

Appendix 550

LESSONS LEARNED

Most of the charting tips and tricks, plus a few select others, have been collected here.

Computer Tips

- 🌀 Learn the ways your program inserts, moves, copies, and deletes columns and rows.
- 🌀 When you are working on your charts, * save early and save often. Also, periodically close your file, and make a copy of it in your file manager. Then open up the original and repeat from *. (See hollybriscoe.com/save-yourself for the full discussion.)
- 🌀 If you want to use a different symbol than the one that is most easily typed (perhaps you want to use \int instead of \int for a K2tog), then use Insert | Symbol (or copy it from chapter 390 and paste it) to put \int into your chart initially, then copy and paste it wherever you need it. You could also use \int throughout, then do Find and Replace with / in the Find box and 9 in the Replace box. (For the “weird” characters like that backwards e, you can also just select and copy the actual knitting symbol in the chart, then paste it in the Replace box.)
- 🌀 See if your program will paste one cell’s copied contents into as many cells as you highlight. Then see if it will paste multiple cells’ copied contents into as many cells as you highlight. If it will do either, and especially if it will do both, you can make even big charts very quickly and with minimum effort. (Chapters 150, 350)

Chart Tips

- 🌀 Create a basic file that has all the elements you’ll want in virtually every chart, then make a copy of it to use as a starting point for every new project. (Chapter 350)
- 🌀 Use a minimum of two columns: one for the pattern symbols and one for the public-side row numbers. You may want to add a third column for private-side row numbers. (Chapter 120)
- 🌀 If there is more than one pattern across the width of the project, put each pattern in its own column. If the patterns’ row repeats are not the same height, it may be useful to have an extra column for at least the public-side row numbers for each pattern. (Chapter 120)
- 🌀 If a flat project has borders on the right and left edges, then if you need to chart the borders, put each border’s symbols in its own column. (Chapter 130)
- 🌀 If you are combining patterns with different row repeats, continue to duplicate the tallest pattern until copies of all the smaller patterns fit into it exactly. If the chart seems to be getting too tall, then you can just lop off the rows that go higher than you need. If you think all the patterns should fit in a smaller number of project rows,

put the number of rows in each pattern into an Internet “least common multiple” calculator to see how many rows you’ll need to get all of the patterns into a completely filled chart. (Chapter 150)

- ☉ If you don’t like where your pattern’s row repeat starts, you can probably shift it to wherever you like. (Chapter 150)
- ☉ In a particular chart, you can redefine any symbol to mean anything you want it to. (Chapters 190, 390)
- ☉ Charts don’t have to have be all straight horizontal and vertical lines and have only square corners. (Chapter 170)
- ☉ The No Stitch symbol serves only to keep all the other symbols in their proper positions relative to one another. If you don’t like it, then just use an ordinary space. (Chapter 175)
- ☉ If you chart a pattern’s or project’s instructions, you can reuse the motif or pattern fabric in a completely different project. (Chapter 220)
- ☉ You can scale many motifs and texture patterns bigger or smaller to better match the size of the item. (Chapters 220, 230)
- ☉ It’s better to assume that asterisks and other repeat markers in written-out instructions don’t actually fall on the pattern’s true stitch-repeat boundaries. If the project instructions include a border, the border stitches might be mixed in with the pattern stitches. You can double-check by charting the instructions. (Chapter 220)
- ☉ Once you’ve determined a project’s pattern repeat, you can double-check your accuracy by pasting copies of it into a table with several columns, then selecting all the rows and pasting several copies of them into new rows at the bottom of the table. (Chapter 220)
- ☉ Once you know the number of stitches in a pattern’s stitch repeat and how many plus stitches it has, you can easily determine how many stitches to cast on to make a much bigger (or smaller) item. (Chapter 220)
- ☉ Once you have a pattern’s or project’s stitches charted, you can tweak the details at will. (Chapter 230)
- ☉ If you like an isolated motif, you can use it to create an all-over stitch pattern. (Chapter 240)
- ☉ If you start your chart on regular text lines then realize you need to put them in a table, use strategically placed tabs to help with the transition. (Chapter 320)
- ☉ If you need to create a symbol for a unique stitch pattern or project, combine the available symbols in special ways. (Chapter 330)

- ☞ If you don't want to work from a chart, you can at least chart the instructions to make sure there aren't any typos, then write the instructions back out in a way that helps you organize the actual knitting. (Appendix 520)

Knitting Tips

- ☞ If you use an opaque marker to keep track of your place on a chart, put it above the current row, so that you can double-check that you're working this row's stitches in the proper place relative to the previous row's stitches. (Chapter 125)
- ☞ You can cable on private-side rows just as easily and in the exact same way—holding the cable needle to the front or the back—as on public-side rows. (Chapter 150)
- ☞ Purl-equivalent decreases made on the private side of stockinette lean in the same direction as their knit counterparts when looked at from the public side. If you have to make decreases on every third row (or any other interval that's an odd number), then at the same places you do a K2tog on the public side, you'll do a P2tog on the private side. SSKs and SKPs/SSPs also get done in the same places on the public and private sides. (Chapter 160)
- ☞ If your project will have lots of cables across its width, you'll want to do some increases right below the cables's first crossings to account for how much they pull the fabric in. Before (or during) binding off above the cables, you'll want to do some decreases to keep the bound-off edge from ruffling because it has too many stitches. (Chapter 175)
- ☞ You can make decreases in lace be either prominent or minimized by placing the correct decrease on the correct side of the yarnovers. (Chapter 180, Appendix 515)
- ☞ Stitch markers between repeats can save counting, frogging, and hair. (Chapter 210)
- ☞ If you want garter-stitch borders on the left and right edges of a stockinette-based flat project, then use short rows in those borders so that they'll be as long (by measurement) as the stockinette portion. (Appendix 515)
- ☞ A top border of garter stitch on a stockinette project will “eat” the last public-side knit row of the stockinette, so you may need to add an extra row or two to the stockinette portion of the project to keep the border from getting too close to the design. (Appendix 515)