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 selavage.
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 selavage, 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.
Seaming
When you have completed 3 strips, line up the CO edges and use mattress stitch to seam them together. The selvedge 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/strip 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.
Babies love contrasting colors! When I gave the original Star Blanket to my friend for her newborn son, I was a bit torn between the heirloom blanket I had made for my own newborn and the modern, colorful version she had chosen. The blanket I ended up making for her was somewhere between the two.

For the main project, I used three strips of yarn sewn together to make a 60" by 60" blanket. Each strip was 20" by 6" and was cast on 54 stitches. I used three foreground colors and three background colors: two solid colors and a Star pattern color. The Star pattern was worked in the round, and the colors were alternated in the pattern. The solid background colors were used to separate the stars, and the Star pattern color was used to create the illusion of stars.

The Star pattern was worked in a flat stitch, and the solids were worked in the round. The pattern was worked in a 2-row color stripe, and the solids were worked in a 3-row color stripe. The pattern was worked as follows:

- Row 1: Change to BC, K to last st, P1.
- Row 2 (RS): See chart. Slip the markers as you come to them.
- Odd-numbered rows: Work in the BC color.
- Even-numbered rows: Work in the FC color.

To make the blanket, I worked three strips together. To line up the CO edges, I worked two rows in each strip. I used the Star pattern color for the second row worked in the 2-row color stripe. I used the BC color for the third row worked in the 3-row color stripe. If you want to stagger two-row stripes, you can switch colors (at the beginning of WS rows) every 2 rows. Continue in this manner, following the chart for RS, purling in the WS rows.

When you have completed the blanket, you can trim the excess binding fabric and use leftover strands of yarn to create a fringe. You can also use this blanket as a baby blanket, and it will make a great gift for any baby. The blanket is made from 3 strips, sewn together, and can be used as a baby blanket or a throw. The finished blanket will be 360 rows (90 by 90) and can be used as a baby blanket or a throw.
big project like this I always enjoy mixing in as many colors across the strips or staggering them. Have fun with it.

This blanket is constructed from 3 strips, sewn together.

Design considerations:
- Seaming, 1 yd or 1 m / flannel or other backing fabric; satin
- Other supplies:
  - Finished dime

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

Yarn:
- 100 g / 215 yards (196 meters)
- 80% cotton, 20% wool

Contact me at: ktdid88@hotmail.com

Star Illusion Blanket

Dimensions:
- Approximately 32 x 40 inches

Chart:
- Chart is in two sections on the fol.
- Carefully to create the star image. Solid bars indicate purl.
- Bumps create the illusion effect, so follow the chart.

Note:
- First and last sts are selvage stitches. Seaming the backing will cover them, but they are just there to aid in counting across the edges.

Row 4: See chart.
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 1: Beginning. When you have worked through the chart, the pattern will line up. As you start each strip at row 1 of the chart, the pattern will start again at the beginning. Finished strip will be 360 rows (90 when you have completed it. (There's no need to cut the yarn between color changes - just carry the unused yarn up the side.)

Row 22:
- Kn1, P13, K16, P21, K1, P14, K14, P24, K24, P1

Row 26:
- Kn1, P15, K16, P21, K1, P14, K14, P24, K24, P1

Row 30:
- Kn1, P1

Row 34:
- Kn1, P1

Row 38:
- Kn1, P1

Row 42:
- Kn1, P1

Row 46:
- Kn1, P1

Row 50:
- Kn1, P1

Row 54:
- Kn1, P1

Row 58:
- Kn1, P1

Row 62:
- Kn1, P1

Row 66:
- Kn1, P1

Row 70:
- Kn1, P1

Row 74:
- Kn1, P1

Row 78:
- Kn1, P1

Row 82:
- Kn1, P1

Row 86:
- Kn1, P1

Row 90:
- Kn1, P1

Row 94:
- Kn1, P1

Row 98:
- Kn1, P1

Row 102:
- Kn1, P1

Row 106:
- Kn1, P1

Row 110:
- Kn1, P1

Row 114:
- Kn1, P1

Row 118:
- Kn1, P1

Row 122:
- Kn1, P1

Row 126:
- Kn1, P1

Row 130:
- Kn1, P1

Row 134:
- Kn1, P1

Row 138:
- Kn1, P1

Row 142:
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Row 146:
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Row 150:
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Row 154:
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Row 158:
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Row 162:
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Row 166:
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Row 170:
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Row 174:
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Row 178:
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Row 182:
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Row 186:
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Row 190:
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Row 194:
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Row 198:
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Row 202:
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Row 206:
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Row 210:
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Row 214:
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Row 218:
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Row 222:
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Row 226:
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Row 230:
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Row 234:
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Row 238:
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Row 242:
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Row 246:
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Row 250:
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Row 254:
- Kn1, P1

Row 258:
- Kn1, P1

Row 262:
- Kn1, P1