

Cat's Paw Shawl
Diane Pearsall



I love shawls. They keep me warm without constricting my movements. They're light and airy and can be striped or patterned, long or short. But I don't like shawls that fall off! Or ones that you constantly have to readjust and fidget with.

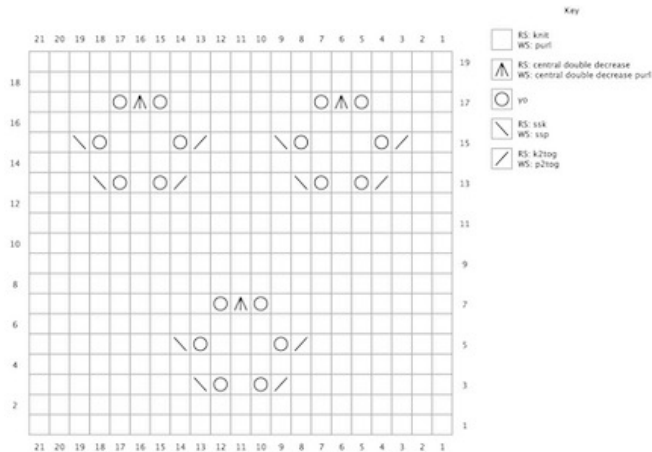
So, I took a basic triangular shawl pattern, which normally has two sections, and added one or two more. Presto! A shawl that draped nicely and STAYED on my shoulders!

Not content with a plain shawl, I added my favorite motif, the cat's paw. It's a traditional Shetland lace motif that's often used in shawls---in borders, overall patterns, etc.

And so, the Cat's Paw shawl was born. I hope you have fun knitting and wearing it.

- **Yarn:** any solid-colored yarn with a lot of drape. Don't use a variegated yarn or one that's really fuzzy: that will obscure the pattern. The shawl should take between 400 and 600 yards, depending on the size you want. For the shawl shown above I used 4.9 ounces of a worsted-weight handspun.
- **Needles:** 40-47" circular needle to give a very loose, drapery fabric.
- **Other supplies:** safety-pin-style stitch markers that can be moved around easily, ruler, tapestry needle, scissors, row counter, etc.

Swatch: A swatch is essential for this project so you can get the proper drape and openness. For the swatch, cast on 20 stitches and knit the following chart. Keep changing the needle size until you get the effect you want.



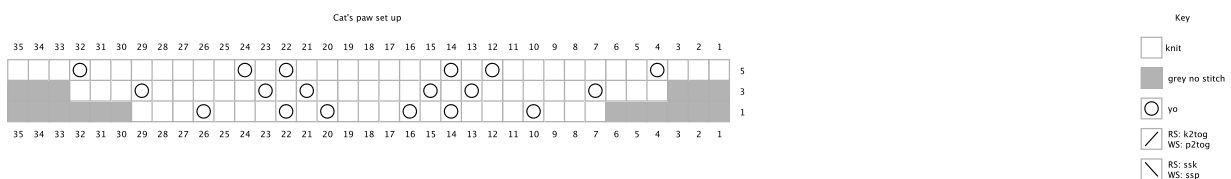
Garter-stitch tab

After you have knitted and blocked your swatch and determined your needle size, it's time to cast on. This shawl begins with a garter-stitch tab. If you've had trouble with tabs before, don't worry. This method from Kelbourne Woolens makes it easy! (<https://kelbournewoolens.com/blog/2015/03/garter-tab-cast-on/>) The safety pin markers help you find the cast-on stitches with no problem.

- Cast on 3 stitches.
- Put a safety-pin-type marker in each stitch.
- Knit 24 rows.
- Turn work 90 degrees.
- Pick up and knit 11 stitches, one in each garter ridge on the edge.
- Turn work 90 degrees again.
- Pick up and knit 3 stitches using the safety pin lifeline to help find them.
- There should now be 17 stitches on the needle.

Body setup

These are the setup rows for the body of the shawl. You should have 17 stitches on the needle. Knit the following chart (6 rows). Only the right-side rows are shown (odd numbered, 1, 3, 5). Then just knit the wrong-side rows 2, 4, and 6.



Body of shawl

Body starts on row 7 of the chart.

Tips:

- Put markers on the center stitch of section C (see body chart). This will help you remember to do a yarnover before and after the center stitch.
- Use safety pin markers. They can be moved up the shawl as you work.
- Use marking tape to keep track of what row you are on.
- Learn the pattern. After a while you won't need the chart.
- The little numbers in the chart indicate how many stitches between motifs. They are very helpful!

The chart stops after 6 motifs per section, but you probably want to make the shawl longer. Just add one more motif each time, centering them appropriately. Remember that the shawl will be blocked aggressively and be longer.

Finishing

When the shawl is about the size you want, it's time to round the edges for a better drape and fit.

Knit 6-8 rows of garter stitch **WITHOUT** any yarnover increases. This will add a nice, rounded edge. Then cast off loosely with this stretchy bind off. The stretchiness is important, so that the shawl drapes nicely. Here's how:

- Knit the first two stitches.
- Then knit them together through the back loop like an SSK. You will have one stitch left on the right needle.
- Knit the next stitch.
- Then knit the 2 stitches on the right needle together like an SSK.



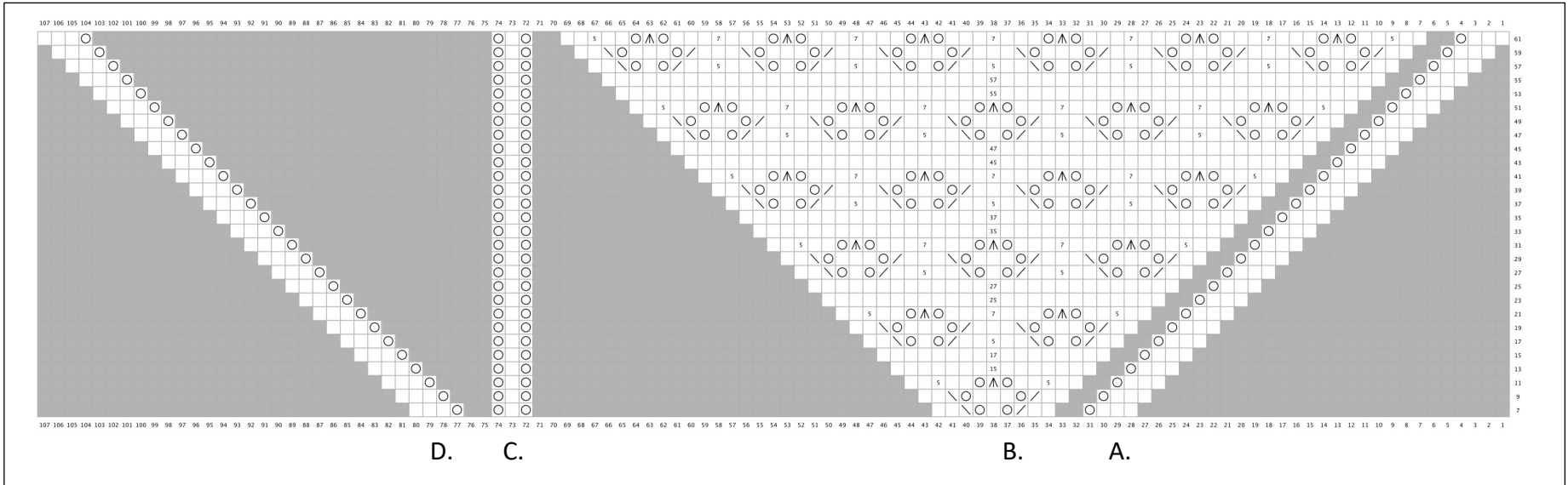
Blocking

First soak the shawl in lukewarm water with non-rinse wool wash for 10-15 minutes. Squeeze as much water out as possible by rolling it in a towel and then standing on it.

You will need a blocking board and lots of long pins. Pin out the shawl, shaping it like the one in the picture. Leave it until completely dry, then take out pins and weave in any ends.

Put the shawl on, find a full-length mirror and admire your beautiful creation!

Cat's Paw body chart



Only the right-side rows (odd numbers, 7-61) are charted. They form the pattern of the shawl. All wrong-side rows (even rows, 2-62) are knit. It is impossible to chart the entire shawl, since it is too big to fit on the page. Here's how to use the chart. For **every right-side row** knit the following repeats:

- Knit section **A**.
- Knit section **B**.
- Knit section **C**. Put a safety pin marker in the center stitch, and move it up as you knit. This helps avoid missed yarnovers.
- Repeat sections **B** and **C** two more times.
- Finish row with section **D**.

Tip: The small numbers on the chart indicate how many stitches between the motifs. These can help you keep track of where you are.