

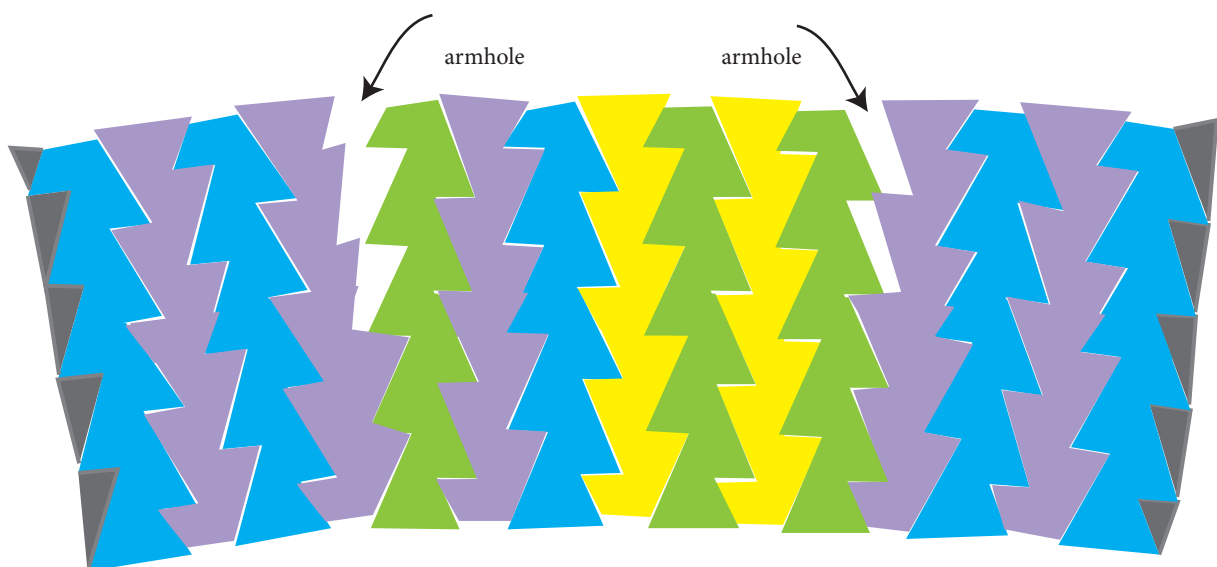
Off-Center Diamonds Cardigan

Susan Guagliumi



Yarn: 8 skeins Noro “Cyochin” (86% wool, 7% mohair, 7% silk)
Brother bulky K/M, stitch size 8

The specific directions for knitting “off-center diamonds” are given in detail in the Modular Knitting chapter of *Hand Knits by Machine*. The diagram below shows the structure of the body of the garment, which is worked in Off-Center Diamonds as one continuous piece. The sleeves are knitted in stockinette. All edges will require fills for seaming and finishing.

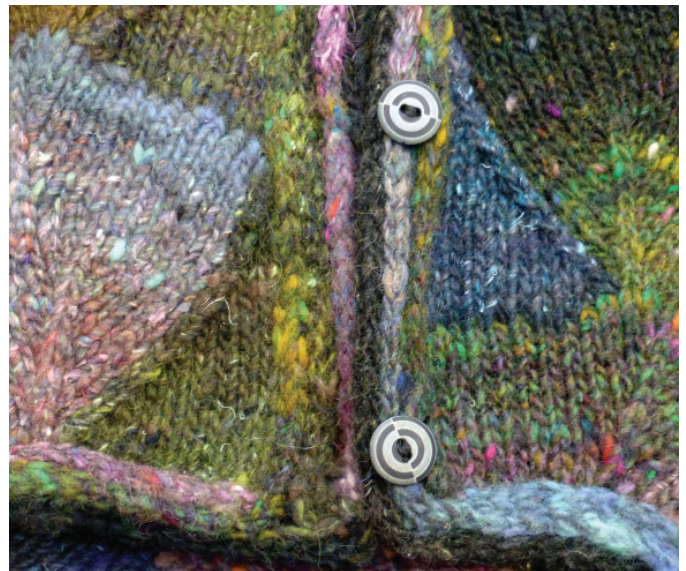
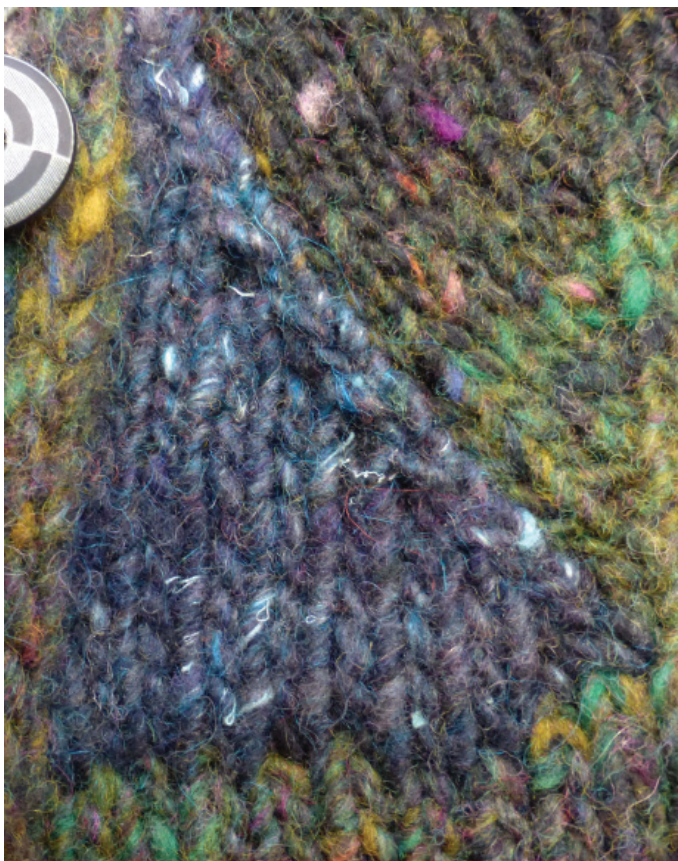


The back was worked first with 7 strips of off-center diamonds (9 high) as described on pages 174-178 of *Hand Knits by Machine*. I began and ended each strip on scrap knitting to facilitate picking up stitches later on for the fills.

Each of my fronts is joined to the edges of the back only through first 5 diamonds when working the first front strip. The remaining 4 diamonds were worked without joining to the back in order to create the armhole. This proportion can be adjusted to suit your taste and size.

Once the body of the garment was complete, I worked vertical fills along the two front edges and all four armhole edges to straighten them out. To do this, pick up 10 stitches from the garment (to form the base of a triangle). Then, every alternate row, pick up one stitch from the garment and hang it on the edge needle of the triangle and *at the same time* make 1 decrease along the picked-up edge. When 1 stitch remains, cut the yarn and pull it through the last stitch to fasten off.

This fill was decreased along the right edge *at the same time* that the edge stitch of the garment was picked up.



In the photo above, the front fill at left (olive) was worked by first casting on 10 stitches; the one at right (blue) was worked by picking up 10 stitches from the edge of the garment.

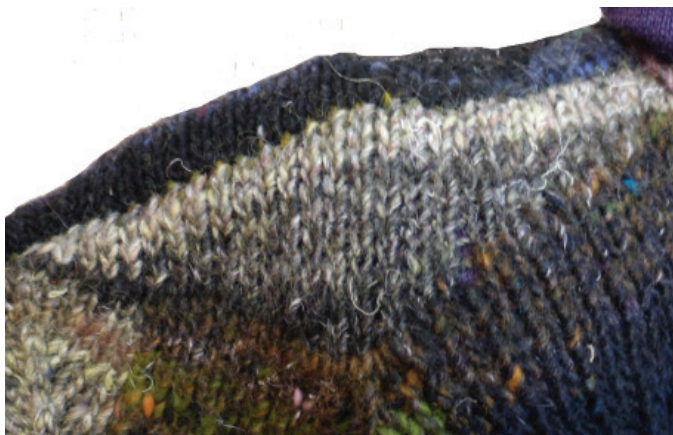
In the diagram on the previous page, the first triangle in the column of triangles on the right edge was worked by e-wrapping 10 stitches to start. There may be other places where this will be necessary in order to straighten out edges. (see photo above)

Before you can join the shoulder seams, you need to level off the upper edges. The diagram on the first page exaggerates the zigzagged edge, which is actually more of an undulating, curving line in the garment. The easiest way to smooth out this edge is to work short row fills.

Because each side of the “valley” you need to fill has a different number of stitches that need to be worked, I found it was easiest if I determined how many rows I needed to work for the smallest side (10 stitches); then, I determined how many extra stitches I had on the larger side (15 stitches). I figured on increasing with short rows 1 E/R for the shorter edge and by returning 2 stitches on the side opposite the carriage A/R to take care of the longer edge. My top fills are all worked over 10 rows.

I picked up the entire shoulder edge, folding back the scrap to expose the live stitches and re-hanging two stitches where one strip joined the next to avoid gaps. Then I worked each fill section, bridging from one to the next. If bridging is new to you, you can also cut the yarn at the end of each fill and then be-

gin the next. Once the upper edges are even, you can join the shoulder seams. Leave about 6" at the center back open for the back neck.



The grey/beige fill above was worked with 10 stitches at left and 15 at right.

The sleeves on my cardigan were knitted in plain stockinette, which I seamed *before* setting them into the garment. I also worked two rows of I-cord edging around the armholes first to further even and define those edges.

I worked multiple rows of i-cord trim around the front, neckline and lower edges, leaving some edges un-connected for buttonholes. You could also finish these edges with crochet or a band of your choice and level the lower edges or leave them scalloped.

I considered leaving the front edges zigzagged (like the lower edges), but opted for the fills instead, although I do think it would make an interesting detail on the front of a cardigan knitted with less "busy" yarn.

The lower edge of the garment falls in graceful scallops - or you could choose to work fills for a straight edge instead.



For a pullover, you will probably do best (in controlling size and shape) if you work the front and the back separately, fill the side edges and then seam front to back. It is fairly likely that working the sweater in one piece (back, armhole, then front) will produce strips that do not notch into each other correctly at the second armhole. However, one way to check is to make paper cutouts to manipulate before you even begin.

If you look carefully at my cardigan, you will notice that the fills along the armhole edges made the sweater wider at that point. Below the armholes, the front was just knitted off the back edges with no fills between them so that portion of the garment is not as wide as the armhole edges.

This difference in width created a sort of "cap" to attach each sleeve. The only way to avoid this is to knit separate fronts and backs, filling *all* side edges so that the pieces are perfectly rectangular before you seam them together. If I were to knit my cardigan again, I would probably opt for this change. Either way, the irregular edges that result from this kind of modular knitting offer all kinds of scenarios for improvising new techniques and finishes so be adventurous!

Notice how the garment widens at the beginning of the sleeve. There are two rows of i-cord trim between the garment and the sleeve.

