



# A COMPARISON OF A CABLE AND LACE DESIGN BETWEEN MACHINE KNIT & HAND KNIT

Angelika's  
 2110 North Lake Road, Lakeside, Oregon 97449  
 phone 541-759-3975  
<http://www.yarn-store.com>



A frequent phone call I get is a hand knitter wanting to switch to machine knitting to speed up her production.

The education begins by explaining despite the reputation that machine knitting is cheating, it is not. It takes time to learn the settings, speed, gauges and limitations of knitting on a machine. In fact, in my opinion, hand knitting is a heck of a lot easier! After a long day of work, it is the hand knit needles I use to relax. The machine is used in the mornings, when my abilities are fresh and on the ball.

## Viewing the Chart

Hand knit charts (below left), are viewed from the knit side (or right side) of the fabric.

Machine knit charts (below right) are viewed from the purl side (or wrong side) of the fabric.

Hand Knit Chart	Right Side View											
	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
						—					—	12
11						—					—	
						—					—	10
9						—					—	
						—					—	8
7						—					—	
						—					—	6
5						—					—	
	/	○		○	\	—					—	4
3						—					—	
			○	\		—					—	2
1						—					—	

- Purl
- / Slip, slip, knit 2 slipped stitches through the back loop.
- \ Knit 2 together.
- 2x2 cable. Slip 2 stitches to cable needle, hold to front, knit 2, then knit 2 stitches off cable needle.

Machine Knit Chart	Purl Side View											
	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
												12
11												
												10
9												
												8
7												
												6
5												
	\	○		○	/							4
3												
			○	/								2
1												

- | reform purl stitch to knit with latch tool
- < Single stitch transfer to the right.
- > Single stitch transfer to the left.
- 2x2 cable. Lay down left pair of stitches first.

Comparison © Angelika's

All of Angelika's patterns are authorized for home knitting only.

The machine knit chart is viewed from the purl side because when you sit at a knitting machine and fabric is hanging from the hooks, it is the purl side you are looking at. In a machine knit chart, the graph and symbols reflect this view. On a knitting machine you are always looking at the purl side of the fabric, whereas, in hand knitting 50% of the time you are looking at the knit side, and 50% of the time you are looking at the purl side. (With the exception of when you are knitting in the round.)

Therefore when you do a translation of a hand knit graph to machine knit, you need to turn it in your mind and “see” it from the purl side.

### Knit & Purl Combinations

A knitting machine defaults to pulling loops always in the same direction. In hand knitting you can knit or purl each stitch as you come to it. To get knit and purl combinations on a knitting machine you have to pass the carriage, thus forming a row of purls, then using the latch tool, drop and reform the purl into a knit stitch. For the sample I am using, it is still very fast to knit on the machine and reform the purl column on each side of the cable every 5-7 rows.

### Transferring for Eyelets

I find doing most lace on the knitting machine even easier than by hand. In the case of this sample, the carriage is passed thus purling a whole row. I located the needles where an eyelet needs to be formed and using the transfer tool either transferred the stitch to the left or right stitch. The “yarn over” occurs automatically with the next pass of the carriage as yarn is laid into the emptied hook. It is easy to see the line up of patterning on a machine. In hand knitting it is sometimes easy, and sometimes not.

In hand knitting you must either do a SSK or K2Tog, depending on which direction the decrease is leaning, and depending on if the leaning stitch is visible on the knit side of fabric or is hidden behind on the purl side of the fabric. The yarn over eyelet occurs immediately before or after the decrease.

### Cables

Like lace, I enjoy cables on a knitting machine much more than by hand. It is fast, simple and very accurate. In the sample, these are 2x2 cables. 2 stitches are transferred onto a 2 prong transfer tool, the other 2 stitches are transferred onto a 2nd 2 prong transfer tool. The stitches on the tool in the right hand are then transferred off onto the 2 emptied needles on the left, then the remaining 2 stitches are placed on the empty needles on the right. Viewed from the purl

side, you can see that the 2 pair closest to you cross from right to left, over the top of the other pair, just as the symbol appears to do.

In hand knitting the cables are crossed when working a knit side row. The first 2 stitches are transferred to a cable needle and dropped to the front of the fabric (in our sample), knit the next 2 stitches, then knit the 2 stitches off the cable needle. Viewed from the knit side, you can see that the 2 pair closest to you cross from right to left, over the top of the other pair, just as the symbol appears to do.

Same identical symbol on both charts, but understand that one chart is viewed from the knit side, while the other is view from the purl side.



*The swatch above was partially knit by hand and partially on the LK150 midgauge. Can you tell which half was done by hand, and which on the machine?*

### Summary

If you were a language translator, you’d need to know both languages. The same is true if you want to use hand knit charts on your knitting machine, or vice versa. You need to understand both hand and machine charts, terminology and technique. This opens up another world of creativity.

#### *did you know*

*that the brioche stitch in hand knitting is the same as the tuck stitch in machine knitting?*