

Hints and Tips

#5 – Crescent-shaped shawls

Last month we looked at triangular shawls - this month Julie is looking at top down crescents.

My crescent designs all start with the same garter stitch tab that I use for my triangular shawls and which was featured step-by-step in last month's newsletter. For anyone who hasn't seen this, it can be downloaded from our website here:

<http://www.watercoloursandlace.co.uk/newsletter.html>, but as a reminder, the tab is worked as follows:



Cast on 3 stitches loosely.

Rows 1-8: Slip 1 pwise, k2.

Row 9: Slip 1 pwise, k2, turn work through 90 degrees, pick up and k 4 sts from slip stitch chains at left hand edge, then pick up and k 2 sts from cast on edge.

Row 10: Slip 1 pwise, k2, p3, k3.

You now have 9 stitches. (**Pic 1**)

For a crescent shawl, you generally increase 6 sts on every right side row. This means your stitches increase more rapidly than for a triangular shawl, so you get more width to the knitted piece but less depth at the back.

If you're working a design based on a stocking stitch background (alternating knit and purl rows), it's obvious which is the right side of your work. If you're working in garter stitch, ie every row knit, as for our Eilidh design, it's a good idea to place a marker at the start of the right side row so that you know which row to work the increases on.

I usually work crescents by increasing 3 sts either side of the right side row and my set-up rows would therefore look like this:

Row 1: Slip 1 pwise, k2, yo, (k1,yo,k1) in next st (= kyk), k1, kyk, yo, k3. 15 sts (**Pic 2**)

Row 2: Slip 1 pwise, k2, p to last 3 sts, k3.

Row 3: Slip 1 pwise, k2, yo, kyk, k to last 4 sts, kyk, yo, k3. 21 sts (**Pic 3**)

Row 4: Work as for Row 2.



This forms a 3-stitch garter edge next to a yarn over on either side of each right-side row. This will give a lace hole near the edge, which may appear quite large if using 4-ply or thicker yarns, or sometimes with yarns like pure silk which don't have much elasticity.

If you don't like these holes close to the edge, you may prefer to work 'make 1' in place of the yarn over. Make 1 by picking up the horizontal bar before the next stitch and knitting through the back of it. Whichever edge you use, make sure you keep the slip stitch and garter stitches at the edges loose, as this will ensure the top edge does not pucker when the shawl is blocked.

If you were planning to work the shawl, or at least the start of it, in stocking-stitch, you would repeat rows 3 and 4 until you have the depth required. My final picture (**Pic 4**) shows the fabric at 33 stitches, stretched over the cable of the circular needle so that the garter stitches form the straight edge that will become the long neck edge of the shawl, and showing the lace holes formed by the yarn overs at either side. You can continue this way in stocking stitch, or in a lace pattern, increasing either side until the end, or the pattern tells you otherwise.

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