

The Spiral Blanket of Awesome {Design your own} Tutorial by Sharon McMahon



I made this blanket in the spring of 2012 for my baby daughter. As of today, she's not even born yet. I hope she likes it.

The beauty of this blanket, aside from the fact that it's beautiful, is that it's really just a formula. You can make it any size – from Barbie doll to king bed. You can make it with any weight yarn. You can just decide to start knitting and stop when you run out of yarn.

I happen to think it looks especially nifty with hand dyed yarn. The spiraling allows you to see all of the amazing colors with very little risk of pooling, because of the ever-growing circle of

fabric you're creating. Mathematically, it becomes less and less probable that the colorway will stack up and create unwanted splotches of color.



The example here was knit with three skeins of DK weight yarn on size 6 (4mm) needles. (Approximately 780 yards.) The colorway is Yarn Love's Autumnal Splendor.

To design your own blanket, all you need to do is determine approximately how large you want your blanket to be. Mine is approximately 34" across, which is perfect for a baby blanket. Larger blankets will make great playmats as the baby grows, a beautiful lap blanket, or a pretty throw across the back of your sofa.

Please also note that my yarn usage included a generous ruffle around the edge, and that the ruffle used an entire skein of yarn. You can choose to use less yarn by designing a simpler edging.

Here are some yardage estimates for a blanket this size. These are only estimates, and you may find that your knitting and particular yarn may create different results.

Bulky weight: 400-600 yards

Worsted weight: 600-700 yards

DK weight: 700-800 yards

Sport weight: 800-900 yards

Fingering weight: 900-1000 yards

Be sure to match your needle size to the yarn you intend to use. You want a fabric that will drape well, so if you're in doubt, go up a needle size.

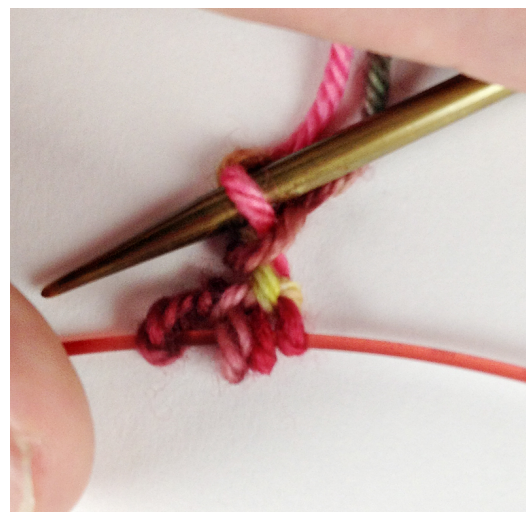
I spent about two hours figuring out the best way to begin the spiral, and ultimately decided it was best on one long circular needle. You can go ahead and spend two hours figuring this out on your own, or you can take my word for it. Up to you.

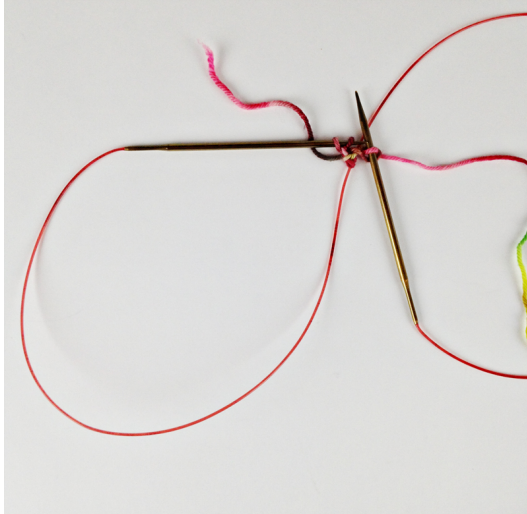


1. Begin by casting on five stitches on a 24" (or longer) circular needle.

2. Rearrange the stitches so that you have one stitch on your right hand needle and four stitches on your cable.

If you've never used the Magic Loop technique before, check out this video on [Knitting Help](#).





3. Now take two stitches and move them to your left hand needle. The stitches will now be arranged like this:

Stitch 1: Right hand needle
Stitches 2 and 3: On Cable
Stitches 4 and 5: Left hand needle

Notice how there are two loops of cable in this picture. One loop is between Stitch 1 and Stitch 2, and the other is between Stitch 3 and Stitch 4.

I promise this is the fiddliest part of this whole endeavor. Once you get past the first couple of rounds, it will be smooth sailing. Don't give up!

Join to knit in the round. Your life will be less complicated if you knit the round like this:

1. Knit one stitch. You will now have two stitches on your right hand needle. Move one of them onto the cable.
2. Knit another stitch. Move one stitch onto the cable, and one of the stitches from the cable on your left hand needle. Repeat step 2 three more times. You will now have knit all five stitches without wanting to jab your eyeballs out.

Place a stitch marker after you knit the fifth stitch. This is now the start of your round.

Round 2: Knit into the front and back of each stitch, rearranging on cables and needles as feels comfortable. You will now have ten stitches.



Round 3: Knit one, yarn over (YO). Repeat until you reach the marker. You will now have twenty stitches, and you will feel less like crying. Twenty stitches are much easier to Magic Loop than five.

Round 4: Knit all the stitches. Get some tea to drink if you haven't already.

Round 5: Knit two, YO. Repeat this pattern until you reach the marker.

Round 6: Knit all the stitches. Sip the tea.

Round 7: Knit three, YO. Repeat this pattern until you reach the marker.

Round 8: Knit all the stitches.

Continue in this established pattern, alternating YO rows and plain knitting rows. Be sure to add one to the number of stitches to knit before the YOs on each increase round.

Eventually, you'll start noticing your blanket beginning to spiral. People will ask you if you're knitting a hat. They'll be very surprised when you say it's a blanket, because chances are, they can't conceptualize how that spiraling round thing will look as a flat object.



You may need to switch to a needle with a longer cable length at some point. I had to switch to a 40-inch circular, and by the end, I still had to do quite a bit of stitch shuffling to see what I was doing.

Keep knitting until you want to be done, or until you run out of yarn. Be sure and save some yarn for the edging of your choice.

There are really endless possibilities, and you only need consult any of Nicky Epstein's *Knitting on the Edge*, *Knitting Over the Edge*, or *Knitting Beyond the Edge* books to prove this to yourself.



The simplest option is about five rounds of garter stitch, just enough to make the edge lie flat. You don't have to bind off and pick up stitches for the edging, just work with the live stitches on the needles.

I designed my own ruffle, and if you'd like to replicate it, here are the instructions. These are based on a stitch count of a multiple of seven. You could alter this based on your stitch count. Just increase the number of purl stitches to suit you.

- Round 1: *K1, P6* Repeat this pattern until you reach the marker.
- Round 2: *K1FB, P6* Repeat this pattern until you reach the marker.
- Round 3: *K1, K1FB, P6* Repeat this pattern until you reach the marker.
- Round 4: *K2, K1FB, P6* Repeat this pattern until you reach the marker.
- Round 5: *K3, K1FB, P6* Repeat this pattern until you reach the marker.
- Round 6: *K4, K1FB, P6* Repeat this pattern until you reach the marker.
- Round 7: *K5, K1FB, P6* Repeat this pattern until you reach the marker.
- Round 8: *K6, K1FB, P6* Repeat this pattern until you reach the marker.
- Round 9: *K7, K1FB, P6* Repeat this pattern until you reach the marker.
- Round 10: *K8, K1FB, P6* Repeat this pattern until you reach the marker.

Knit one round plain. Bind off loosely. If you have a tendency to knit tightly, it might help to go up a needle size or two. It will have the added effect of making the ruffle look rufflier.

Weave in ends. Wet block. A good blocking makes a huge difference in the finished project, [as you can see here](#).



Sharon McMahon is the founder and creative director of Three Irish Girls. She lives near the shores of Lake Superior in Northern Minnesota with her husband, (almost) four children, and two giant hosedogs. You can visit her blog at www.yarnista.com.