

Planning Your Afghan

Afghan Size

The patterns in this book will work with any size afghan you wish to make, from a baby afghan or lap throw size (approximately 36" x 58") to a larger size suitable for a sofa afghan or twin bed throw (approximately 58" x 84").

Fabric Amounts

One yard of monk's cloth (using the 60" width of the fabric for the length of the afghan) will make a nice size lap throw or a baby afghan for a crib. A larger sofa afghan or twin bed throw will require approximately $2\frac{1}{3}$ yds. When purchasing the fabric for your project, add an additional 6"

to allow for shrinkage and uneven cuts of the weave from the bolt. Be sure to allow for the side hem preparation noted below.

Yarn Amounts

The number of skeins required will depend upon the size afghan you wish to make and the pattern choice. Because this will vary greatly, exact amounts of yarn cannot be given. The chart below has some general guidelines. These quantities are estimates so it is best to purchase extra yarn should you need more.

Estimated Yarn Amounts

Baby Afghan or Lap Throw (36" x 58")

one 3 oz skein
of each solid color

or

two 3 oz skeins
variegated

or

one 6 oz jumbo skein
solid color or variegated

Sofa Afghan or Bed Throw (58" x 84")

one 3 oz skein
of each minor color and
two to three 3 oz skeins of dominant color

or

four 3 oz skeins
variegated

or

two 6 oz jumbo skeins
solid color or variegated

Preparing Your Fabric

1. Remove enough threads from the cut ends of the fabric until there is a continuous thread all the way across. Trim off excess threads and do not cut to desired finished size at this time.
2. Machine stitch (zigzag is preferable) two rows of stitches, or hand baste a hem to prevent the cut ends from raveling.
3. Machine wash and rinse in cold water and use fabric softener if desired. Dry flat or in a dryer at low or no heat. There will be minor shrinkage.
4. Now hem the raw edges. Turn under three, then five rows of the weave (**Fig 7**). Pin in place and baste by hand, keeping your stitches fairly loose and spacing them two or three blocks apart.
5. Now fold the selvages back the width of five rows, pin in place, and overcast by hand. Do not machine stitch at this time.

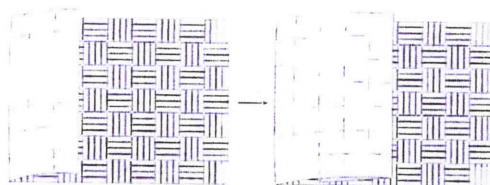


Fig 7

What are Monk's Cloth Afghans?

These afghans are created by running a needle and yarn along the surface of a material called monk's cloth. This fabric has a distinct weave of four vertical and four horizontal threads per block (**Fig 1**). The yarn is slipped behind the blocks of vertical threads to create a design according to the pattern followed. All of the "stitching" appears on the top of the fabric and never shows through to the back.

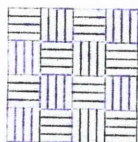


Fig 1

Here's What You'll Need

The Yarn

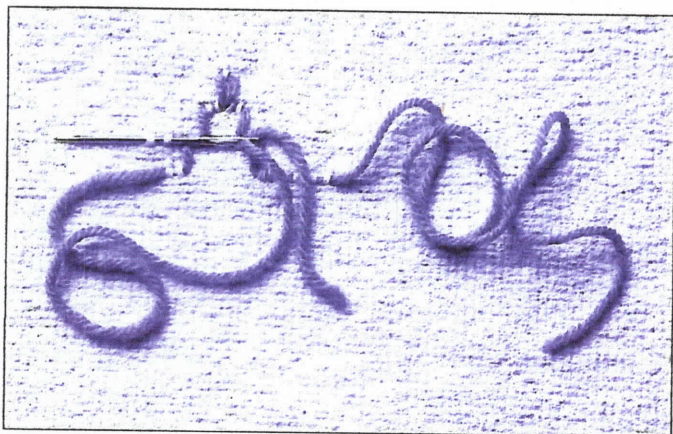
The yarn used to make a monk's cloth afghan is traditional 4-ply worsted weight acrylic yarn. Choose your favorite colors to coordinate with a room or use the colors shown in our patterns.

The Needle

Use a #13 metal yarn needle for stitching monk's cloth afghans. You will also need a measuring tape, a pair of scissors, and a few safety pins.

Monk's Cloth

The fabric used is called monk's cloth, which is available in white or a natural (pale beige) color. It is 59" to 60" wide. This fabric has an interesting texture which is caused by its distinctive weave: four vertical and four horizontal threads creating a block. By slipping yarn behind the blocks of vertical threads at prescribed intervals (see below), a design can be created.



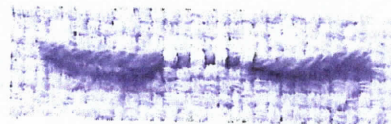
Beginning the first row of a monk's cloth afghan.

The Stitches

When stitching, the yarn is worked **only** under blocks of vertical threads. We've illustrated each stitch with both a detailed diagram and a photograph of the stitch worked on monk's cloth. Work right to left, or left to right if you are left-handed. Do not pull the yarn all the way to the back side of the fabric. Simply slip the needle under the vertical blocks of threads.

Straight Stitch

This is the basic stitch; all the others are variations.



Stitch **under** a block of vertical threads and **over** the horizontal threads to form a straight stitch (**Fig 2**).

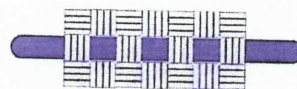
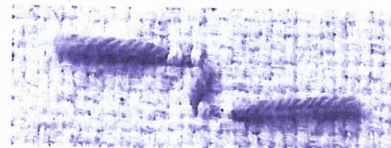


Fig 2

Slant Stitch Up

Bring the yarn out of the last block of vertical threads shown in the pattern, then go



up to the row indicated and under the first vertical block to continue the pattern (**Fig 3**).

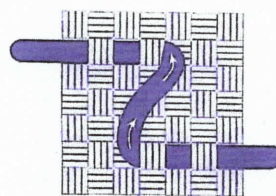
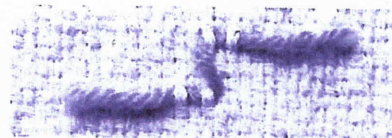


Fig 3

Slant Stitch Down

This stitch is the same as the Slant Stitch Up but worked in the



opposite direction (**Fig 4**). Bring the yarn out of the last block of vertical threads shown in the pattern, then go down to the row indicated and under the first vertical block to continue pattern.

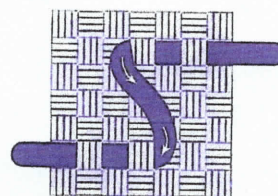


Fig 4

V Stitch

Go under only two vertical threads on the right half of this block.

Bring yarn up to the block indicated in the pattern and go under all four threads, bring yarn back down and under the remaining two threads of the bottom block (**Fig 5**).

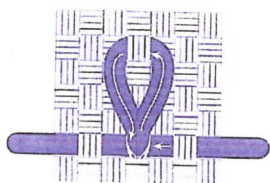
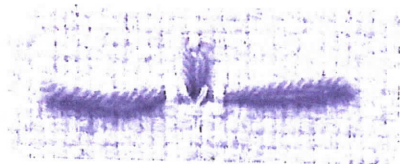


Fig 5

Figure Eight Stitch

Bring yarn under a vertical block, then up over rows of blocks indicated and under vertical block at top of stitch. Bring yarn back down and under the center vertical block but over the top of previous yarn to the bottom vertical block; go under block. Go up to the center vertical block again and bring yarn under the block but over the previous yarn to complete the stitch (**Fig 6**).

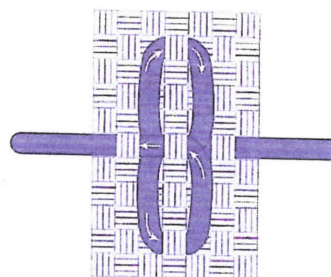
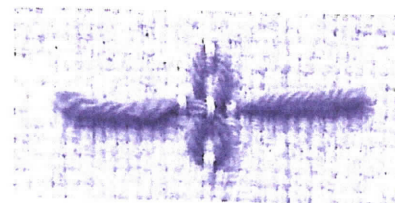


Fig 6

The Charts

The stitches are worked in continuous rows on the afghan. Each row is always worked in the same color; there will not be a "stop and start" in the middle of a row to switch to a new color.

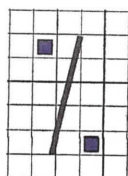
Each design is charted, with symbols and lines indicating the colors and stitches to be worked.

Although you work under four threads (or one block) at a time, the chart only shows the block. So each square on the chart represents one block in the weave of the fabric. The symbol or line on the chart represents the visible yarn. On this page are examples of the different stitches and how they appear on a chart.

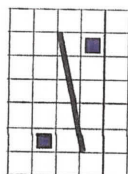
Straight Stitch



Slant Stitch Up



Slant Stitch Down



V Stitch

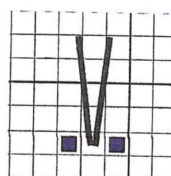
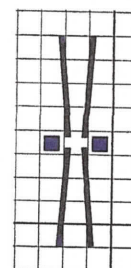


Figure Eight Stitch



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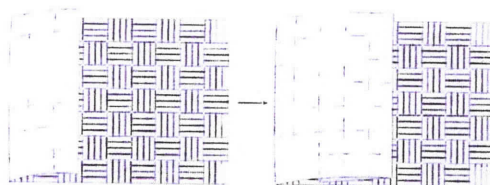


Fig 7

Start in the Middle

It is very important to always stitch from the center of the afghan out to its sides in order to keep the fabric from becoming distorted or off grain. To find the center of your afghan, fold it into quarters, carefully matching the corners and sides. Mark the center using a safety pin.

You may want to double check the center location by laying out the fabric flat and measuring. The design pattern will indicate if the center knot needs to be tied over a block of horizontal or vertical threads. In the same block as your safety pin, tie a loose yarn knot using one or two strands of a contrasting color from your stitching colors (**Fig 8**), then remove the pin. The pin can snag your yarn or fabric, and you will be frequently using the center knot as a reference point.



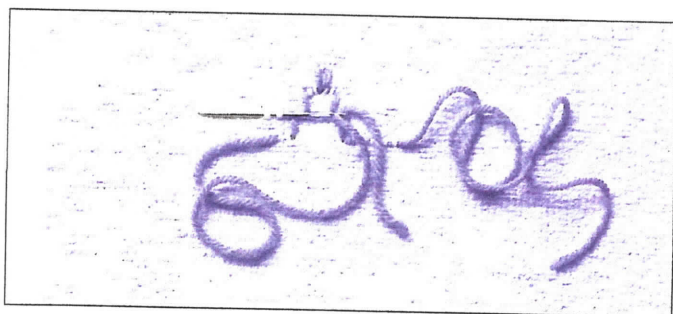
Fig 8

Beginning to Stitch

The length of yarn required is given for each row in a pattern and is measured by using the width of the afghan. For example, 2W means to use a piece of yarn twice the width of the fabric. $2\frac{1}{2}W$ means a piece of yarn two and one half times the width of the fabric. Lay the yarn on top of the fabric and straighten it to measure, but do not stretch the yarn.

It is important to keep the tension on the yarn even. Pulling too tight will pucker the fabric, and too loose will make the work look sloppy.

Make the first stitch(es) as directed in the individual pattern instructions. Place the two ends of the yarn together and gently pull the yarn through the fabric until you have divided its length in half. Leave the right half off to the side. If you are left-handed work the opposite way.

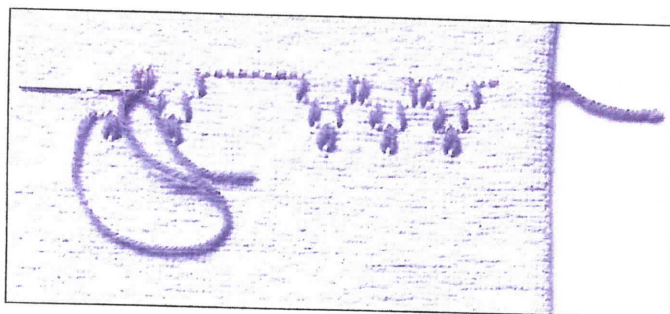


Following the pattern, stitch with the left half of the yarn from the middle of the afghan toward the left, repeating the pattern until reaching the fourth or fifth block from the edge. Slide the needle down through the fabric and hide the yarn inside the hem bringing it out of the afghan edge (see below).



Turn the afghan around (top to bottom). Pick up the remaining half of the yarn and stitch the other half of the row (see below).

You can stitch the entire left side of your afghan first, then turn it and stitch the right side. Or you can stitch each row in its entirety, always starting in the center.



Remember! To keep your afghan from becoming distorted, always start in the center of the fabric to stitch one half of the row, then stitch the other half. Never start at one side and stitch all the way across to the other side.

Let's Practice with a Placemat

For your practice piece, you will need:

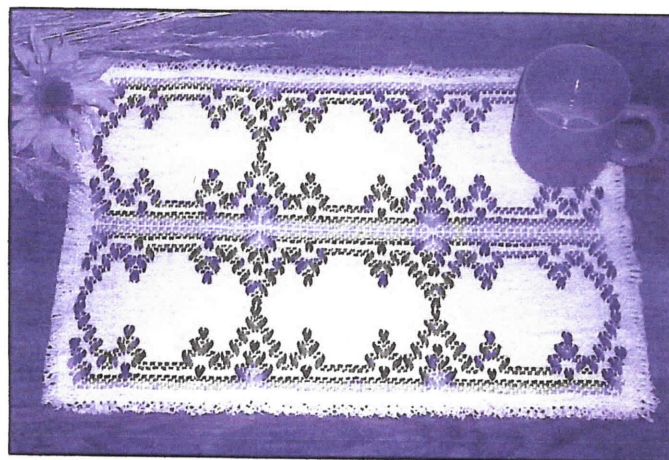
- monk's cloth, measuring 16" x 20", prepared as described on page 3
- 4-ply worsted weight yarn; tan (16 yds), gold (24 yds), rose (21 yds)
- #13 metal yarn needle
- measuring tape
- safety pins
- scissors

Stitching Key

Place center knot over a block of **vertical** threads.

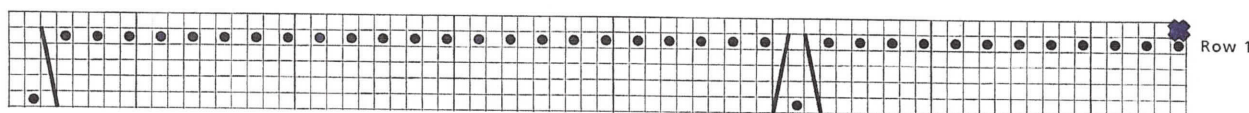
✕ = center knot

Row #	Symbol	Yarn length	Yarn Color
1	●	2W	tan
2	●	2W	tan
3	▲	2 1/4W	gold
4	■	2 1/2W	rose

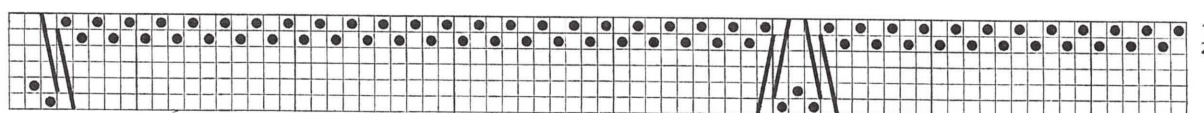


We've used the Wheat Fields pattern pictured on the back cover for our practice placemat.

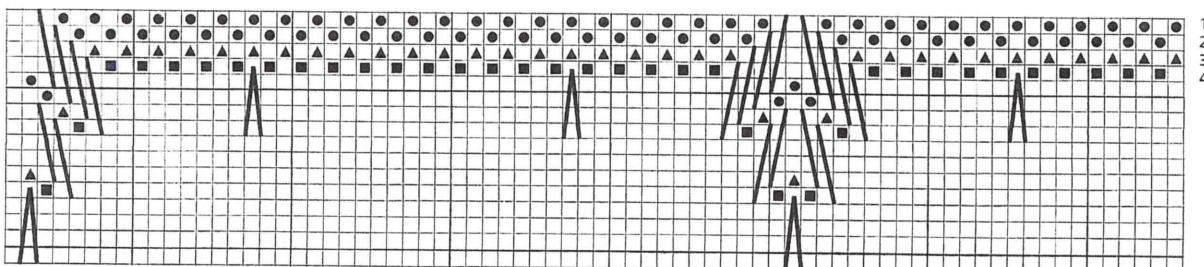
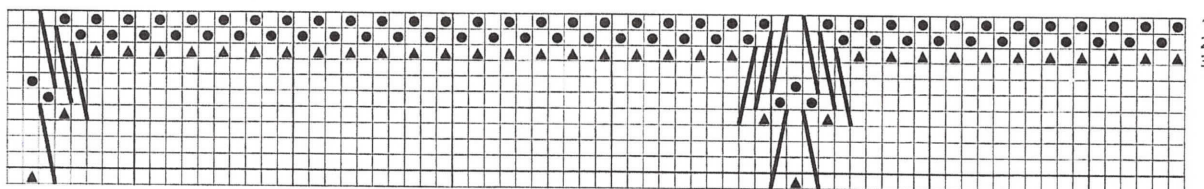
1. Locate and mark the center of the fabric as described on page 4. Be sure your center knot is over a **vertical** block of threads.
2. Begin stitching the first row, starting in the center at the row below the center knot and using tan yarn. The Stitching Key above indicates the symbol for the yarn color and the length of yarn to cut for this particular row. As you can see, this row consists of several Straight Stitches with Slant Stitch Down and Slant Stitch Up.



3. As you near the left edge, stop stitching the pattern at the end of the chart. Turn the fabric top to bottom and use the other half of the yarn length to stitch the rest of the row.
4. Now stitch Row 2, beginning in the center and stitching to the same place on the left edge as Row 1. Turn fabric top to bottom and complete Row 2.



5. Keep stitching! Now you can see the pattern and colors develop when Rows 3 and 4 are completed.



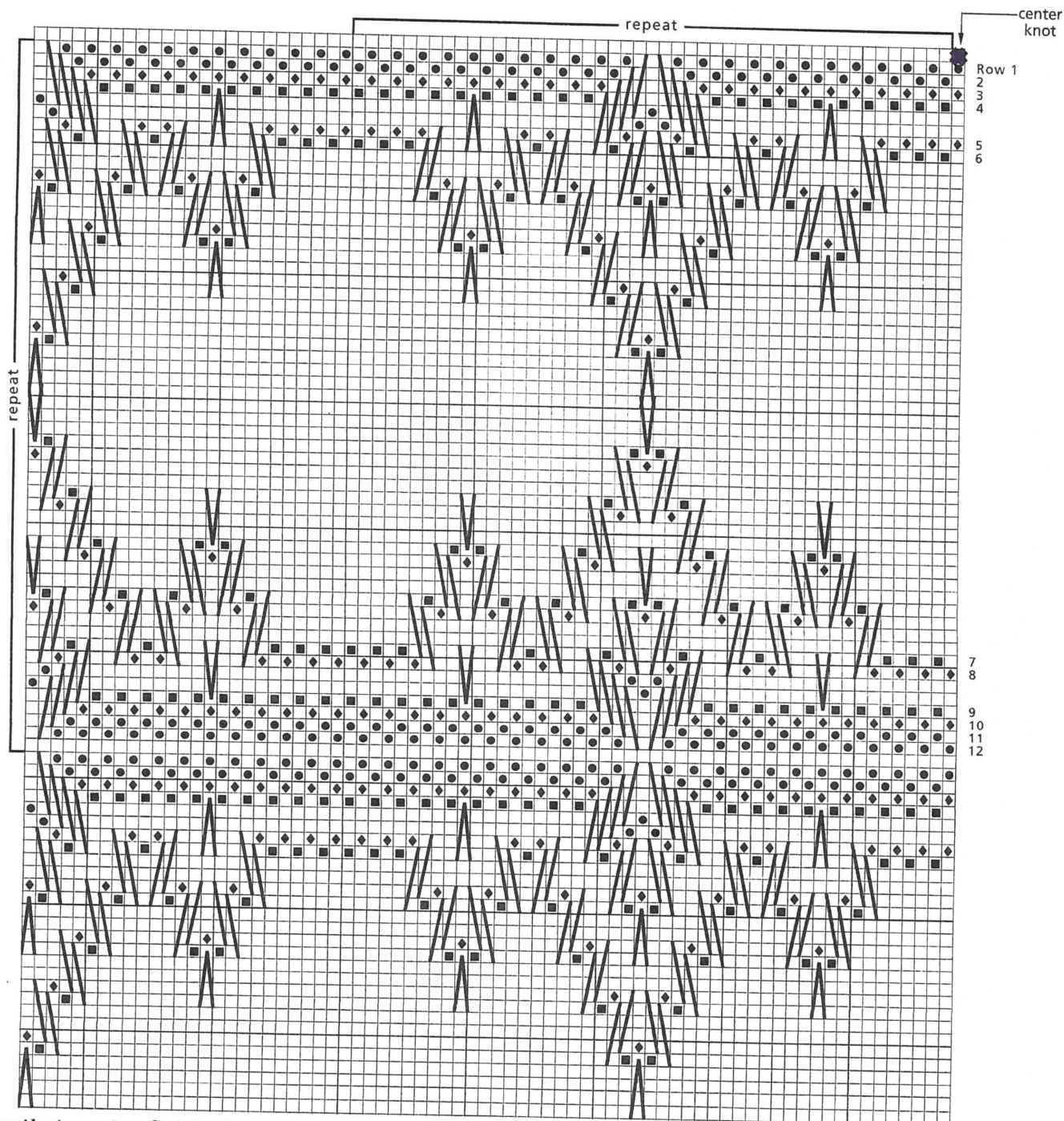
6. Continue stitching by following the chart on the next page, until the fabric is stitched to your taste.

Wheat Fields

Stitching Key

✱ = center knot

Row #	Symbol	Yarn Length	Yarn Color	Row #	Symbol	Yarn Length	Yarn Color
1	●	2W	tan	7	■	3 1/4W	rose
2	●	2W	tan	8	◆	3W	gold
3	◆	2 1/4W	gold	9	■	2 1/2W	rose
4	■	2 1/2W	rose	10	◆	2 1/4W	gold
5	◆	3W	gold	11	●	2W	tan
6	■	3 1/4W	rose	12	●	2W	tan



Now that you've finished your stitching, proceed to the following page for finishing, and you'll have a lovely placemat!

Finishing

When the stitching is complete there are several options to consider when finishing your afghan.

Hemmed Edges

With a sewing machine stitch around all four hand-basted sides of the afghan. Holding each individual strand of yarn that extends from the outer edge of the side hems, depress the outer edge slightly and carefully cut off the excess yarn. The cut end of the yarn will be hidden within the hem.

Self Fringe

Machine stitch the two sides and remove the excess ends of yarn as described above. On the top and bottom of the afghan machine sew with a zigzag stitch two or three rows just above the length of fringe desired. Unravel the fabric up to the stitching (**Fig 9**). To straighten the kinked fringe, wet it and gently comb with a large toothed comb. Let dry flat or hanging.

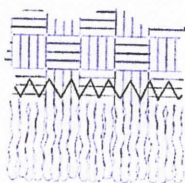


Fig 9

Blanket Stitch Edging

Machine stitch the two side hems, then fold and stitch the hems for the two remaining sides. Choose a color of yarn to coordinate with your design. With the same yarn needle used for stitching, make a blanket stitch around the outer edges, spacing the stitches two rows in and two blocks apart (**Fig 10**).

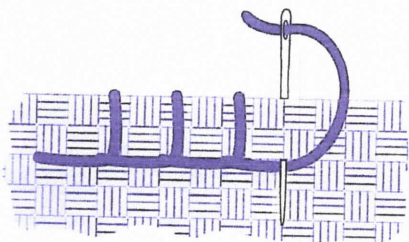


Fig 10

Single Crochet Edging

Machine stitch the two side hems, then fold and machine stitch hems for remaining two sides. Use a crochet hook, steel 2 or aluminum B. Insert hook into an intersection two rows from the hemmed edge. Draw a yarn loop through the

fabric, then hook the yarn and draw through the loop (**Fig 11**).

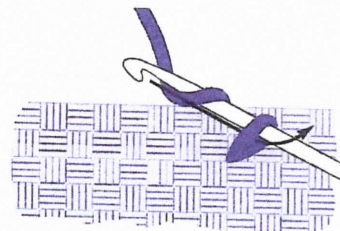


Fig 11

Insert the hook into the fabric two blocks to the left, hook the yarn, and draw through the fabric (**Fig 12**).

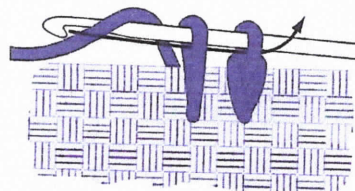


Fig 12

Hook the yarn and draw through both loops on the hook to make the first crochet stitch (**Fig 12**).

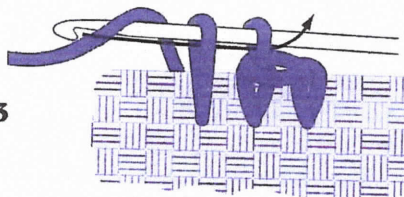


Fig 13

Insert the hook into the fabric two more blocks to the left, hook the yarn, and draw through both loops again for the second stitch (**Fig 13**). Continue in this manner around the afghan edges.

Tips and Hints

When stitching your afghan support your fabric on a table or over a firm pillow on your lap. This will help control the tension and make placing your stitches easier.

If a stitch is pulled too tightly, looks too short, or buries itself in the fabric, slip the tip of your needle under the stitch from above and lift the yarn to adjust it.

Check your progress often to be sure you are stitching the pattern correctly, especially when there is a change in the pattern shape.

If a mistake is found, remove the needle from the yarn and use the tip of the needle to draw up a small loop until you can grasp it. Gently pull the yarn back out of the fabric and remove small sections at a time so you don't distort the fabric. Be sure you have the needle under all strands of the yarn before lifting it up.

MATERIALS

MONK'S CLOTH

OR OTHER FABRICS LIKE HUCK
FABRIC OR WAFFLE CLOTH

***DON'T FOREGET TO PRE-WASH**

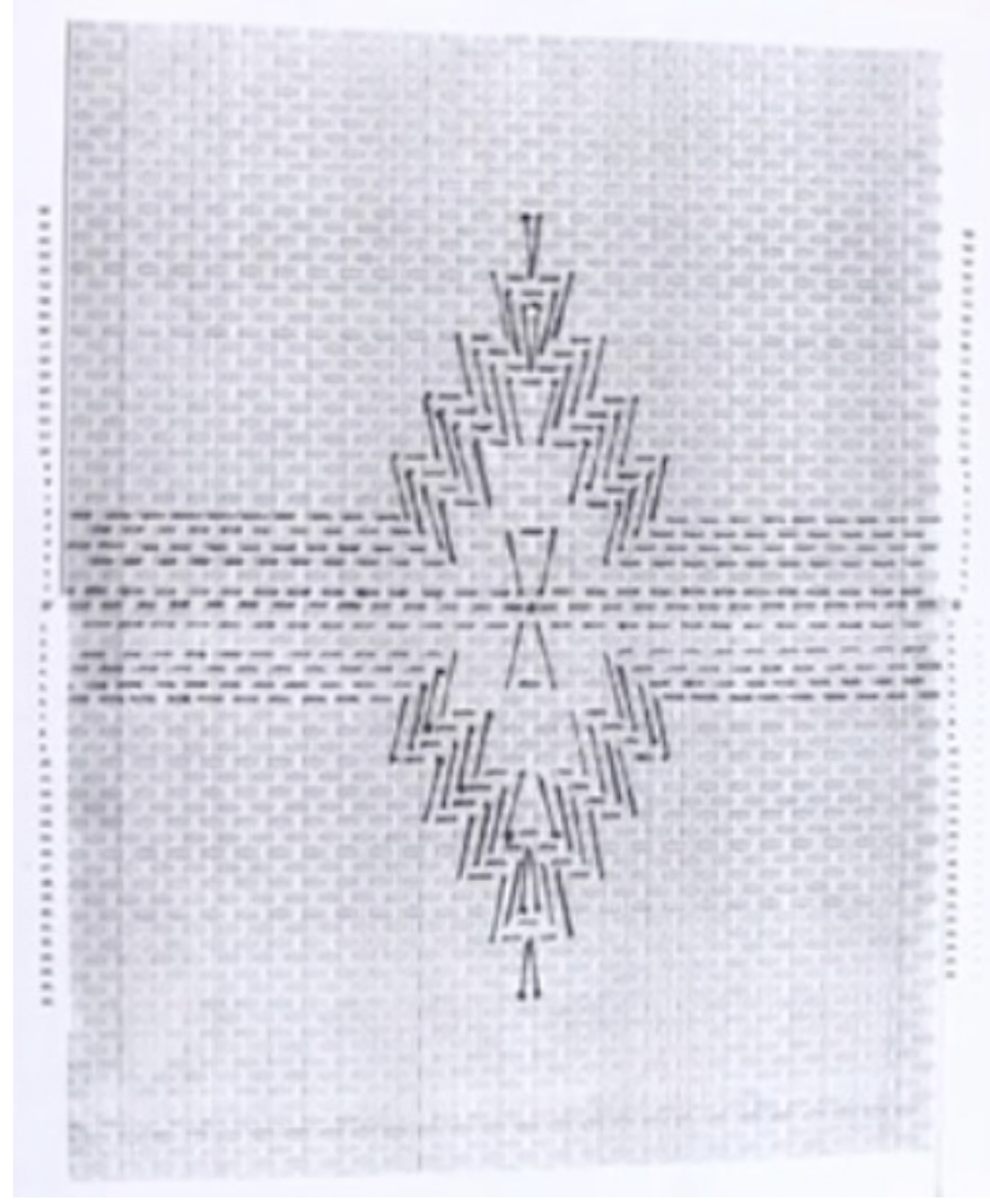
THREAD

#3 PERLE COTTON THREAD,
ELEGANZA™ BY SUE SPARGO

TAPESTRY NEEDLE



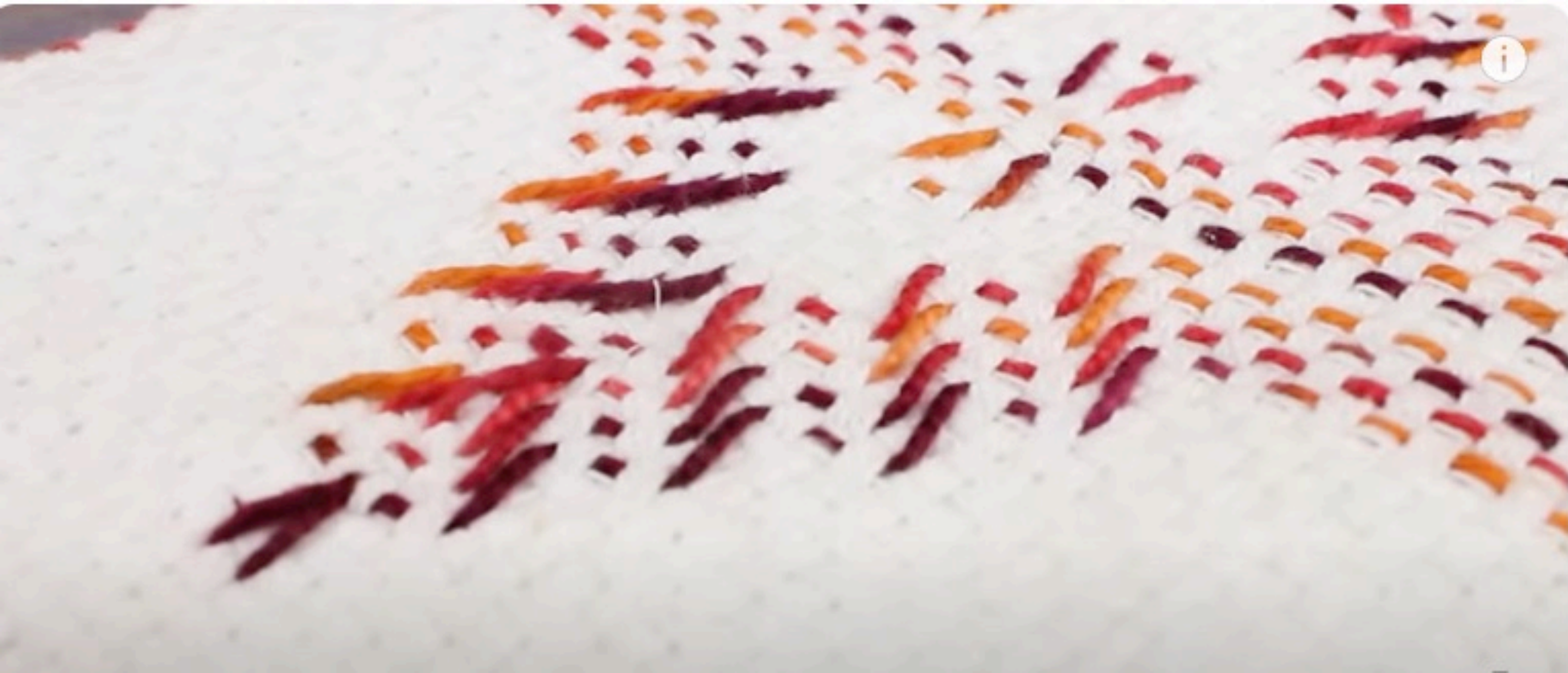


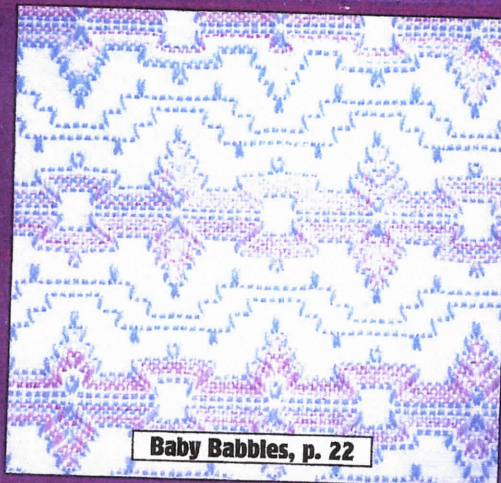
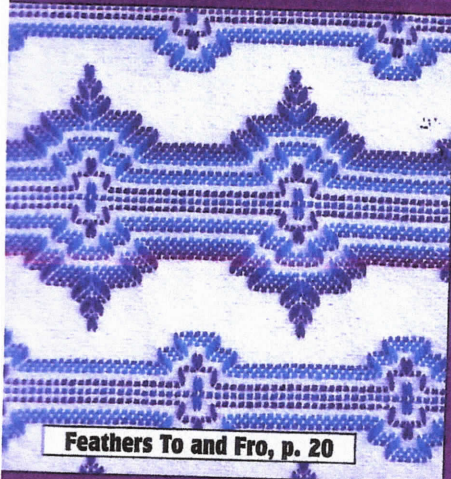
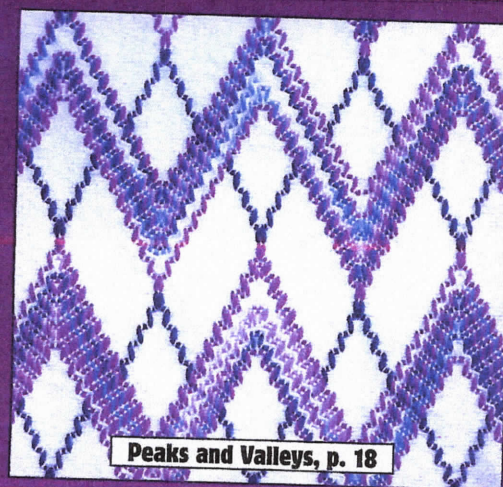
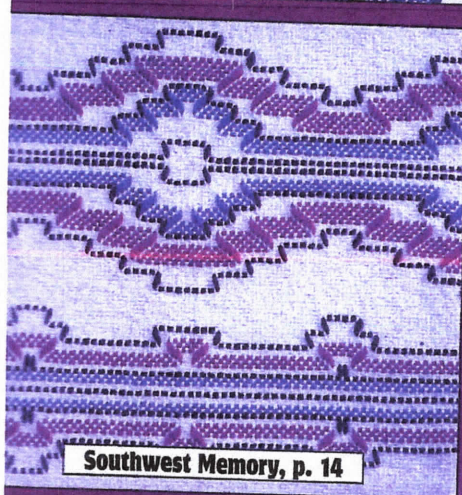
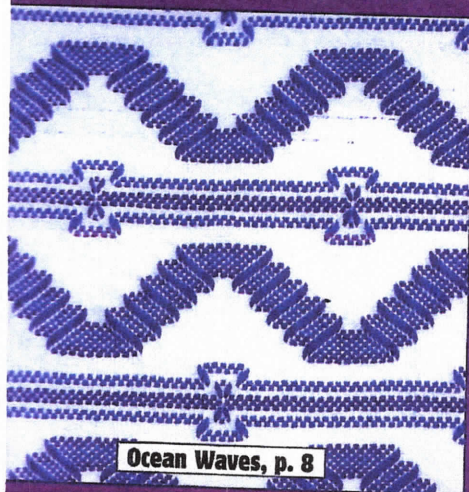




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Learn to Make Munk's with Afghans

produced by **Jean Leinhauser**