

Corvus



This pattern was the first thing I ever designed in double-knitting, and is still my most popular pattern. I attribute its success to its simple elegance and whimsy.

The original pattern was designed for my sister, who was at the time an amateur ornithologist with a particular interest in corvids — crows, ravens, etc. It has been redesigned a couple of times since then and was included in my 2011 book *Extreme Double-Knitting* as an introductory pattern. This version was redesigned subtly in 2016.

This is a great pattern for anyone who's new to double-knitting. The chart is simple to follow, with few color changes per row, and when you are finished you will have an excellent foundation on which to build new double-knitting knowledge — as well as a warm and stylish scarf for yourself or a loved one.

Materials

Berroco Ultra Alpaca (50% alpaca, 50% wool); 219 yds/100 g skein.

[Color A]: #6214 Steel Cut Oats; 2 skeins.

[Color B]: #6245 Pitch Black; 2 skeins.

US 6/4 mm straight needles, or size required to achieve desired gauge.

Gauge

20 sts/27 rows = 4" in standard double-stockinette fabric. Dimensions as charted are 6.5" wide x 70" long.

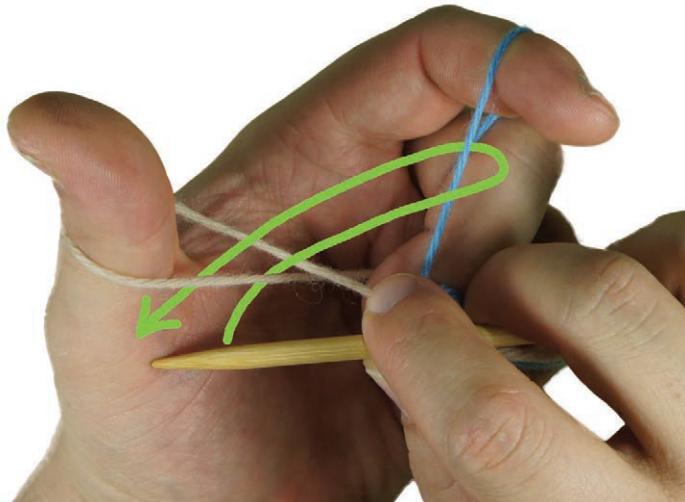
This cast-on is based on the long-tail method I learned from my mother – but there is no long tail. Instead, you will be using the long-tail techniques on the active ends. The nice thing about this is that you get the clean edge usually associated with the long-tail cast-on without all the tedious guesswork. There is now a [Youtube video](#) for this cast-on!

To begin, make a slip-knot with both colors held together; insert the needle through the loop and tighten. Leave about a 4-6" tail for weaving in. Don't worry about which direction the slip-knot colors are facing – you will remove and untie the knot before you begin your first round.

Position your hands. With the needle in your right hand and the tails held out of the way in that hand, put your left forefinger and thumb together and put them between the two hanging active ends so that one end goes over your finger and the other over your thumb.

Close the rest of your fingers over the hanging ends; spread your thumb and forefinger into a Y-shape, and pull the needle back like a slingshot. The ends should come from the needle, pass through the middle of the Y, around each finger from the inside to the outside, and continue down into your closed hand, out the bottom of your loosely-held fist, and into your wound source balls.

The pattern will call for a cast-on in a particular color order. For example, if the cast-on calls for BA pairs, Color B should be over your finger and Color A should be over your thumb. If it calls for AB pairs, Color A should be over your finger and Color B should be over your thumb.

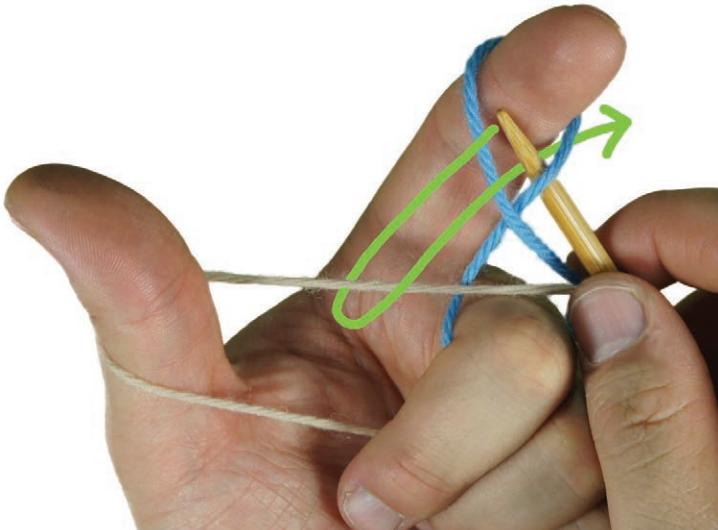


With your needle in front of all the ends, pass it underneath the first thumb strand, over the top of the next thumb strand and the first finger strand. Catching the finger strand on your needle, pass the needle back through the thumb loop and to the front again. Drop the thumb loop, pick up the end of the thumb color on your thumb again and tighten. You should now have a loop on your needle of the color that is over your finger.

Next, we'll do the same thing in (subtly modified) mirror image for a reverse long-tail cast-on stitch.

Bring your needle behind all the ends. Now reading the strands from the rear, pass your needle under the first finger strand, over the top of the next finger strand, and then underneath the first thumb strand you encounter. Catching the thumb strand on your needle, pass the needle back through the finger loop and to the back again. Drop the finger loop; pick up the end of the finger color on your finger again and tighten. You should now have a loop on your needle of the color that is over your thumb.

This has created a pair of stitches in alternating colors as called for in the pattern. Continue doing one regular and one reverse long-tail cast-on stitch to continue alternating cast-on colors. I recommend you tighten this cast-on a little more than you normally would for a long-tail cast-on. It will make the first row after the cast-on more difficult, but the final edge will be much cleaner.



These are the rules of standard double-knitting: All double-knitting is worked in pairs. The first stitch in every pair is always the front stitch, is always a knit stitch, and is always worked with both ends in back (wyib). The second stitch in every pair is always the back stitch, is always a purl stitch, and is always worked with both yarns in front (wyif) in the opposite color from the knit stitch.

In other words, on the Layer 1 (odd-numbered) rows, when you encounter a pixel in Color A on the chart, you'll knit in Color A with both ends in back, then purl in Color B with both ends in front; when you encounter a pixel in Color B on the chart, you'll knit in Color B with both ends in back, then purl in Color A with both ends in front. On the Layer 2 (even-numbered) rows, the charted color corresponds to the purl — but you still have to knit first. So on Layer 2, when you encounter a pixel in Color A, you'll knit in Color B and purl in Color A; when you encounter a pixel in Color B, you'll knit in Color A and purl in Color B. This is also explained in the key.

You should only ever have pairs of two color orders: AB or BA. You should never have AA or BB pairs. If you see a grouping of three or more active loops on the needle in a single color, you've made a mistake and put in a single-colored pair. This can't be fixed later except by duplicate stitch, so go back and fix it before it's too late! It's normal to have groupings of 2 of one color in a row — not within a pair, but from adjacent pairs when a color change has been made.

Double-knit edges

A clean double-knit selvedge is achieved by combining a linked pair and a slipped pair. A linked pair is simply a pair worked with a twist in between the stitches, so that the two sides are locked together without a color change. A slipped pair is slipped instead of worked, while the yarn moves as for any normal pair. If you work the linked pair and slipped pair when you encounter them in the chart (every row begins with a linked pair and ends with a slipped pair), you'll get the cleanest possible edge. Follow the steps below or [visit the Youtube video!](#)

To work a linked pair:

1. Knit the first stitch TBL (through the back of the loop) in the color indicated by the chart.
2. Wyif, insert the needle as if to purl.
3. Wrap the opposite color once around the other strand from underneath and complete the purl.

To work a slipped pair:

1. Wyib, slip 1 pwise.
2. Wyif, slip 1 pwise.

Binding Off

The bind-off I use in double-knitting looks similar to the cast-on although it isn't completely identical. It's the same as the most basic bind-off you know, except that it's done in-pattern in double-knitting — and the way I solve the issue of overcompensating or undercompensating for your tension is uncommon. There is a [Youtube video](#) for this too!

When you've finished your pattern, work another complete row in a single color order (usually the same as the color order of the selvedge pair). *Work the last pair rather than slipping it!* If you're working on circular needles, slide to the other end; if on straights, slip all sts to the other needle. Either way, the needle's point should now be sticking out of the "wrong" edge of the work.

Now, slip 1 kwise, slip 1 pwise, PSSO. Slip 1 kwise, PSSO, slip 1 pwise, PSSO. Keep slipping your knits kwise and your purls pwise, and whenever you have 2 sts on the needle, PSSO.

When you reach the end, you'll have a single pair (2 sts) on your needle. Break the ends, pass both ends through both loops and tighten.

Double-knitting is hollow! Feed your ends into the spaces between layers with a tapestry needle, being careful to keep the needle inside the work at all times. When you feel you've gone far enough, bring the needle and ends out, snip them near the base of their exit point, then give the fabric a tug and the ends will disappear inside. This works especially well on grippy fibers like wool. If you like, you can bring the ends to the surface, then pass them through the same hole in another direction; repeat as many times as necessary. This will help to securely anchor the ends.

Blocking

Blocking double-knitting is basically the same as blocking standard knitting, with one caveat — two layers are more absorbent than one. Soak and drain as usual and pin out on your blocking board; dry overnight (I use a fan to speed things up) and then — this is important — turn the piece over and pin out again to make sure that both sides dry completely. This pattern requires some heavy blocking — the wavy edges should straighten out very well and almost if not completely disappear when dry.

Pattern

CO 31 BA pairs.

1. Work 8 repeats of Chart 1 (16 rows).
2. Work 2 repeats of Chart 2 (4 rows).
3. Work Chart 3.
4. Work 3 repeats of Chart 2 (6 rows).
5. Work repeats of Chart 4 until you don't have enough yarn to finish another repeat. Count your completed Chart 4 repeats. Work the same number of Chart 4 repeats again, switching to the second pair of skeins when necessary. This is done to make the scarf as long as possible while guaranteeing you won't run out of yarn!
6. Work 2 repeats of Chart 2 (4 rows).
7. Work Chart 5.
8. Work 2 repeats of Chart 2 (4 rows).
9. Work 8 repeats of Chart 1 (16 rows).

Key

- Layer 1: AB pair
Layer 2: BA pair
- Layer 1: BA pair
Layer 2: AB pair
- +
- ▽ Slipped pair

Bind off and weave in all ends. Block if necessary and enjoy!

Chart 1

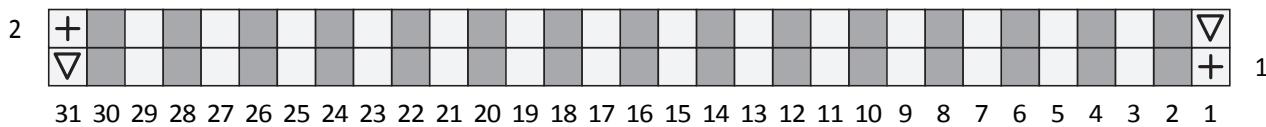


Chart 2

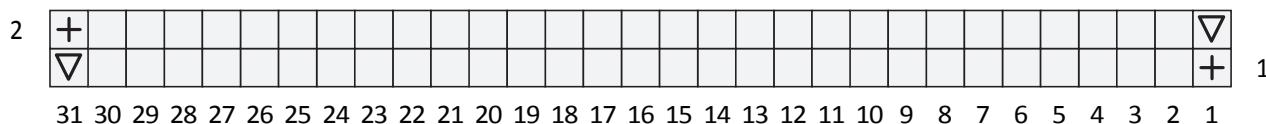


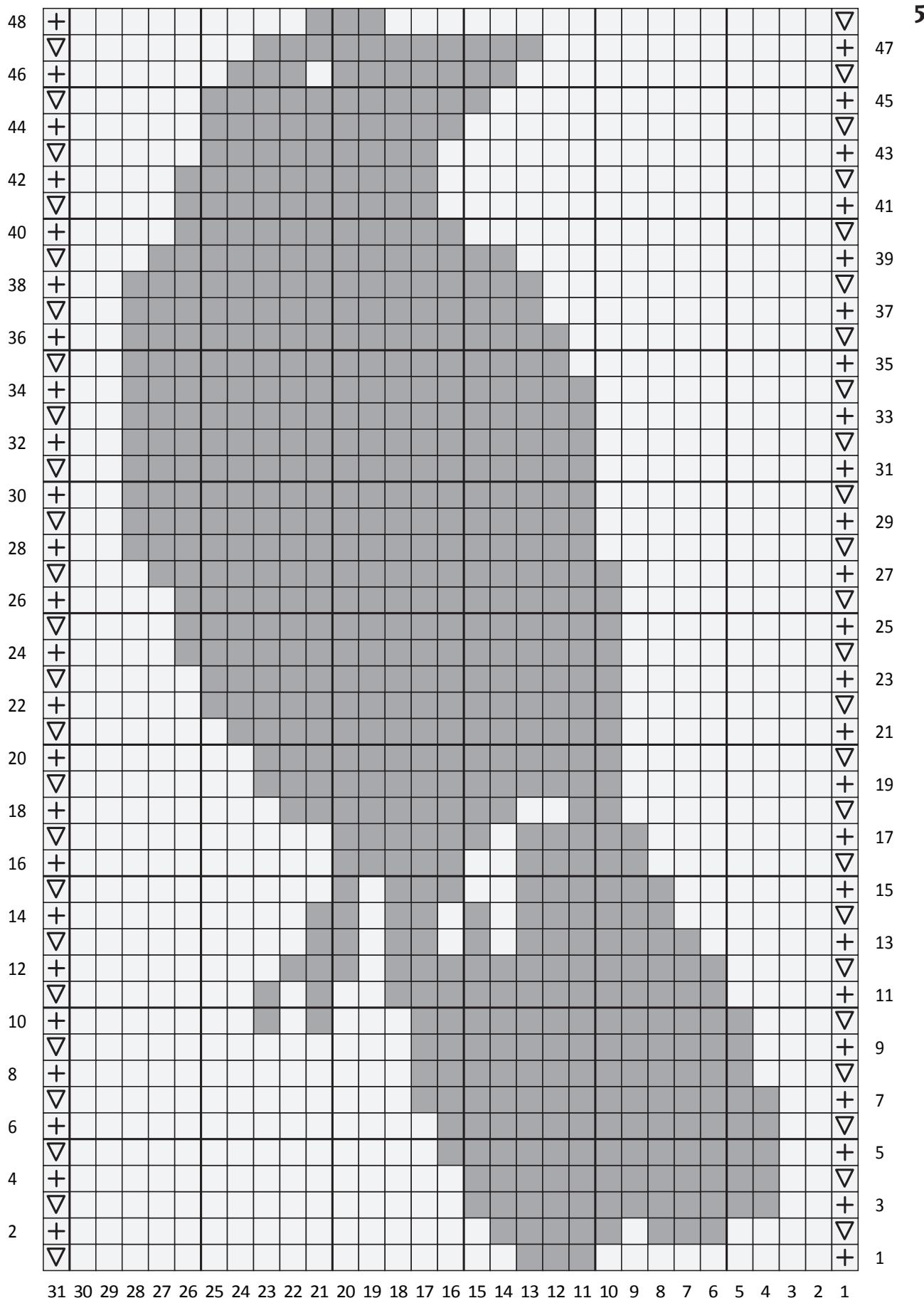
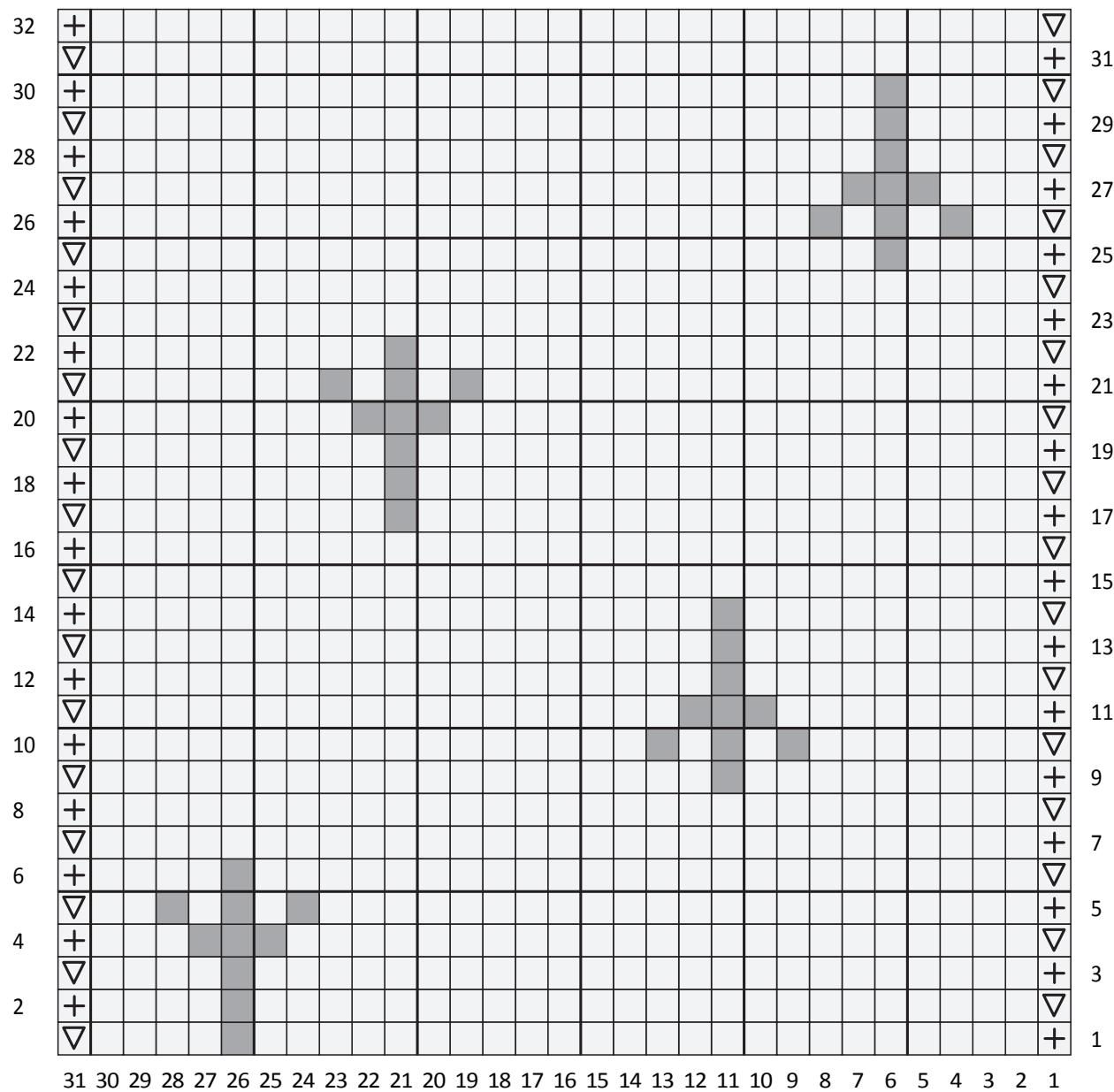
Chart 3

Chart 4



Shameless self-promotion section

The techniques in this pattern were originally published in my book *Extreme Double-Knitting*, and fleshed out further in my new book *Double or Nothing*. While I'm happy if you're enjoying this standalone pattern, there's far more information and instructional content (not to mention a bunch of other patterns) in the books, which are available in print or PDF. [Find links to them on my web store](#).

Looking for more video instruction? The most updated recordings of my virtual workshops are available on the [Workshop Recordings](#) page of my website.

Still stumped and want some hands-on training? I teach double-knitting at all levels of experience. [Check my calendar](#); if nothing is happening near you, have your local yarn shop or guild get in touch!

Chart 5

