The Geek-A-Long

BY LATTES & LLAMAS

WEEK 5 OF 2015: DR. VENTURE

There are many factors to consider before you cast on your first Geek-A-Long (GAL) square and begin your journey of geeking out with your needles out. The first is how many squares you want to include and the second is how large you would like for your blanket to be when it is finished. On the next page you will find three options laid out for you, but they are hardly the only options.

GAL squares are wildly adaptive, making it easy for you to knit or crochet the perfect blanket to suit your needs. Instead of making 156 squares with fingering weight yarn to make a "Nightmare" blanket that will fit a king-sized bed, you could knit 56 squares with fingering yarn to make an afghan. Conversely, if you want a king-sized blanket but the idea of knitting 156 squares is too daunting, you could use worsted weight yarn instead and only knit 100. Use the yarn weight (fingering, sport, or worsted) and accompanying finished square size listed in the three different options on the next page to help you shake things up and make your blanket exactly what you want it to be.

Child's Play Charity

The Geek-A-Long (GAL) supports Child's Play Charity, which provides games and consoles to children in hospitals and domestic violence shelters. The sample blanket made by Lattes & Llamas is auctioned off at the annual Child's Play Charity gala in December each year. Additionally, GAL participants donate to CP Charity throughout the year via our sanctioned widget. There is no required donation, but we encourage you to donate a few dollars in lieu of paying for this pattern. No donation is too small!

Option One: Recommended

BEST FOR A 24-SQUARE AFGHAN

NEEDLES (IF KNITTING): US 7 – 4.5mm straight or circular needles

HOOKS (IF CROCHETING): US 7 – 4.5mm hook; if unavailable use a H/8 – 5mm

YARN: Lattes & Llamas [Fandom Yarn](#) or a comparable worsted weight yarn in sharply contrasting colors.

GAUGE: 18 sts by 26 rows = 4 inches in double sided knitting | 18 sts = 4 inches in single crochet

FINISHED KNITTED SQUARE SIZE: 10 inches by 10 inches (blocked)

Option Two: Hard Mode

BEST FOR A 48-SQUARE FULL-SIZED BLANKET

NEEDLES (IF KNITTING): US 4 – 3.5mm straight or circular needles

HOOKS (IF CROCHETING): 4/E – 3.5mm hook

YARN: Lattes & Llamas [Geek-A-Long Yarn](#) or a comparable sport weight yarn in sharply contrasting colors.

GAUGE: 21 sts by 27 rows = 4 inches in double sided knitting | 21 sts = 4 inches in single crochet

FINISHED KNITTED SQUARE SIZE: 8.5 inches by 8.5 inches (blocked)

Option One: Nightmare

BEST FOR A 156-SQUARE KING-SIZED BLANKET

NEEDLES (IF KNITTING): US 2 – 2.75mm straight or circular needles

HOOKS (IF CROCHETING): C/2 – 2.75mm hook

YARN: Lattes & Llamas [Vacation Yarn](#) or a comparable fingering weight yarn in sharply contrasting colors.

GAUGE: 12 sts by 17 rows = 2 inches in double sided knitting | 12 sts = 2 inches in single crochet

FINISHED KNITTED SQUARE SIZE: 7.5 inches by 7.5 inches (blocked)

Designer Notes

YARDAGE

The number of yards required to knit or crochet a Geek-A-Long blanket will vary depending on your gauge and yarn choice. Here is a handy math equation for you: Total yards used for one finished square multiplied by the number of squares equals the total yards needed to make your blanket. This calculation does not include the yarn needed to join the squares or edge blanket. For our 2014 blanket, knitted on Hard Mode, we used approximately 7,200 yards.

ASSEMBLY

There are numerous ways to turn your nerdy squares into a full-fledged Geek-A-Long blanket. In 2014, we developed [the LLJ](#), a beautiful join that is not for the faint of heart but is the most rewarding. In 2015, we used a [Double-Sided Join](#) that was a bit easier than the LLJ. In 2016 and 2017, we joined and edged our knitted squares using crochet. This is the simplest and easiest way, and you can find a comprehensive tutorial on the [Lattes & Llamas website](#).

TUTORIALS

Not sure about some of the techniques? Visit the [Tutorial section](#) on the Lattes & Llamas website.

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The 2015 Geek-A-Long

THE HISTORY

When we originally conceptualized the Geek-A-Long, we imagined each blanket as its own entity. We planned to make each year vastly different, so we switched things up for 2015. The theme was mad scientists, and it was a truly mad year. Of the 48 squares, we crocheted 24 of them and knitted the rest. We wanted to give the crocheters their due and based the gauge on crochet instead of knitting. It made things a bit weird for the knitters. And in addition to that, we made the squares larger to give ourselves more room to design.

These changes did not go over well with the community that had quickly formed around the GAL. They begged us to make the future squares interchangeable. We returned to the status quo in 2016 and have not spoken of the dark times (2015) since.

THE FUTURE

In addition to all the squares being the same size as year 2014, in 2017 we began including both double knitting and crochet color charts. As we update the old designs with more information in the patterns, we're adding crochet charts to years 2014-2016 when applicable. For the 2015 patterns, however, we have the additional task of making the designs fit our standard 45 stitch by 57 row squares. The instructions on page 4 are based on these new chart(s). Please note that these updated color charts are NOT the ones shown in the photo on the front page. It is based on the old 2015 design (Chart C).

Making the Original Pattern

You can find the original 59 stitch by 59 row color chart (Chart C) on page 7. This chart was used in the photo sample on the first page.

NEEDLES (IF KNITTING): US 5 – 3.75mm straight or circular needles

HOOKS (IF CROCHETING): F/5 – 3.75mm hook

YARN: Lattes & Llamas Geek-A-Long Yarn or a comparable sport weight yarn in sharply contrasting colors.

GAUGE: 20 sts by 20 rows = 4 inches

FINISHED CROCHETED SQUARE SIZE: 12 inches by 12 inches (blocked)

Use the instructions on page 4 to knit or crochet Chart C. The only difference is that you will be casting on 59 sts for each side of double knitting instead of 45 sts or chaining 59 sts instead of 45 for crochet.

Instructions

Sample shown in Cascade Yarn's Cascade 220 Superwash Sport.

Lattes & Llamas began as a design house for Megan-Anne and Jac to release their patterns. The first two blankets (2014 and 2015) were made with yarn donated from Cascade Yarns. In 2016, we partnered with Louet North America, who pledged to donate 50 cents for every skein of GEMS Worsted, but the process was complicated to track which purchases were for the Geek-A-Long.

At this time, Megan-Anne and Jac were already dabbling in hand-dying yarn. After feedback from participants, we decided to create our own line of yarn especially for the Geek-A-Long. Now, no matter if you purchase Geek-A-Long Yarn to make a GAL blanket, knit a sweater, or crochet at hat, we will donate $1.00 USD to Child's Play Charity for every skein of yarn you purchase.

TL;DR: When the Geek-A-Long began, we didn't sell yarn. Now, one could argue, we sell yarn because of it.

KNITTING

Cast on 45 sts for each side of knitting (with two strands held together CO 45, for a total of 90 sts on needle).

Beginning on row 1 of Chart A, work rows back and forth, reading the chart from right to left on the Right Side (odd numbered rows) and left to right on the Wrong Side (even numbered rows). After row 57 bind off.

CROCHET

When changing from the working color to a new color, work the last stitch to be done in the working color until two loops remain on the hook. Draw new color through the two loops on hook. Continue to work the new color as normal.

Row 1 (right side): This row corresponds to row 1 of Chart B. Chain 45 with main color (MC). Lay complementing color yarn (CC) across working yarn. Ch 1 in MC to trap the CC in the stitch, so that it's ready to be carried along the top of the row. With MC, SC in each SC across (unless the chart indicates a color change), working over the CC for a total of 45 SC.

Turn, ch 1, and continue working the color chart back and forth until complete, making sure to SC over non-working yarn.

ABBREVIATION KEY

Please note that we use USA crochet definitions.

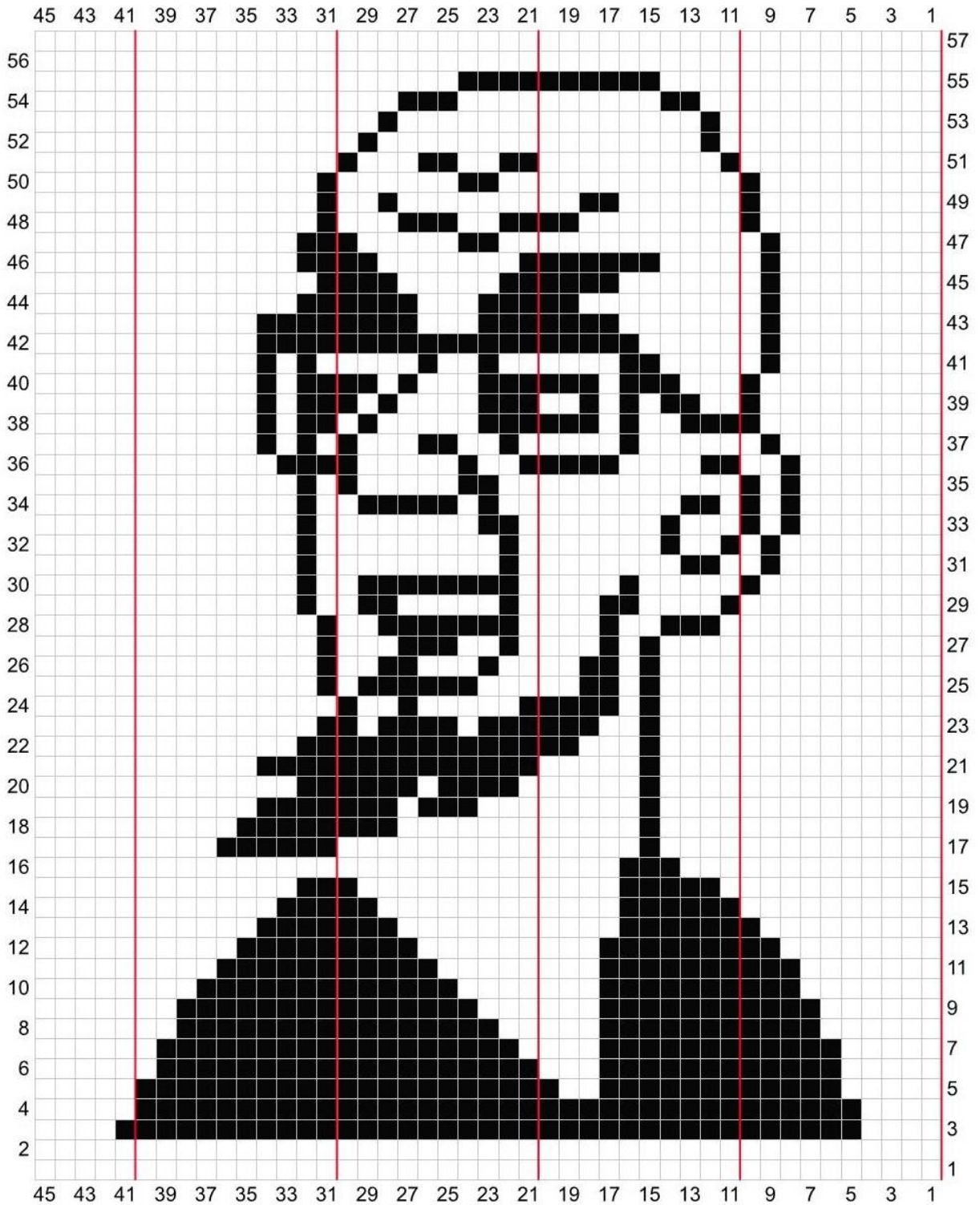|	
CO	cast on
ch	chain
CC	Complementing Color
MC	Main Color
SC	Single Crochet
st(s)	stitch(es)

COLOR CHART KEY

MC □

CC ■

If you enjoyed this free pattern, please consider donating to [Child's Play Charity](). You could help sick children in hospitals forget their troubles while reconnecting with their families through the power of play.

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Chart C
THE ORIGINAL 2015 DESIGN

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