

High Desert PILLOWS

Designs by **CHERYL MURRAY**

Practice your stranded colorwork skills and bring the warmth of the Southwestern desert to your decor with this pair of Native American–inspired pillows.



1 2 3 4 5 6 INTERMEDIATE

Size

Fits 16-inch square pillow form

Finished Measurement

15½ inches square

Materials

- Berroco Comfort (worsted weight yarn; 50% super fine nylon/50% super fine acrylic; 210 yds/100g per skein): 2 skeins ivory #9701 (MC); 1 skein each iron oxide #9746 (A) and rabe #9754 (B)
- Size 8 (5mm) 16-inch circular needle and 32-inch circular needle or size needed to obtain gauge
- Waste yarn in contrasting color
- Stitch markers
- ½ yard (45-inch-wide) fabric for back
- Sewing needle and matching thread
- 2 (16-inch) pillow forms



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Gauge

20 sts and 24 rnds = 4 inches/10cm in stranded St st.

To save time, take time to check gauge.

Special Techniques

Attached I-Cord: *K2, ssk (I-cord st with edging st), slip 3 sts back to LH needle, pull yarn across back; rep from * as indicated.

Unattached I-Cord: K3, slip 3 sts back to LH needle.

Pattern Notes

Yarn quantities are sufficient to make both designs.

Instructions for both pillows are the same. Select the chart as desired. The front of the pillow is worked in stranded stockinette stitch from a chart. The pattern is worked in the round with a steek. Upon completion the center steek stitch is cut for a flat

piece. See More About Steeks sidebar for information on securing and cutting the steek stitch to create the flat pillow front.

Front

Using provisional cast-on method, waste yarn and shorter needle, cast on 70 sts.

Rnd 1: Work Rnd 1 of desired chart. Do not turn.

Rnd 2: Using backward-loop method, cast on 3 sts (steek sts), place marker for beg of rnd, cast on 4 sts (steek sts), place marker, work Rnd 2 of chart—77 sts.

Join to work in rnds.

Note: On following rnds when 2 colors are used in rnd, alternate between MC rnd and CC rnd across steek sts; on color change rnds, change colors in the middle of the steek at beg of rnd.

More About Steeks

Steeking is a clever technique used in stranded color knitting which allows the knitter to work a colorwork pattern without interruptions for openings. It also eliminates the need to turn the work or purl the wrong-side rows. By keeping the right side of the work visible at all times, it makes it easier to observe the developing colorwork design.

Steeks are created by casting on a small number of additional stitches at the point where an opening is required. These stitches are worked in a simple alternating color pattern to differentiate them from the main design stitches. Once the knitting is complete, the steek is secured with either machine or hand stitching and then cut open. Finally, stitches are picked up along the cut edges and finished with ribbing or other edging treatment as desired.

For the High Desert Pillows, seven steek stitches are cast on using the backward-loop method at the end of the first row. Stitch markers are placed before and after the steek stitches and the knitting is joined to knit in the round. The charted pattern is worked on the main stitches with alternating light and dark colors used on the steek stitches as shown in Figure 1. Bind off steek

stitches at the beginning of the final round of the chart, then complete last chart row.

Mark the center of the middle steek stitch with a contrast-color basting thread, shown by red dotted line on Figure 1. With sewing machine set for a small, straight stitch, sew two lines of stitching along the stitches on either side of the middle stitch as shown by the green lines in Figure 1. Be careful not to catch loose strands of yarn on the back side of the steek in the sewing machine mechanism. With a pair of sharp scissors, carefully cut through the center of the middle stitch along the basting line. Pick up stitches for Attached I-Cord edging by inserting knitting needle under both legs of outermost steek stitches and complete edging as described in the pattern.

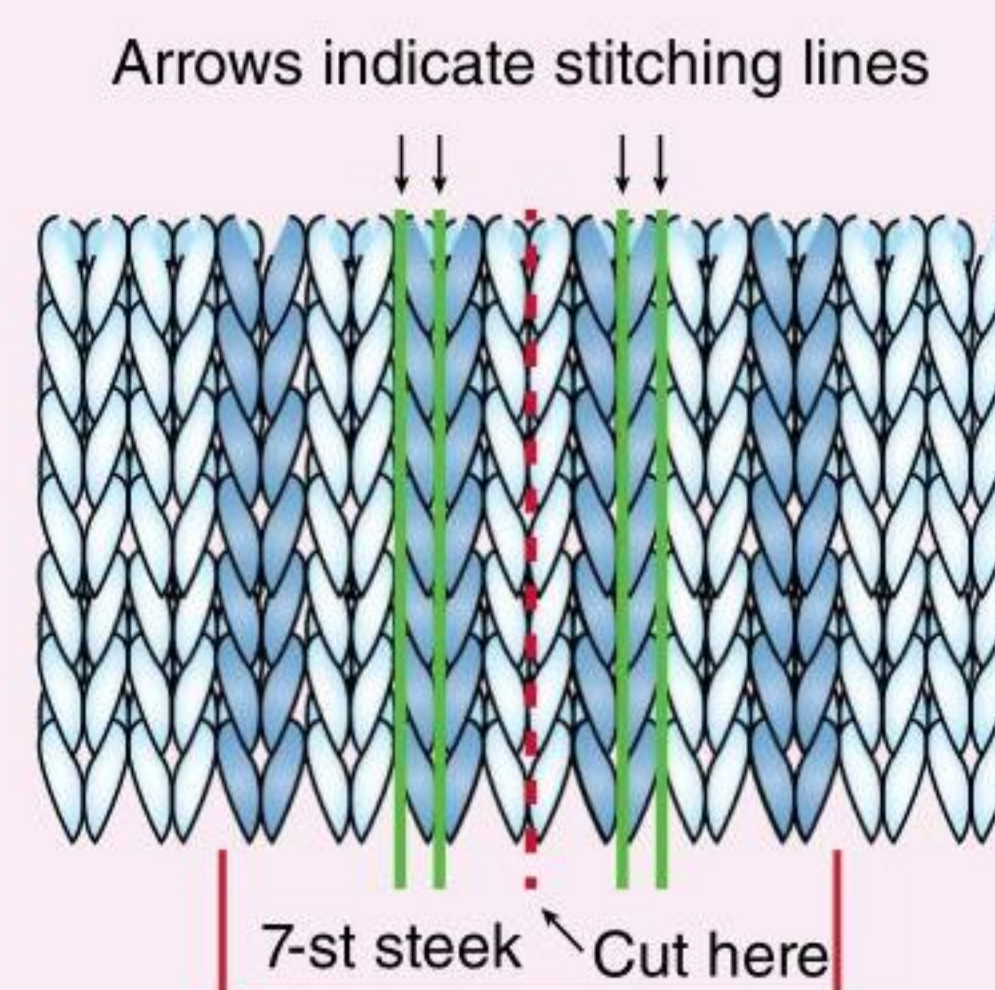


Figure 1

Rnds 3–92: Continue in pat from chart.
Rnd 93: Bind off 7 sts, work Rnd 93 of chart—70 sts.
 Place rem sts onto holder.
 Secure and cut center steek st.

Edging

With longer needle and B, pick up and knit 68 sts along left side of pillow by inserting tip of needle under both legs of edge st; working across cast-on edge, remove provisional cast-on and knit across 70 sts; pick up and knit 68 sts along right side of pillow; knit across 70 sts from holder—276 sts.

Cast on 3 sts onto LH needle. Work Attached I-Cord until 3 sts rem, working 1 rnd of Unattached I-Cord at each corner.
 Join rem 3 sts to beg of edging.

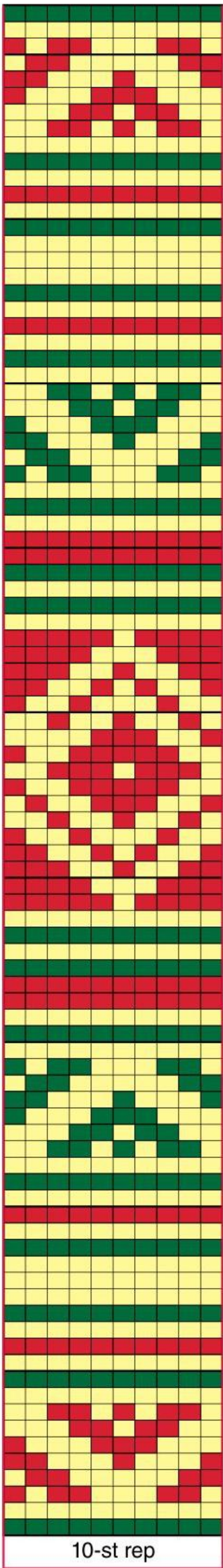
With WS tog, sew back to pillow front just below the I-cord edging along 3 sides. Insert pillow form. Sew rem side. ●

Assembly

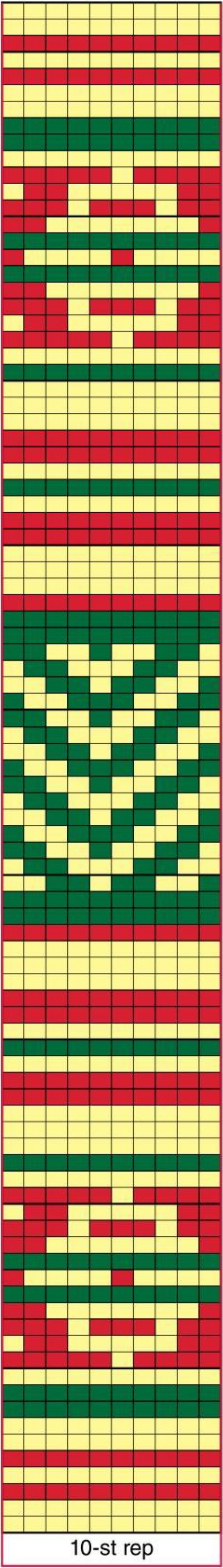
Cut a 16-inch square of fabric for each pillow back. Fold ½ inch to WS along all sides and press.

STITCH KEY

With MC, k on RS, p on WS
 With A, k on RS, p on WS
 With B, k on RS, p on WS



PILLOW CHART A



PILLOW CHART B