Expectation of Snow

An Orenburg-Inspired Shawl

OLGA RADCHUK

A legacy of lace. Olga wearing the shawl she created in the tradition of Orenburg lace.
Photos courtesy of Olga Radchuk

PIECEWORK
ePATTERNS

This shawl was inspired by the old Orenburg lace shawls knitted during the long winter nights and made of the finest and warmest goat down that can be found only in that part of Russia.

The traditional shawl designs used a limited number of basic elements. These smaller elements could be arranged to create a wide variety of patterns, allowing each knitter to express herself individually. The patterns were usually passed from mother to daughter and almost never written down, which made some Orenburg lace shawls treasured and unique pieces of art. Despite the popularity of this lace tradition in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, public interest in Orenburg lace knitting began to decline over time. Very few needlework artists still work in this technique today.

My interest in Orenburg lace knitting was first aroused when I came across a book written by Olga Fedorova. This famous Russian knitter had gathered many Orenburg pattern elements in her book and introduced me to the world of Orenburg shawls. In learning about Orenburg patterns, I remembered a shawl owned by my grandma that was also called "Orenburg" but had nothing to do with that technique. It was very warm, soft, and hairy—plain and simple, very old, and torn in some places, but do you really care or notice as a child? This beloved shawl was enough to just wrap myself in, and there you go: the child sleeps, and the grandma can finally do her chores.

She was a very hardworking woman, with deep wrinkles on her hands from the farm work she had done all her life. She treasured that fake Orenburg shawl, probably because it was so warm (and there was a lot of snow in my childhood) and also probably because she had never seen anything better.

No man steps in the same river twice, so I knitted this shawl using some traditional Orenburg elements, but I developed my own patterns. For example, my own ideas and patterns are included in the border and lace edging as well as in the layout of the shawl body. I added beads, which is never done in classic Orenburg lace knitting. They are clear and nearly invisible, but they sparkle under sunshine or moonlight like the snow that filled my childhood many decades ago.

This shawl is an homage to my grandma, Olga, for whom I am named. This is the shawl she should have had but never did.

MATERIALS

- Pehorka Orenburgskaya, 80% goat down, 20% Merino, laceweight, 430 yd (393 m)/1.76 oz (50 g) skein, 5 skeins of #166 Raw White
- Needles, size 2½ (3 mm) circ 47" (120 cm), in size needed to obtain gauge
- Additional 47" (120 cm) cable or second circ needle for holding border sts

Olga gave this special shawl to her mother, Tatiana, shown here wearing the shawl in Ukraine.
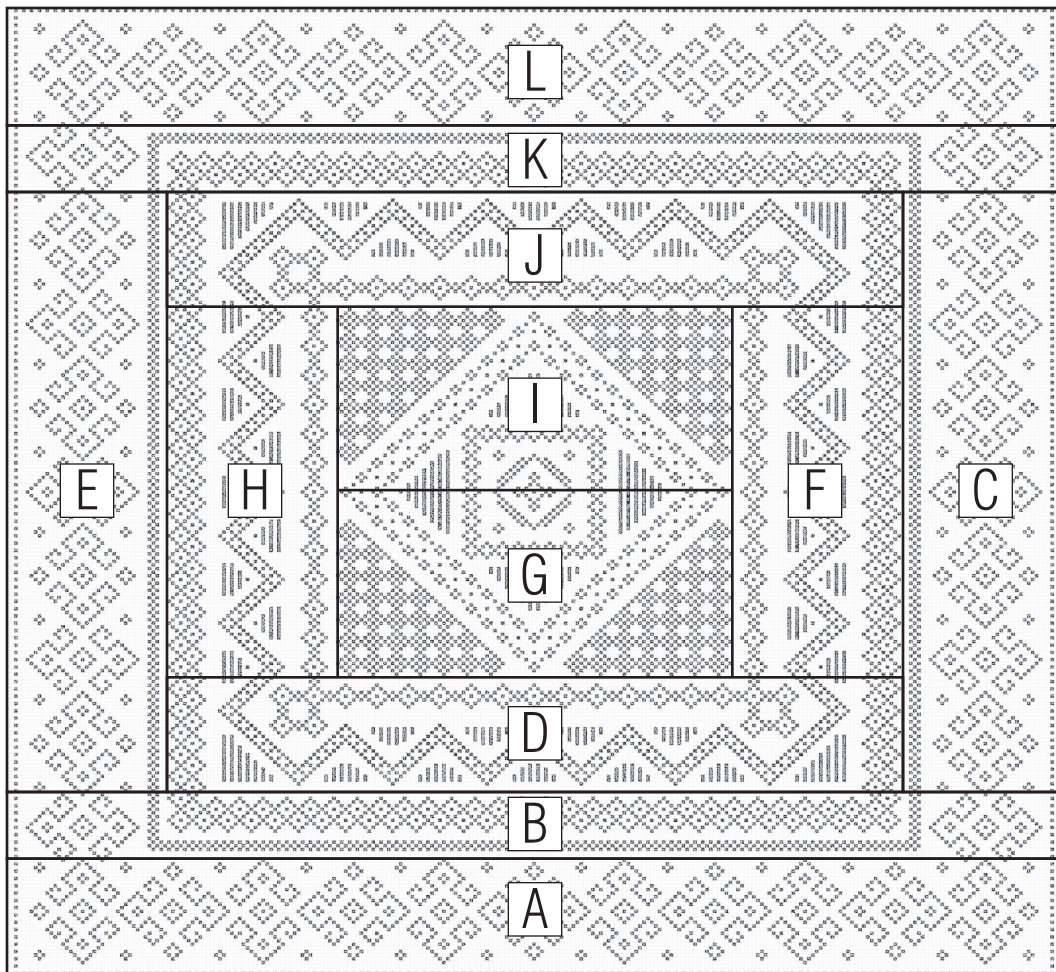
- Stitch markers
- About 712 clear 2 mm faceted glass rondelles with aurora borealis effect, optional
- Steel crochet hook, size 12 (0.6 mm) for applying beads, optional
- Blocking wires and pins
- Tapestry needle

Finished measurements: 58" (147.3 cm) square, after blocking

Gauge: 28 sts and 28 rows = 4" (10.2 cm) in garter lace patterns from charts, after blocking.

SPECIAL STITCHES

Place bead: Slide a bead onto the shaft of the crochet hook. Knit the stitch to receive the bead, catch the top of the stitch just knit with the crochet hook and remove it from the right needle, slide the bead down onto the stitch, then return the stitch to the right needle.

SPECIAL NOTES

The body of the shawl is worked first. After completing the body, the live stitches from the top of the shawl remain on the needle, and stitches are picked up along the other three sides for the border. The border is worked in the round outwards, with mitered increases at the corners.

This project is worked in garter stitch lace, and the charts show the patterning on the odd-numbered rows only.

When working the shawl body back and forth in rows, the odd-numbered rows are right side rows worked according to the chart patterns, slipping the first stitch purlwise with yarn in front as shown on the

charts. For even-numbered wrong side rows, slip the first stitch purlwise with yarn in front, then knit to end.

When working in the round for the border, work the odd-numbered rows according to the chart, and purl all stitches every even-numbered round.

When shaping the border, take care that the markers on each side of the corner stitches to do not move out of position by migrating underneath the adjacent yarnovers.

When there are multiple charts worked across a row, you may find it helpful to place stitch markers between the different charts.

Visit pieceworkmagazine.com/abbreviations
for terms you don't know.

I N S T R U C T I O N S

Body

Using the backward-loop method, CO 269 sts. Do not join in the rnd.

Knit 2 rows, ending with a WS row.
Work Rows 1–64 of Chart A (see Special Notes).
Work Rows 65–100 of Chart B.
Next row (RS): Work Row 101 of Chart C over 40 sts, work Row 101 of Chart D over 189 sts, work Row 101 of Chart E over 40 sts.
Continuing patterns as established, work Rows 101–164.
Next row (RS): Work Row 165 of Chart C over 40 sts, work Row 165 of Chart F over 44 sts, work Row 165 of Chart G over 101 sts, work Row 165 of Chart H over 44 sts, work Row 165 of Chart E over 40 sts.
Continuing patterns as established, work Rows 166–266.
Next row (RS): Work Row 267 of Chart C over 40 sts, work Row 267 of Chart F over 44 sts, work Row 267 of Chart I over 101 sts, work Row 267 of Chart H over 44 sts, work Row 267 of Chart E over 40 sts.
Continuing patterns as established, work Rows 268–366.
Next row (RS): Work Row 367 of Chart C over 40 sts, work Row 367 of Chart J over 189 sts, work Row 367 of Chart E over 40 sts.

Continuing patterns as established, work Rows 368–430.

Resume working a single chart across all stitches, and continue as follows:

Work Rows 431–466 of Chart K.
Work Rows 467–530 of Chart L.
Row 531 (RS): Sl 1 pwise wyf, knit to end of row; do not turn.

Border

With RS still facing, pick up and knit sts around the other 3 sides of the body as follows: Pm, 1 st in corner, pm, 269 sts along selvedge at end of RS rows, pm, 1 st in corner, pm, 269 sts along CO edge, pm, 1 st in corner, pm, 269 sts along other selvedge, pm, 1 st in corner, pm, and join for working in the rnd—1080 sts.
Rnd 1: *Work Rnd 1 of Chart M over 269 sts (increasing them to 271 sts as shown), sl m, k1 corner st (shaded gold on chart), sl m; rep from * 3 more times—1088 sts; 271 chart sts along each side and 4 marked corner sts.
Even-Numbered Rnds 2–42: Purl all sts.
Rnds 3–42: Work chart pattern as established on odd-numbered rnds, increasing 2 sts in each side—1248 sts; 311 sts along each side and 4 marked corner sts.
Rnd 43: **[Yo, k1] 16 times, *yo, sk2p, yo, [k1, yo] 8 times, k1;* rep from * to * 22 more times, yo, sk2p, yo, [kl, yo] 16 times, sl m, k1 corner st; rep from ** 3 more times—2112 sts; 527 sts along each side and 4 marked corner sts.
Bind off as follows: Sl 1 purlwise with yarn in back, *k1, return 2 sts from right needle to left needle, k2tog; rep from * until 1 st rem. Break yarn and fasten off last st.

F I N I S H I N G

Block the shawl to measurements using blocking wires or pins. Weave in ends.

OLGA RADCHUK started knitting and designing relatively recently, but since birth, she has been surrounded by her mother and grandmother's handcrafted items. Under such circumstances, it was simply impossible not to inherit their passion for the art of handcrafting.

There are many ways to wear this large, square shawl, including folded into a triangular shape.

Key

- ☐ k on RS rows and all rnds
- ╱ k2tog
- ╲ ssk
- ⅄ sk2p
- ◯ yo
- ◆ place bead
- ⋁ sl 1 pwise wyf
- ▦ border corner st
- ▭ repeat

46 sts
work 4 times

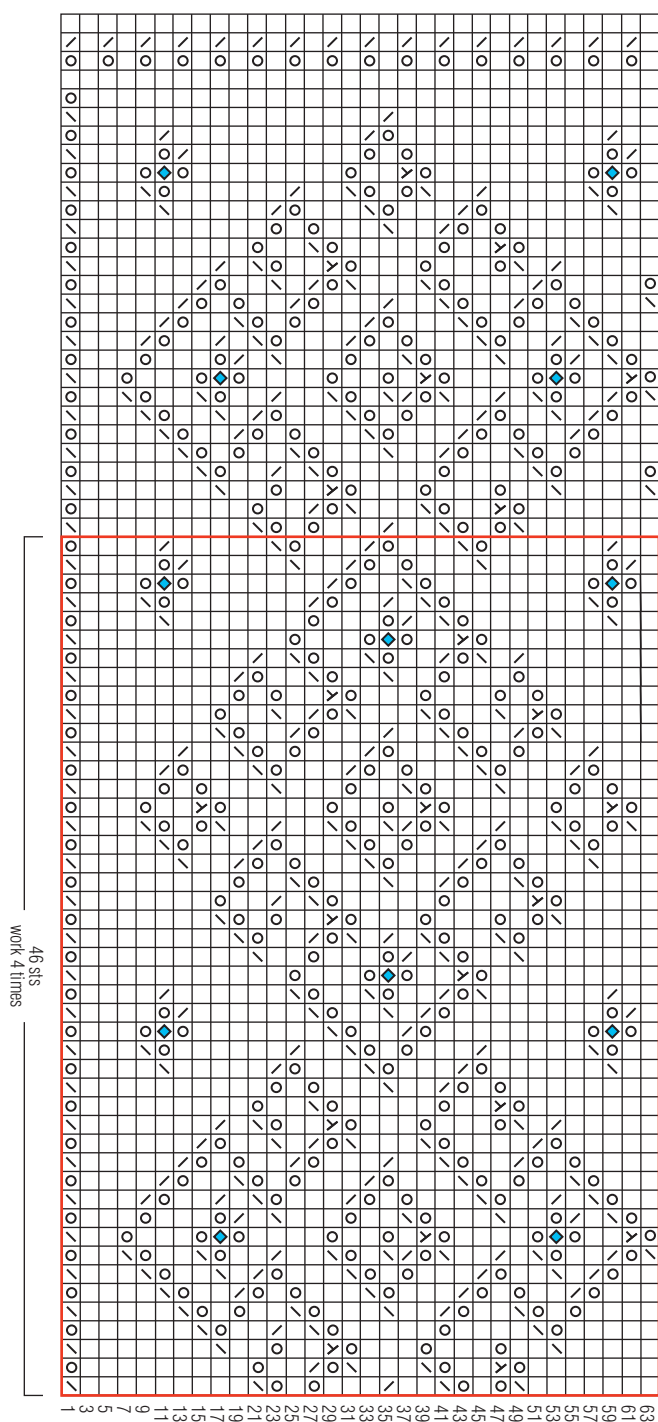1 3 5 7 9 11 13 15 17 19 21 23 25 27 29 31 33 35 37 39 41 43 45 47 49 51 53 55 57 59 61 63
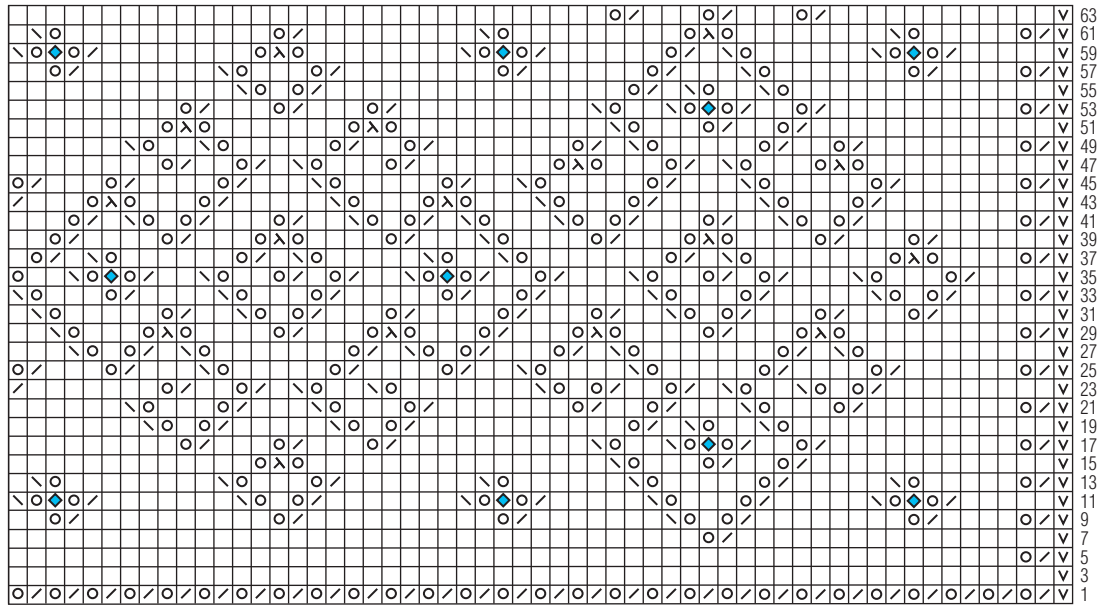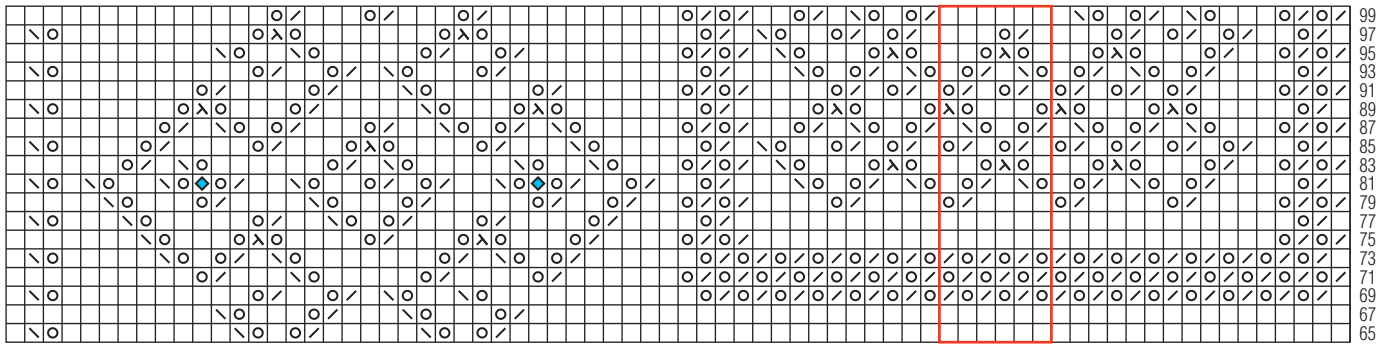
Chart A, Right Side

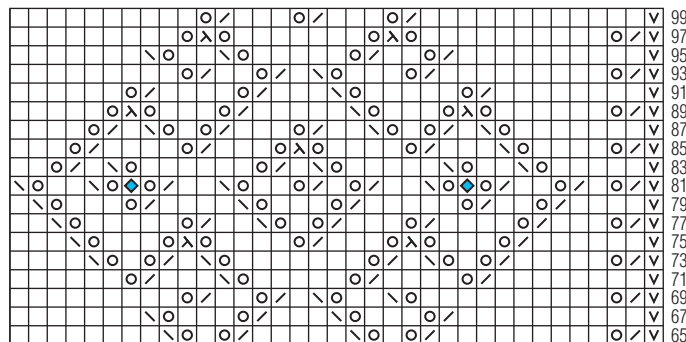Chart B, Left Side
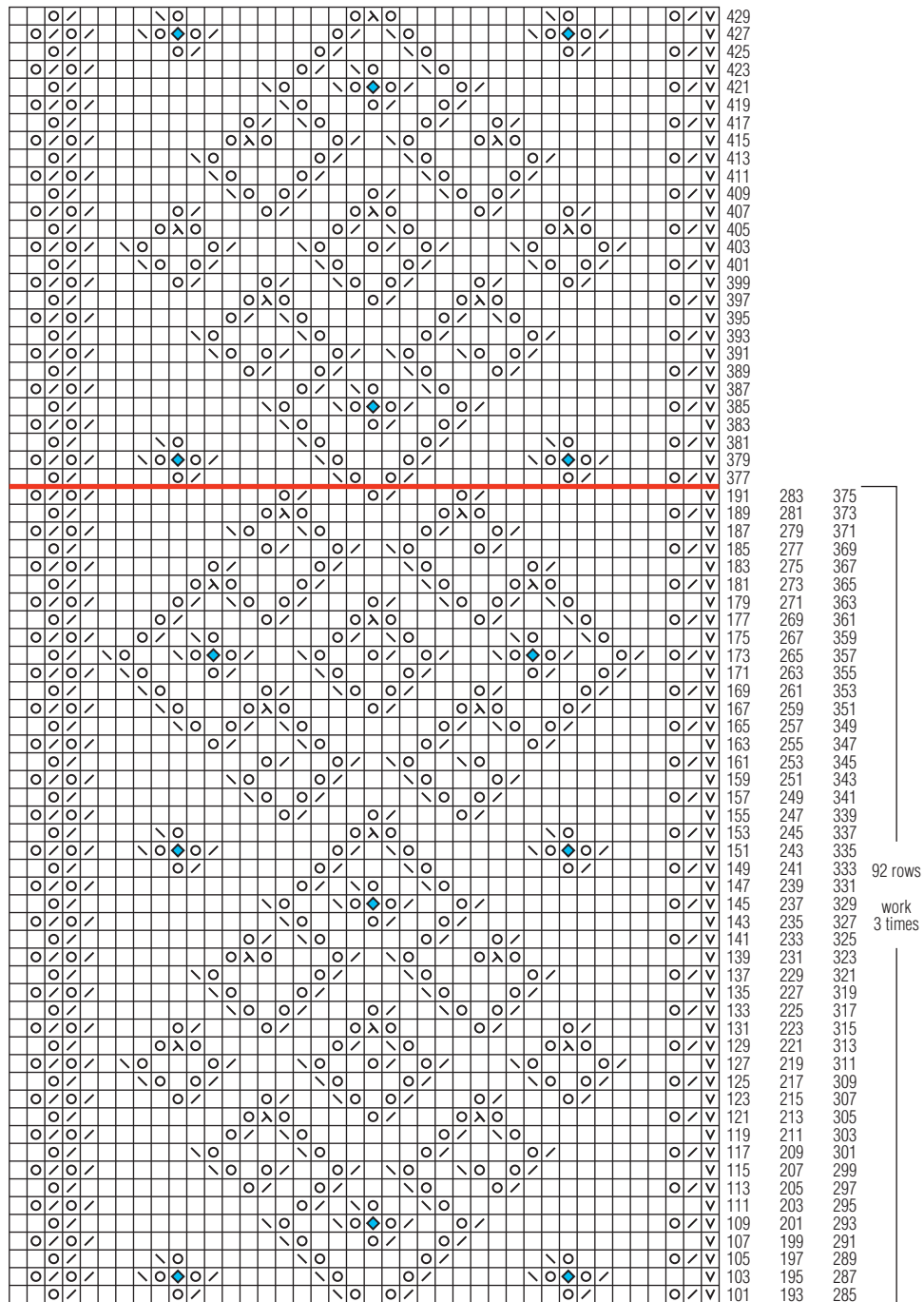

6 sts
work
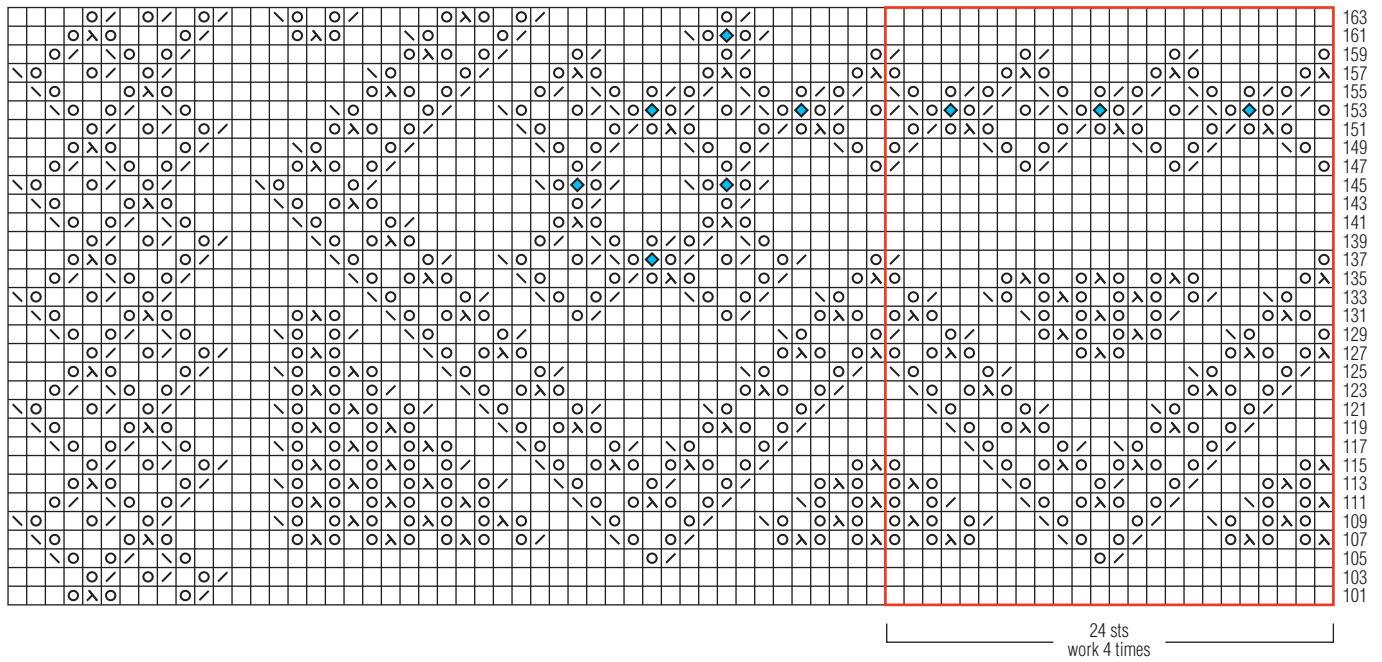28 times
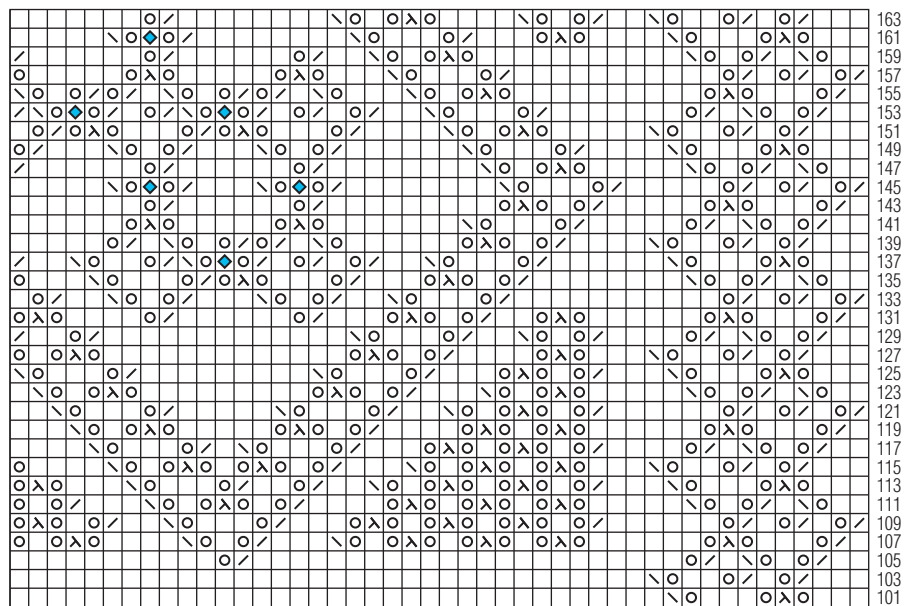
Chart B, Right Side

Chart C

Chart D, Left Side

24 sts
work 4 times

Chart D, Right Side

Chart E

Chart F

365
363
361
359
357

211	259	307	355
209	257	305	353
207	255	303	351
205	253	301	349
203	251	299	347
201	249	297	345
199	247	295	343
197	245	293	341
195	243	291	339
193	241	289	337
191	239	287	335
189	237	285	333
187	235	283	331
185	233	281	329
183	231	279	327
181	229	277	325
179	227	275	323
177	225	273	321
175	223	271	319
173	221	269	317
171	219	267	315
169	217	265	313
167	215	263	311
165	213	261	309

48 rows

work 4 times

Olga made this shawl her own by mixing traditional and personal stitch patterns.

12

Chart H

			365
			363
			361
			359
			357
211	259	307	355
209	257	305	353
207	255	303	351
205	253	301	349
203	251	299	347
201	249	297	345
199	247	295	343
197	245	293	341
195	243	291	339
193	241	289	337
191	239	287	335
189	237	285	333
187	235	283	331
185	233	281	329
183	231	279	327
181	229	277	325
179	227	275	323
177	225	273	321
175	223	271	319
173	221	269	317
171	219	267	315
169	217	265	313
167	215	263	311
165	213	261	309

48 rows
work
4 times
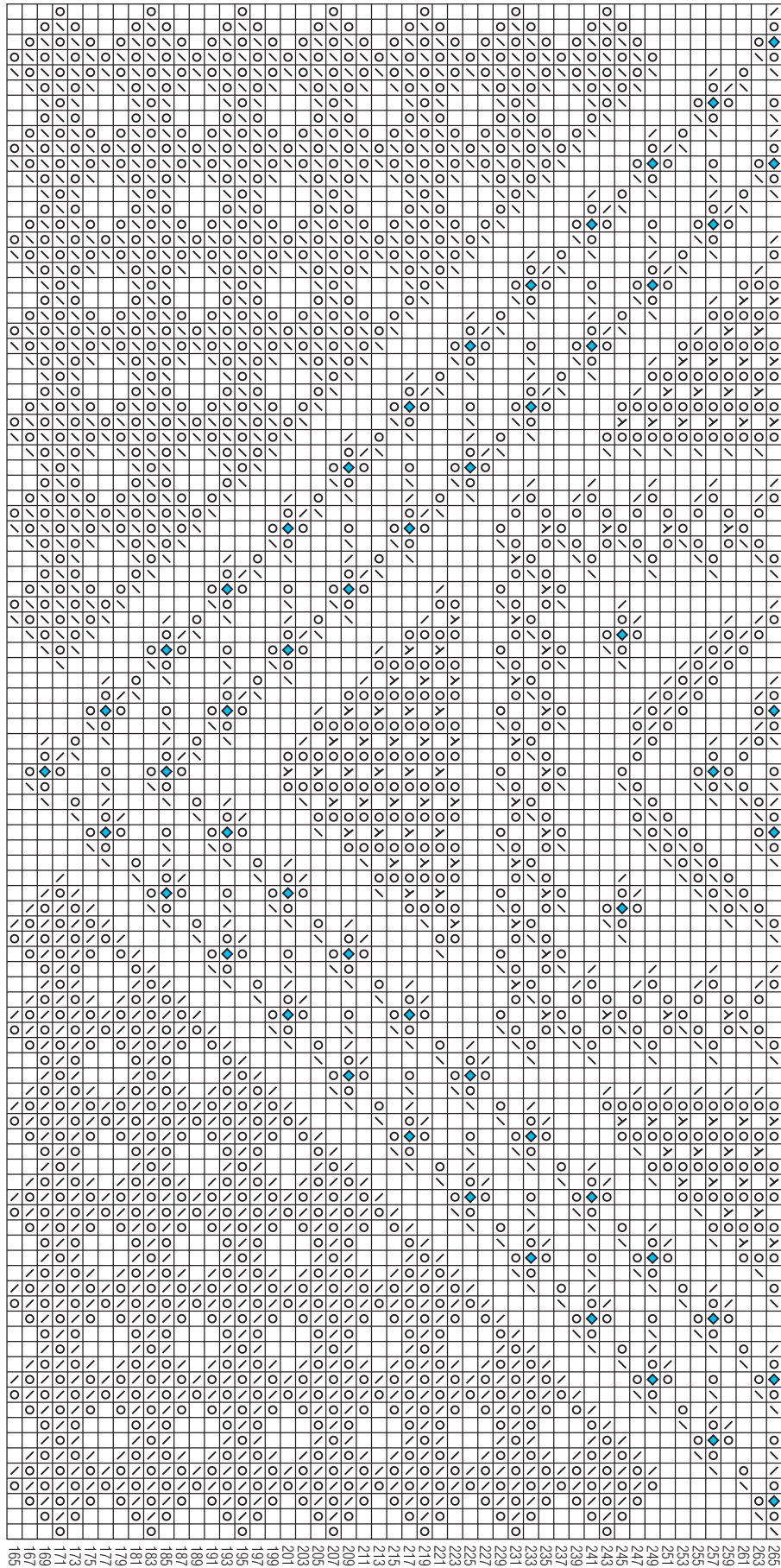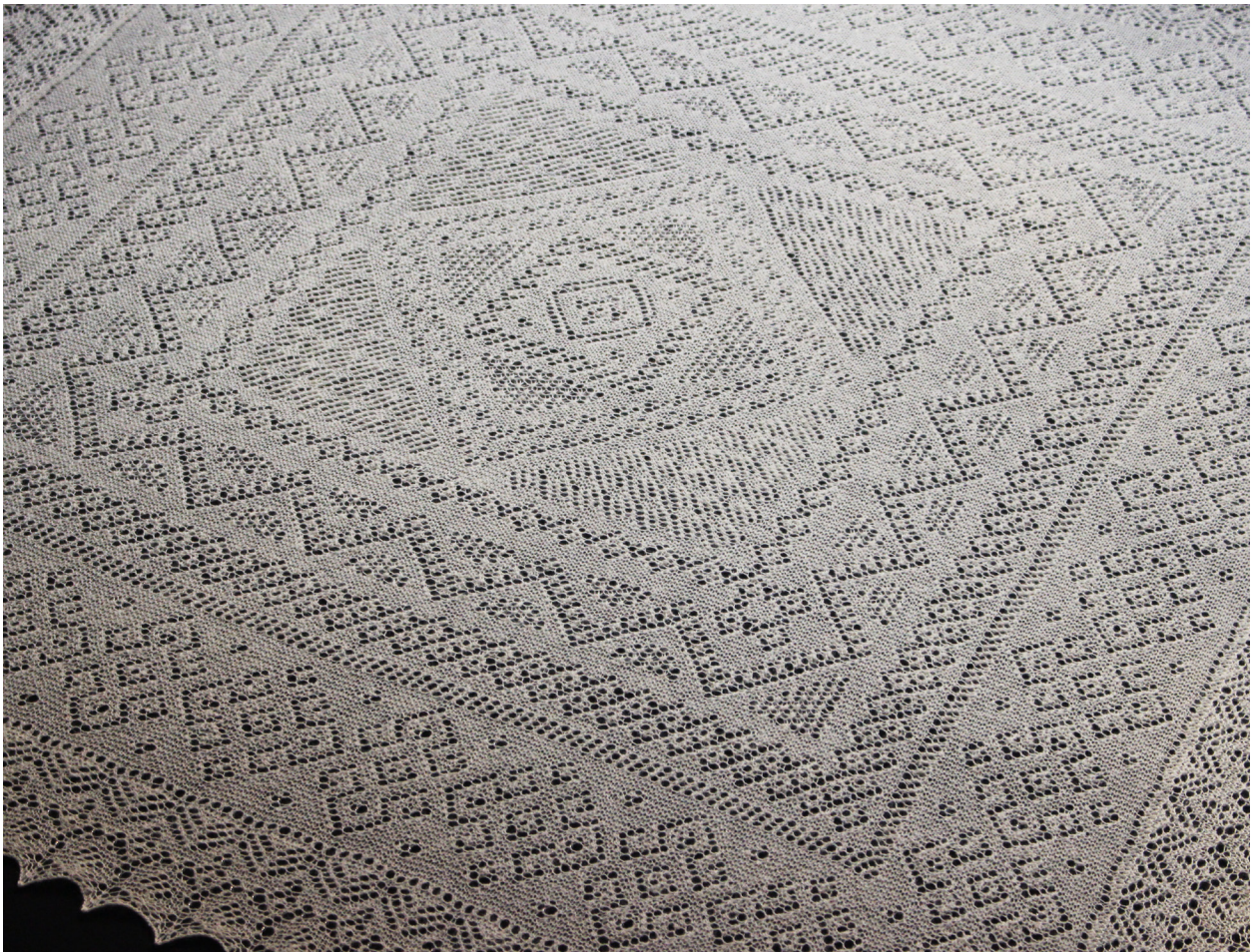
A knitted masterpiece.
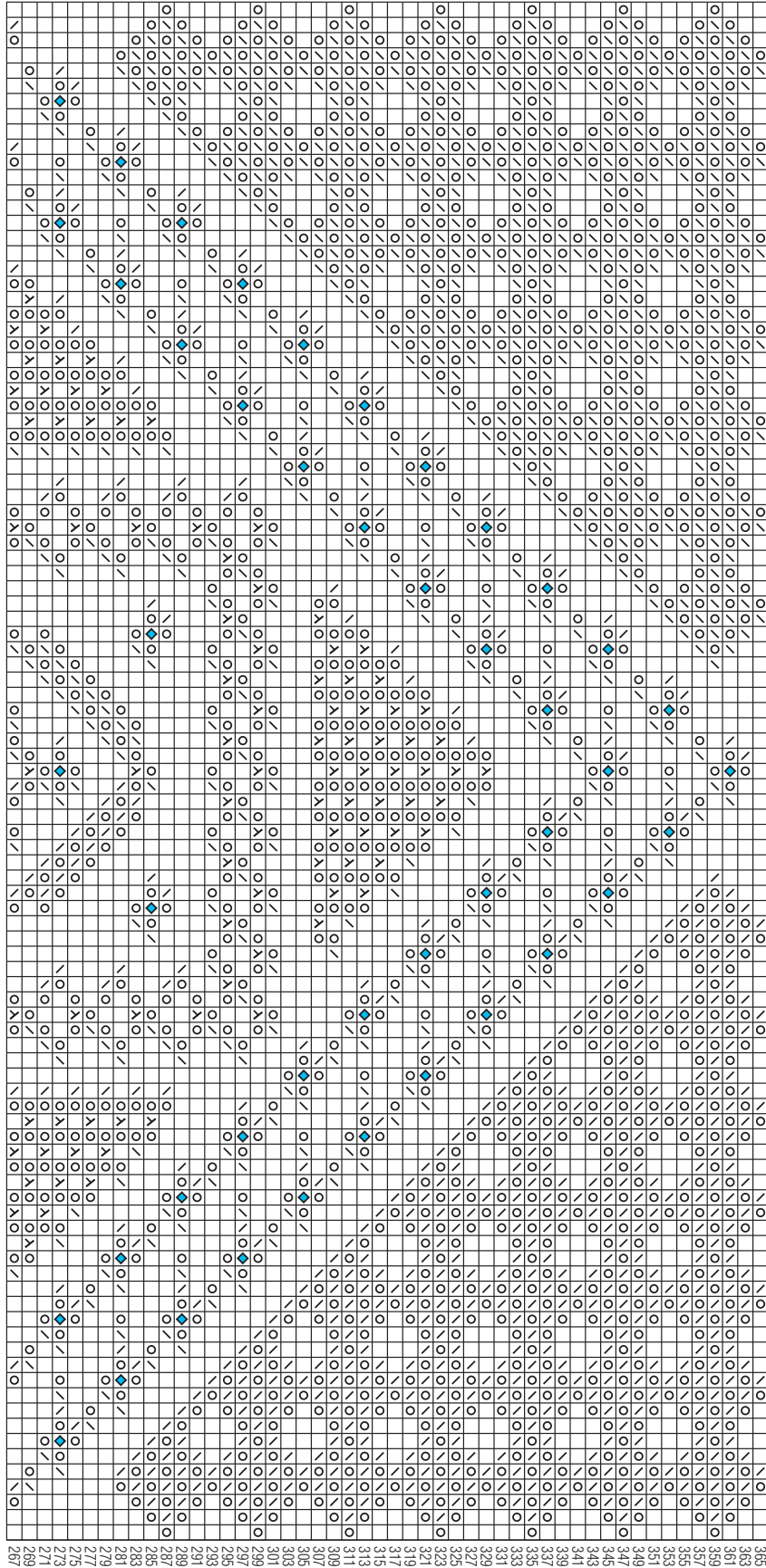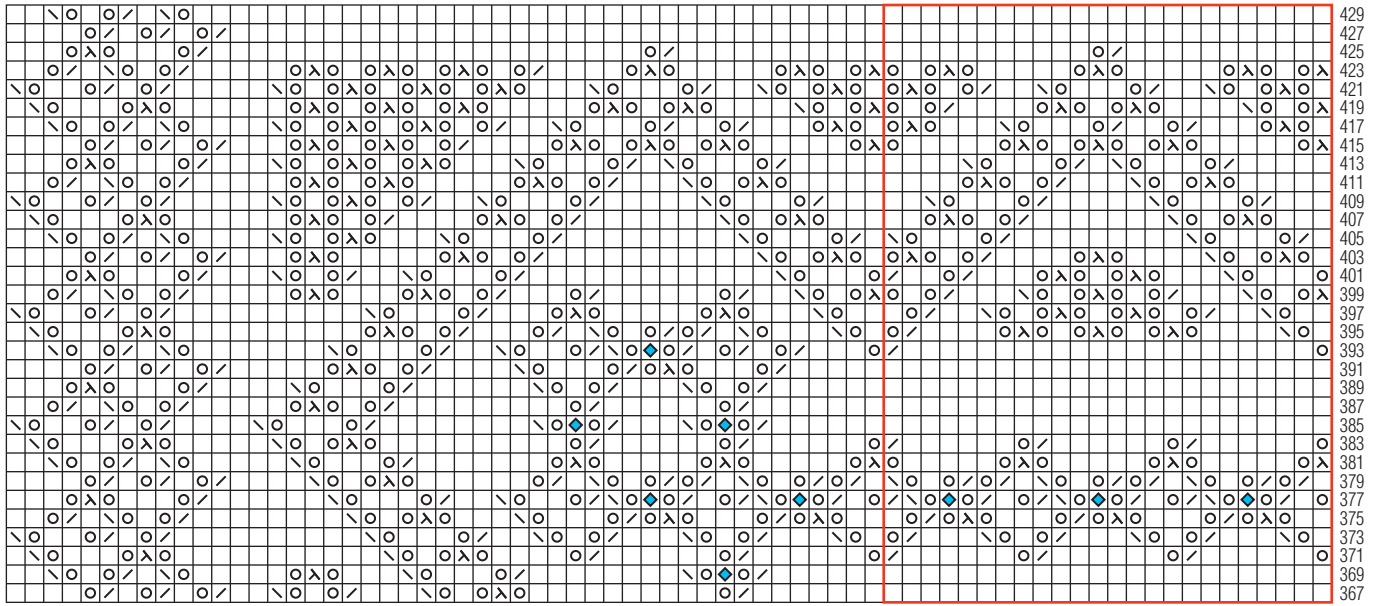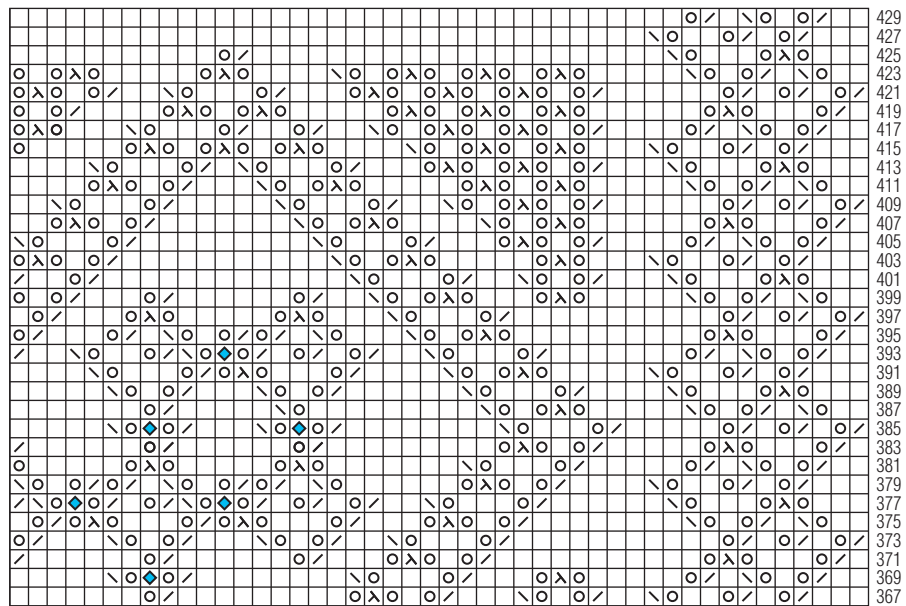
Chart I

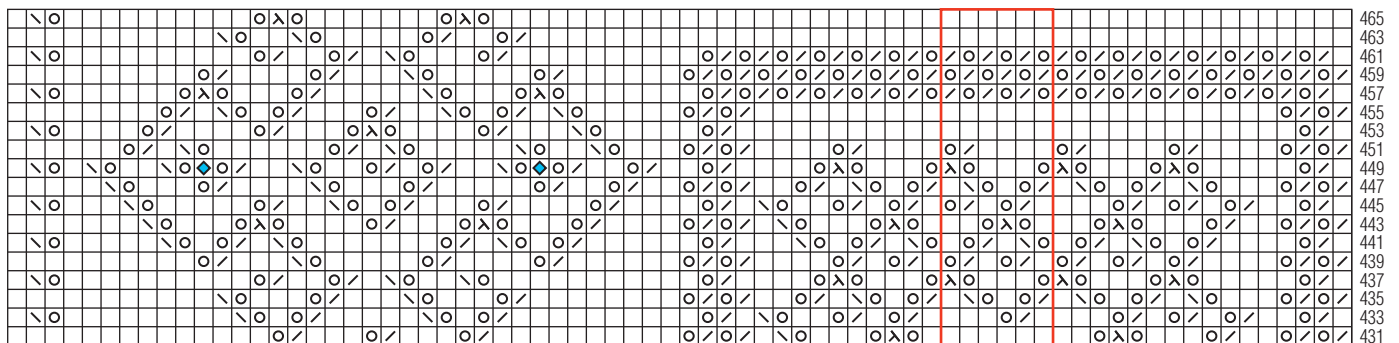Chart J, Left Side

24 sts
work 4 times

Chart J, Right Side

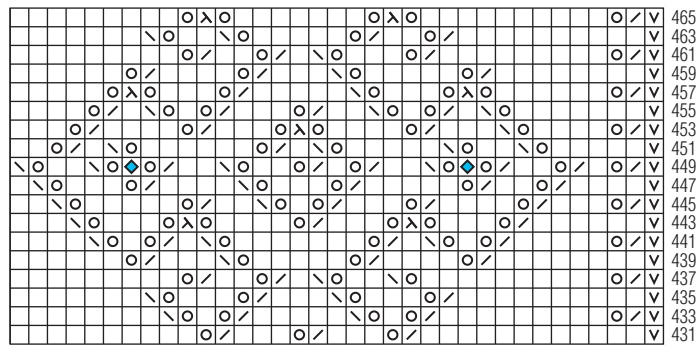Chart K, Left Side

6 sts
work
28 times

Chart K, Right Side

465
463
461
459
457
455
453
451
449
447
445
443
441
439
437
435
433
431

Chart L, Left Side

46 sts
work 4 times

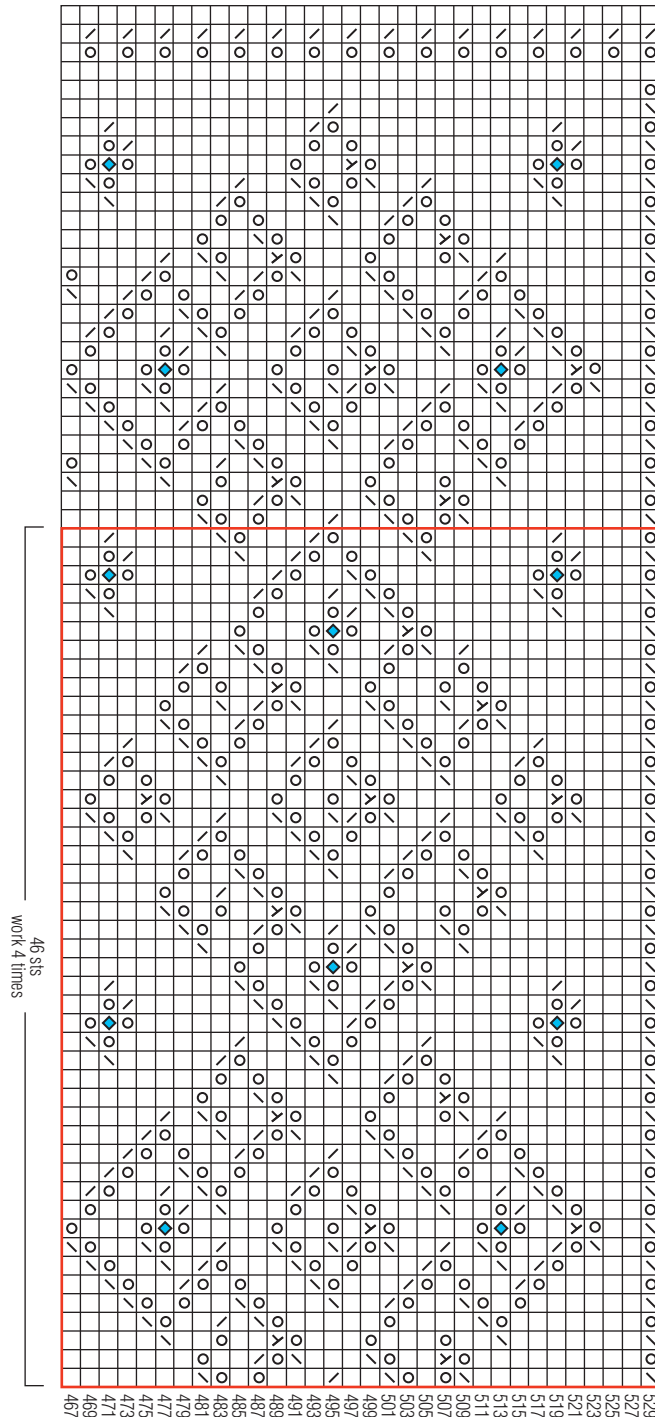467 469 471 473 475 477 479 481 483 485 487 489 491 493 495 497 499 501 503 505 507 509 511 513 515 517 519 521 523 525 527 529

Chart L, Right Side

Chart M

12 sts
work 22 times