

Double Knitting Tutorial

Double knitting creates two fabrics at the same time in which the image is in reverse colors on the back. This is simpler than it sounds. Choose a charted image and 2 colors. We will use the chart below.

1. Cast on holding both colors of yarn together. Cast on using the half hitch method in the Knitting 101 handout. As you cast on each stitch make sure that every other stitch is a different color. You will need to cast on the number of stitches indicated by your chart in each color, so on your needle you will have double the number of stitches. If the chart calls for 12 stitches that's 12 in each color or 24 stitches total. For this chart cast on 14 stitches.
2. Begin knitting at the bottom row of the chart on the right. The first 2 rows are background colors, so you will begin knitting with the color of the first stitch. You are going to knit one color and purl the other color. Meaning that you will knit the first stitch and purl the second, knit the third, purl the fourth and continue all the way across the row. [K1, P1] You need to hold both yarns together and pass each of them back and forth across the work as you knit and purl, but you will only complete the stitch with the color of yarn needed for that stitch. The other color yarn is carried back and fourth and not used in the actual stitch. Just keep both yarns in your hand at all times and only catch the one you need but you hold them both keeping tension on them like you were using them both.
3. The second row begins on the second row of the chart (above the last row) but this time you start following the chart on the left. Before you make the first stitch, twist the two yarns so that the one you are not going to use in the stitch is caught at the edge of the fabrics. (Otherwise, you will have a hole at the edge of your fabric that you'll have to close later) If the first stitch was purled, then you will knit and if knitted, then you will purl, just like in regular stockinette stitch. The only difference is that you are carrying two yarns back and forth and only making the stitch with the color required. For this row keep stitching with the color of the previous stitch.
4. Row three (from the bottom starting on the right) is where you begin really following the chart. Remember to twist the yarns to catch the one you are not starting with at the edge of the fabric. Do this at the beginning of each row. When reading the chart, remember that for each stitch on the chart, you have 2 stitches on the needle (1 on the front and 1 on the back of the fabric). So if the chart shows 4 stitches in a given color, you will actually stitch 8 stitches, 4 for the front and 4 for the back. If the stitches are in the background colors, then continue as you have been with the same colors on the front and back. If the stitches are in the opposite color, then you stitch those stitches with the opposite colors. For the chart we are working 4 stitches in the background color, 3 stitches in the opposite color, 5 stitches in the background color, 1 stitch in the opposite color, 1 stitch in the background color.
5. Continue following the chart from the bottom up, remembering to read odd numbered rows from the right and even numbered rows from the left. Change colors as the chart indicates. Row 4: 1 stitch in the background color, 2 stitches in the opposite color, 4 stitches in the background color, 3 stitches in the opposite color, 4 stitches in the background color.

6. When you have reached the last row of the chart, bind off as indicated in the Knitting 101 handout except knit one stitch of each color together as though they were one stitch. (Knit 2 together twice, pass the first stitch over the second stitch and off the needle. * Knit 2 together once, pass the first stitch over the second stitch and off the needle * Continue until all but one of the stitches are off the needle. Pass the tail through the last stitch and pull snug. Using a crochet hook or a yarn needle, pull the tails in between the front and back of the fabrics and you are finished.

If in doubt, find a You Tube video showing how to Double Knit. It may show a different way to cast on and bind off (the simplest ways are described here, there are many other ways to do it.) but the actual double knitting part should be the same.

