Chapter 190

COLORWORK CHARTS

In one sense, colorwork charts can be simpler than those that combine many knitting sym-
bols. But colorwork can be, or appear to be, amazingly complex to the point that people ask,
"How did you knit that?"

Two Ways in a Word Processor

Since color charts usually only need to show us the relative positions of stitches of different
colors, we have more options than we do for charts that must show different kinds of
stitches. Essentially, we just need a grid with colored squares.

As I mentioned in chapter 120, I use a word processor to make knitting charts, defer-
ring the details of why to chapter 310. The same reasoning applies here as well. I simply
don't use a spreadsheet often enough to be able to manipulate it quickly.

A Blank Table

If we just need a grid, we can make one with a table that contains no knitting symbols at all.
Instead, we use lots of narrow columns, whose widths are based on our stitch gauge. So if
our gauge is twenty stitches per four inches, we need each column to be 0.2 inches wide, be-
cause four inches divided by twenty stitches is one-fifth of an inch per stitch. The row height
in the table has to be based on our row gauge. If our row gauge is seven rows per inch, then
each row needs to one-seventh of an inch tall.

Here's the heart motif from the introduction, drawn in an empty table set to match our
gauge of five stitches and seven rows per inch. No stitch symbols are used.
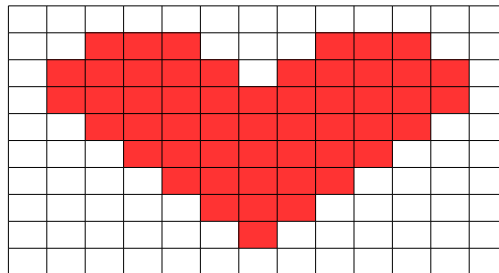
In my word processor, the **background** color of the table cells forming the heart has
been set to red. Your word processor might require you to set the **shading** or **fill** color of
your table cells.

If you're still designing, you can just print a blank grid, then use colored pencils or
magic markers to color in the stitches. There's a nifty tool at

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http://www.tata-tatao.to/knit/matrix/e-index.html
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that will fill a sheet of paper with a grid using your stitch and row gauges over four inches/ten centimeters.
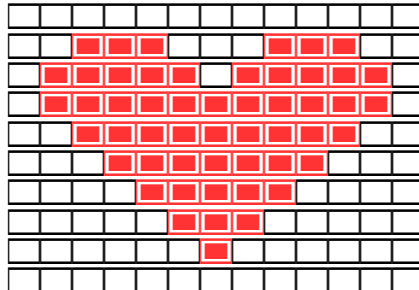
Redefined Knitting Symbols

The other option is to re-purpose some of the knitting symbols.

Here the No Stitch symbol is representing the motif color, while the knit stitches represent the background color.
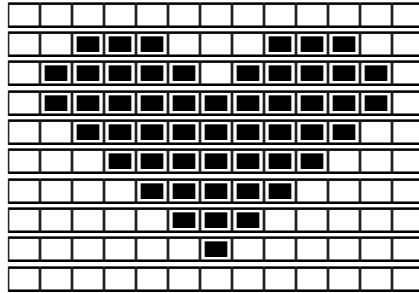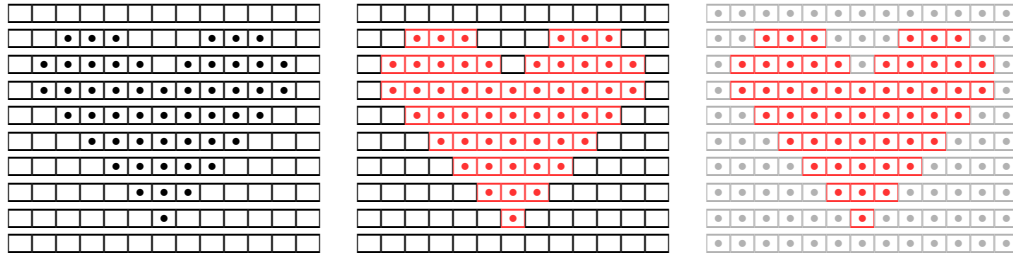
We could change the font color of the No Stitch symbol, just as an extra emphasis.

We could also use the No Stitch symbol throughout the chart. The background color's stitches have been made gray, because white symbols would not show up on white paper.
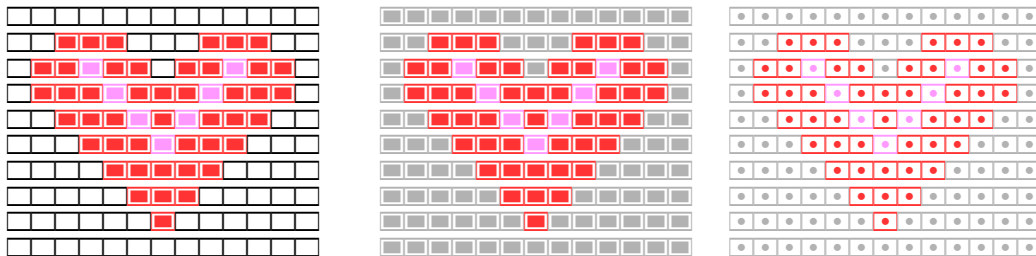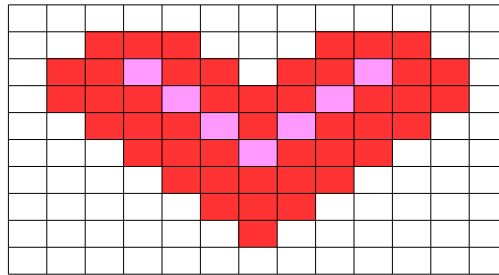
       HollyBriscoe.com
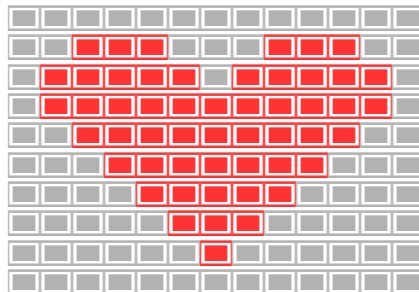
Typing exclamation points can be awkward, so purl symbols could be used instead.

Multiple Foreground Colors

If we need more than one color for the design, we can use any of the techniques.

One Other Alternative

When I originally created the knitting font, color printers were not as widespread. So I added a large variety of geometric symbols that could be used to represent different colors. They still can—if your eyes are better than mine! They would be impractical for me, especially a large chart which required a very small font size, but they might work quite nicely for you.

See the section "Geometric Shapes" in chapter 390 for a complete listing of available symbols.

Combine Colors and Symbols

There are several styles that would require us to do more than simply work knit stitches in different colors. That means the knitting symbols would represent themselves instead of simply indicating the various colors needed in stockinette.

Bohus

This technique combines color with purl stitches in such a way that public-side purl stitches in the current color pull up the color used to work public-side knit stitches in the previous row. In this case, TECHknitter's "icky dots" become a design feature.[1]

For the time being, you can see some swatch photos at

`www.knitty.com/ISSUEwinter08/FEATtexturize.php.`

Shaped Intarsia

This technique eliminates the "jaggies" of stockinette colorwork. Here's an example with a classic argyle pattern, with only the leftmost pair worked in the traditional method.
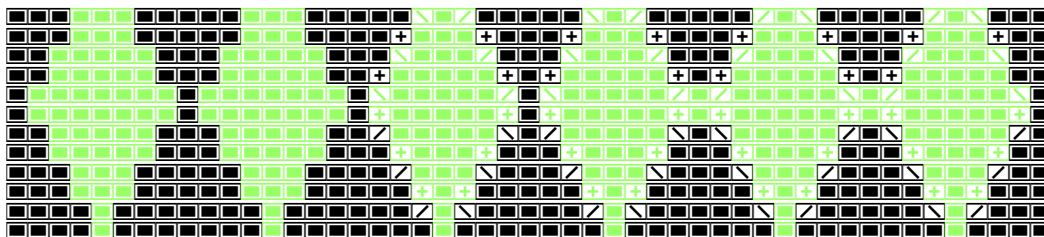
Compare the three pairs of diamonds in actual yarn.

In the center pair, the K2togs and SSKs are positioned such that they **point at** the diamonds' edges, which minimizes their appearance according to what we saw in the lace swatches in chapter 180. The third pair has the decreases **parallel to** the diamonds' edges, which makes them prominent per chapter 180.

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[1] See her blog post at http://techknitting.blogspot.com/2008/02/color-texture-and-ribbing-without-icky.html.