total of 16 stitches on your needle. At this point you should have filled in the first half of the valley section. If not and you are one selvedge attachment point from having done so, just skip the next attachment point at the deepest part of the valley.

Right edge - uphill

- **Row 1:** Slip the first stitch knitwise, Knit until 3 stitches remain. K2tog. Pick up one loop in the selvedge edge of the prior strip. Pass the last stitch over the picked up loop.

- **Row 2:** Purl 2 together; Knit to the end of the row.

Continue working rows 1 and 2 until 6 stitches remain on your needle. Then repeat the uphill and downhill sections until all of the valleys are filled. After the last row 2 repeat is complete, the valley is full, and the working yarn is at the selvedge edge, slip the remaining 6 stitches onto a spare DPN and hold to the side. You will be knitting these live stitches into the frame.

Top frame strip

Slip the last stitch onto the working needle from the storage DPN, and cast on five more stitches, for a total of six.

- **Row 1:** Slip the first stitch knitwise, knit 4, knit the last stitch ALONG WITH the next stitch on the storage DPN.

- **Row 2:** Purl 1, K5.

Repeat rows 1 and 2 until all of the stitches from the DPN have been used, then continue to march along the top edge of the blanket as follows:

- **Row 1:** Slip the first stitch knitwise, knit 4, knit the last stitch ALONG WITH the next stitch on the storage DPN.

- **Row 2:** Purl 1, K5.

Repeat rows 1 and 2 until you reach the last attachment point. After that work

- **Row 1:** Slip the first stitch knitwise, knit 5.

Until there are fifteen attachment loops along the edge of your narrow frame strip, on its "inside side. Bind off five stitches on the last pass across the top from the outer edge.

Left edge (begins with a mountain) - uphill

With the final cast-off loop remaining on your needle, pick up 14 stitches, one in each attachment loop. Pull a loop through the last attachment point AND through the attachment loop of the adjacent zig-zag strip.

- **Row 1:** Purl 1, knit 15

- **Row 2:** Slip the first stitch knitwise, knit until three stitches remain. K2tog. Pick up one loop in the selvedge edge of the prior strip. Pass the last stitch over the picked up loop.
- **Row 3:** Purl 1, knit to end of row.

Repeat rows 2 and three until only 6 stitches remain.

Left edge - downhill

- **Row 1:** Slip the first stitch knitwise, knit until two stitches remain. Knit into the front and back of the next stitch. Pick up one loop in the selvedge edge of the prior strip. Pass the last stitch over the picked up loop.
- **Row 2:** Purl 1, knit to end of row.

Repeat rows 1 and 2 until there are 16 stitches on the needle. Again, it's a good idea to confirm that there are 10 attachment points in the next zig-zag edge section and make any needed skip-one adjustments at the bottom of the valley.

Repeat the left edge uphill and downhill sections until you are even with the bottom of the piece. End with the yarn at the piece's right (outer) edge. Slip the 16 stitches onto the storage DPN.

Bottom frame strip

Slip the last stitch onto the working needle from the storage DPN, and cast on five more stitches, for a total of six.

- **Row 1:** Slip the first stitch knitwise, knit 4, knit the last stitch ALONG WITH the next stitch on the storage DPN.
- **Row 2:** Purl 1, K5.

Repeat rows 1 and 2 until all of the stitches from the DPN have been used, then continue to march along the bottom edge of the blanket as follows:

- **Row 1:** Slip the first stitch knitwise, knit 4, knit the last stitch ALONG WITH the next stitch on the storage DPN.
- **Row 2:** Purl 1, K5.

Repeat rows 1 and 2 until you reach the last attachment point. After that work

- **Row 1:** Slip the first stitch knitwise, knit 5.

Continue across the entire bottom of the piece, AND the initial cast-on edge of the frame strip. Bind off and break the yarn.

Hollow Point Edging

Cast on six stitches. Pick a corner of your blanket. Count six edge stitch attachment points back from it (to the right). Knit five stitches and then attach the sixth stitch to your chosen blanket point using our standard draw up a loop, pass last stitch over it method.

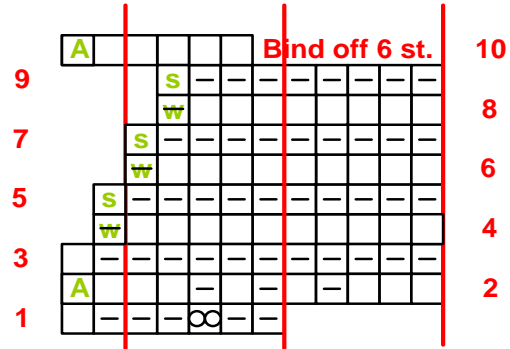
Row 1: P1, K3, YO2, K2

Hollow Point Edging

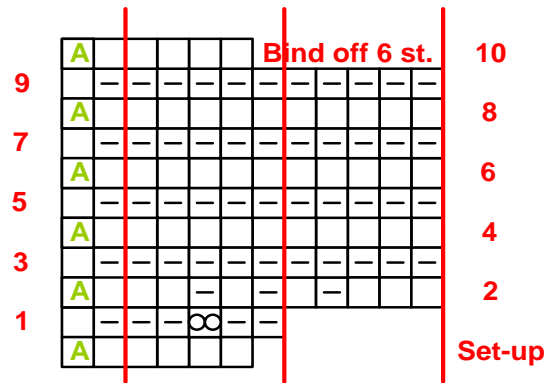
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12 stitches wide x 10 rows

Corner



Straight Run



	Front	Back
□	Knit	Purl
—	Purl	Knit
∞		YO2
W	Wrap and turn	
S		Slip one purlwise

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Row 2: K2, in the large hole created by the double YO work (k1, P1)3x, then K3. Pick up one loop in the blanket's selvedge edge. Pass the last stitch over the picked up loop. (total of 12 stitches)

Rows 3, 5, 7, 9: P1, K11

Rows 4, 6, 8: K11, pick up one loop in the blanket's selvedge edge. Pass the last stitch over the picked up loop. (total of 12 stitches)

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Row 10: Bind off 6 stitches. K5, pick up one loop in the blanket's selvedge edge. Pass the last stitch over the picked up loop. (total of 6 stitches remain).

When one point is completed, you should be at the last selvedge attachment stitch on the blanket body, Work the corner as follows:

Row 1: P1, K3, YO2, K2

Row 2: K2, in the large hole created by the double YO work (k1, P1)3x, then K3. Pick up one loop in the SAME ATTACHMENT POINT YOU JUST USED FOR ROW 10 OF THE STRAIGHT RUN CHART. Pass the last stitch over the picked up loop. (total of 12 stitches)

Row 3: P1, K11

Row 4: K10, bring yarn to the front of the work. IGNORING THE REMAINING STITCH ON THE LEFT HAND NEEDLE, turn the work over (we'll call this the wrap-turn).

Row 5: Bring the yarn to the front of the work again and slip the first stitch on the (now) left hand needle purlwise. Bring the yarn to the back of the work. That first stitch should now be wrapped and slipped – with a little noose around its base. (We'll call this the wrap-slip). K10

Row 6: K9. Wrap-turn.

Row 7: Wrap-slip, K9.

Row 8: K8. Wrap-turn.

Row 9: Wrap-slip, K8.

Row 10. Bind off 6 stitches. K2. Knit the next stitch ALONG WITH the little wrapped loop you placed around its base. (This is easier if you winkle that loop up onto your needle tip first). Knit each of the next two stitches in the same manner, along with its wrap. Pick up one loop in the next attachment point – this should be the first stitch “around the corner”. Pass the last stitch over the picked up loop

Repeat the corner treatment once more, taking care to work the row 4 attachment in the same selvedge edge attachment loop that was just used in Row 10.

After two corner petals are complete, return to working the straight run edging across the entire edge of the blanket. When you're about 24 or so attachment point stitches away from the corner, confirm the count, so that you make sure that the last petal's row 10 aligns exactly with the last attachment point. Although the count should work out, you may need to make some minor adjustments, skipping an attachment point or working two attachments into the same stitch in order for everything to align properly. Confirming count while you are still several iterations out will help you spread any adjustments over a larger area and make them invisible.



Continue working around the remaining sides and corners of the blanket until you reach the point where you began. Again, when you're about 24 attachments away from the first row, confirm the count so that the last row worked is row 10. Graft or seam the final six stitches to the initial six.

Congratulations! You're done. Now you'll have to darn in all of the ends. (For reference purposes, this took me two evenings on my blanket, aided a bit because I used so many self-stripping yarns, which enabled color changes without additional ends).