

The Carnival Bag, by TheTwistedYarn.com



The front and back panels of this shoulder-bag are each worked in the round from the outside-inwards, with decreases forming the corners, and beginning on circular needles then swapping to DPNs once things get tight near the middle. The strap/side/bottom piece is worked in the round too, with the reverse of the strap worked flat. The flap is worked flat, and then all of the pieces are joined using single crochet stitches (double crochet in UK parlance), or blanket stitch embroidery if you prefer. The finished piece is approximately 25cm (10 inches) square, 5cm (2 inches) deep, with a 115cm (45 inch) shoulder strap.

The Carnival bag can be lined using cotton fabric backed with iron-on interfacing, which makes it (especially the handle) strong, because there's no getting away from the fact that knitting is stretchy – much more so than crochet. That said, I'm no sewing expert, so lining instructions will be sketchy. *Really* sketchy.

I realize that too many photos in a pattern are a no-no, so I'll share most of the photos on the blog, at <http://thetwistedyarn.com/2015/09/29/the-carnival-bag/> .

You will need:-

- One pack of special edition Stylecraft Special DK yarn (10 x 50g balls). If you don't have access to this, you could of course substitute ten other Stylecraft Special shades, or even other yarns knitting to approximately 22s, 30r per 10cm/4inch square on 4mm needles in stockinette.
- 4mm circular needles in the following lengths: 60cm and 100cm.
- A set of five 4mm double-pointed needles (DPNs).
- Four stitch markers, including one that looks different from the others.
- Darning needle.
- Crochet hook.
- A magnetic metal clasp or other suitable closure. These are easy/cheap to buy.
- Fabric, interfacing, and thread for the lining.

Gauge isn't crucial, because it isn't as though you'll be wearing this thing, *but* if you're a loose knitter, consider dropping down a needle size because fairisle works best when the stitches are relatively dense.

Abbreviations:-

SSK: slip, slip, knit. (Remember, slip knitwise!)

SSP: slip, slip, purl. (Remember, slip knitwise!)

st: stitch

k2tog: knit two together

p2tog: purl two together

To Make The Front And The Back Of The Bag

I used the colours in different orders for the front and the back, but it's up to you whether you do this too. The front and the flap should be worked in the same colour sequence, though. The chart on the following page shows the colours I used for the front and for the flap.

Using shade Cypress and your 60cm circular needle, cast on 240 stitches (long-tail cast-on), placing a stitch marker every 60 stitches. At the end of this, place your different-looking stitch marker. Join in the round being careful not to twist. The following instructions explain how to work the structure of the piece, but you'll need to refer to the chart below to see colour changes and patterns.

Continuing in Cypress, (SSK. Knit to 2 st before next marker. K2tog. Slip marker) 4 times, to complete the round. (232 stitches.) This is the outer round shown on the chart below.

(Note that the chart only shows one quarter of the round: you'll need to repeat it four times for each round.)

The first stitch of all subsequent rounds is worked very slightly differently, in order to compensate for the 'jog' in colour that would otherwise occur as you shift from one round to the next. So work all further rounds as follows, in colours/patterns as indicated by the chart:-












Slip 2 st knitwise. Pass the 1st st over the 2nd st, as you would if you were casting off. (Knit to 2st before next marker. K2tog. Slip marker. SSK) 3 times. Knit to 2 st before final marker. SSK.

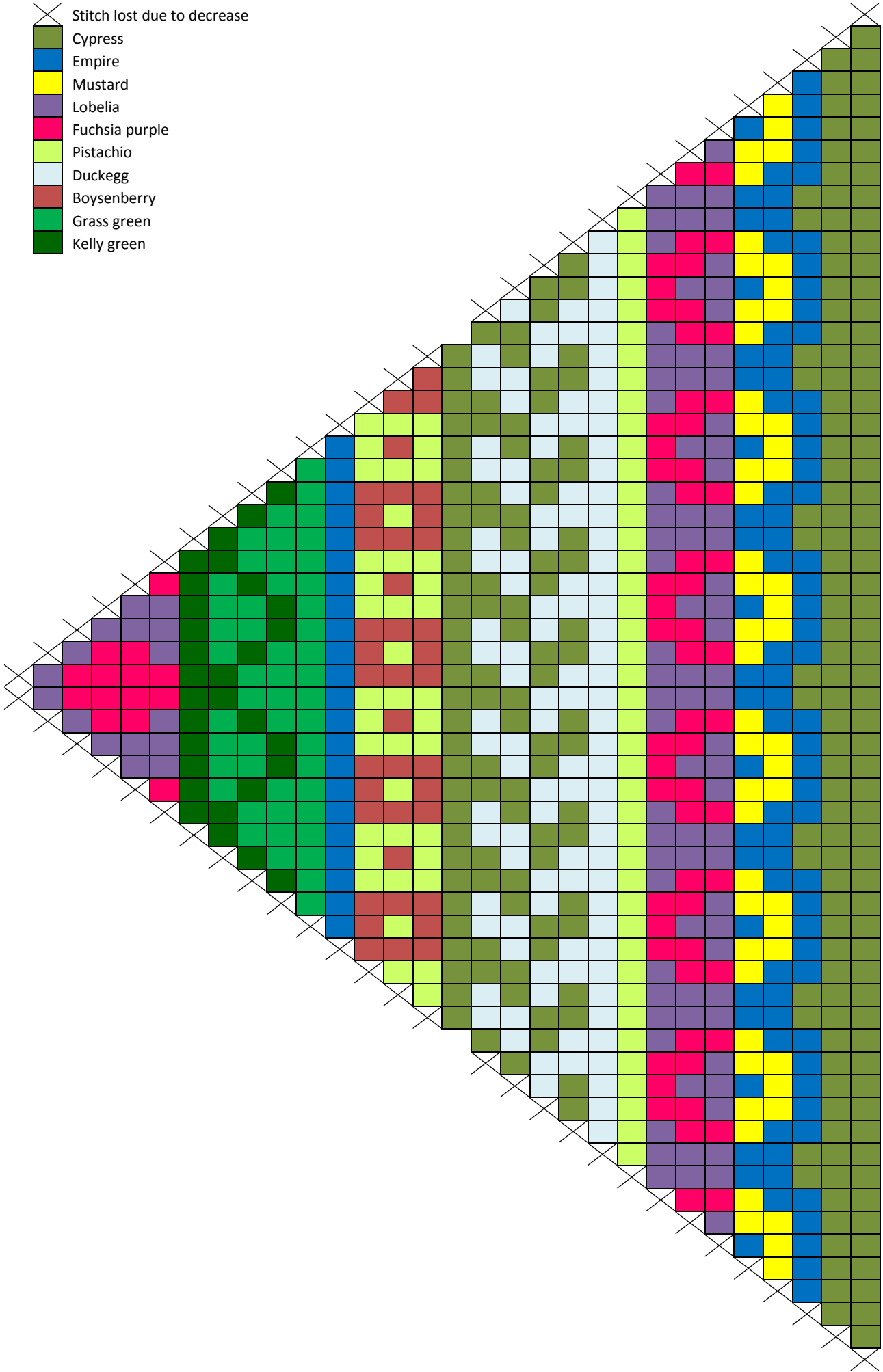
Repeat the above instruction for every round, following the chart below to see colour and pattern changes. When the stitches become tight on your circular needle, switch to DPNs, with one side of the square on each needle. Continue until only 4 stitches remain. Cut your yarn, thread the end onto a darning needle and run this through all 4 stitches before removing the DPNs and pulling the thread tight. Weave in all ends (sorry), using this opportunity to reinforce and tighten any areas of your mitred corners that look a bit loose.

Here's the alternative colour sequence that I used for the back:-



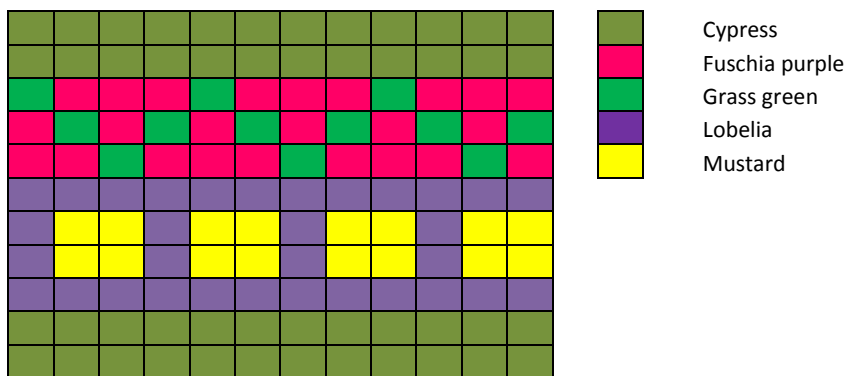
OK, on the next page is the chart showing one quarter portion of your work. (All four quarters are identical.) Colour names are given for the Stylecraft special edition pack, but you can always substitute other shades/yarns. (And no, I don't know why a couple of the decrease marks are missing from this chart. They were there when I produced it in Excel.)

-  Stitch lost due to decrease
-  Cypress
-  Empire
-  Mustard
-  Lobelia
-  Fuchsia purple
-  Pistachio
-  Duckegg
-  Boysenberry
-  Grass green
-  Kelly green



To Make the Flap And The Top Of The Bag

Cast on 60 stitches in Cypress on your 60cm circular needle. This section will be worked flat. Work all of the rows in the chart below from the top to the bottom, alternating between knit and purl rows.



You are then going to continue from the next row onwards by working one triangle, ie just one working of the design in the triangular chart. You will use the same colour sequence as you used for the front of the bag. Using the chart for reference, and alternating knit and purl rows, work each *knit* row as follows:-

SSK. Knit to 2 stitches before end. K2tog. Turn.

And work each *purl* row as follows:-

P2tog. Purl to 2 stitches before end. SSP. Turn.

Continue until you are left with only 2 stitches. Cut yarn, and use a darning needle to thread end of yarn through 2 live stitches. Remove knitting needle and pull yarn tight. Weave in ends.

To Make The Strap/Sides/Base Of The Bag

Use Cypress yarn and the 100cm circular needles. Cast on 420 stitches using long-tail cast-on. Join in the round, placing a stitch marker as you do so.

Knit 10 rounds, following the pattern and colour changes on the small chart above, again working from the top to the bottom of the chart.

Cast off 180 stitches. Knit the next 240 stitches, still in Cypress. Cut yarn.

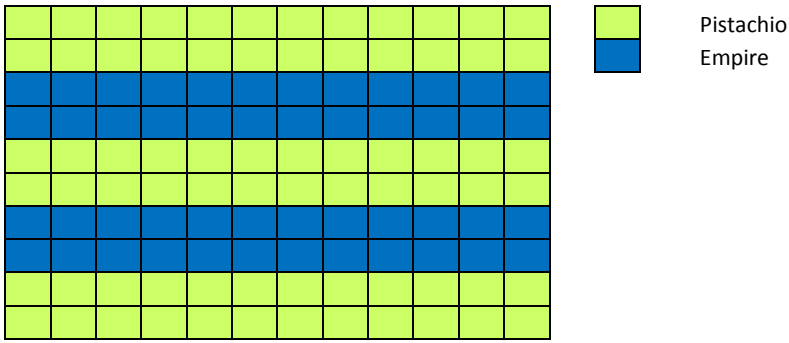
With the right side of your work facing you, join Pistachio yarn at right-hand side of the remaining live stitches. Work one row of knit stitches (i.e. continuing the stockinette).

Turn and purl next row in Pistachio.

Turn and knit next row in Empire.

Turn and purl next row in Empire.

Continue until you have 3 Pistachio stripes and 2 Empire stripes, finishing with a purl row of Pistachio. Cast off loosely. Weave in ends. This section should resemble the diagram on the following page:-

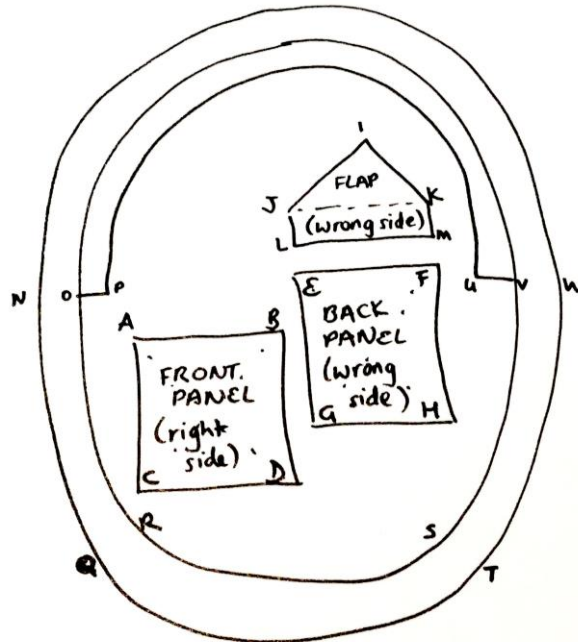


Joining Your Pieces

Now it's time to join your pieces together.

I used Duckegg yarn for this, and worked single crochet stitches (that's double crochet in UK parlance) from right to left across each edge. If you don't like crocheting, you could thread a needle and work blanket stitches into the edges that you're joining. But I do recommend working some sort of prominent, visible edge rather than attaching your panels invisibly.

Here's a diagram to help you think about joining:-



Crochet your joins using one single crochet stitch into each knit stitch, with wrong sides of the two sections you're joining placed together, to make a nice prominent seam. Crochet stitches should be worked *very* tightly, because your crochet stitches will otherwise be slightly wider than your knitted stitches.

ALL JOINS ARE MADE WRONG-SIDE TO WRONG-SIDE, BECAUSE THE SEAM SHOULD BE PROMINENT ON THE OUTSIDE OF YOUR WORK.

First, place point N of the strap against point A of the front panel, and point Q against point C. (Q is a point 60 stitches from N.) Join from N-A to Q-C.

Do the same with points Q-C to T-D. (T is a point 60 stitches beyond Q.)

Do the same with points T-D to W-B.

Do the same with points E-O to R-G.

Do the same with points R-G to S-H.

Do the same with points S-H to V-F.

Attach the top and flap by working from L-E to M-F.

Work a line of crochet chain stitches from J to K on the right side.

Work a line of single crochet stitches (double crochet in UK terms) from O to V, where one side of the strap will fold.

Work a line of single crochet stitches along the edge from L to J to I to K to M. From J to I to K, you'll need to average a little more than one crochet stitch per knitted stitch, otherwise your crochet will be too tight.

Fold the strap so that P is joined to N, and U is joined to W. If you are lining your bag (see below), insert lining for shoulder strap before crocheting the strap closed from N-P to U-W.

Lining

I do recommend lining the bag in order to achieve strength and rigidity. However, I'm no sewing expert, so I'll keep this brief.

Measure the exact inner dimensions of your bag (tricky with knitting, I know), and make a shape in iron-on interfacing that, when folded up, makes a perfect insert for the bag including its flap. Make another piece that will fit perfectly inside the shoulder strap. Iron these pieces to some plain cream cotton, then cut out the cotton, leaving an approximately 1cm edge all the way around for a seam. Fold the edge over twice and sew into place so that your work is the exact size and shape of the interfacing. Fold up the main bag piece as it will be once it's in place, and sew down the sides. Insert it into the actual bag. Sew it to your knitting around the top and around the edge of the flap so that the lining hangs neatly in place. Fix the strap lining inside the strap before folding and closing the knitted strap. Sew the ends of the strap lining to the top of the bag lining very securely.

Closure

Sew a magnetic or equivalent closure in place.

...And you're done!