

## A Knit Bag of Purple Twist and Steel Beads

From *The Lady's Assistant for Executing Useful and Fancy Designs in Knitting, Netting, and Crochet Work* by Jane Gaugain, reproduced by Katherine Caron-Greig and available at <http://koshka-the-cat.blogspot.com/2013/05/the-ladys-assistant-for-executing.html>



Knitted and crocheted bags with star motifs at their bottoms were popular during the Victorian era. And why not? Not only are these stars attractive, but they're one of those deceptively simple things to knit. Once you get past the probably most awkward knitting ever—casting on eight stitches over four double pointed needles—it's incredibly logical and the design progresses quickly. Don't be intimidated by the 5/0 needles. They're remarkably quick to adjust to. They're quite the conversation piece as well—who doesn't occasionally like impressing others with knitting?

Adjustments to original: Mrs. Gaugain's original pattern was remarkably clear. The only adjustment I've made to it is to add a row of eyelets near the top to thread a drawstring though. She makes no mention of how the bag should be finished. Contemporary bags in museums often have a row of eyelets, so I decided to include them. My bag—like many originals—is lined. I used a tube of silk taffeta, gathered at the bottom and whipstitched into place just below the eyelets.

I've included the original pattern at the end of this PDF.

#### Materials

Yarn: Purely Silks silk beading cord size F, one 140 yard spool and one 20 yard card

Needles: One set of five double pointed needles size 5/0

Beads: 1592 seed beads, size 11/0

Gauge: 19 stitches and 24 rows to an inch

Substitutions: As this is a bag, gauge, needle size and yarn aren't truly important. Any needle and yarn that knits into a relatively firm fabric will work nicely. It doesn't have to be a tiny Victorian bag!

While I made the bag out of one spool of cord, I had just enough and would have liked a little more for the drawstrings.

A note—If you wash your bag, the hand changes dramatically. Before washing, my bag was very stiff and dense. After washing, it was quite soft and fluid.

Where to buy: The beading cord and beads are both available from Fire Mountain Gems (<http://www.firemountaingems.com>). Small needles are available from Lacis (<http://www.lacis.com>) and Bugknits (<http://www.bugknits.com>)

# The Pattern

This pattern is much less complicated than it appears. Each row of the star is slightly different, which makes for a long pattern. I've included a chart of the design as well.

Symbols:

Knit—K

Yarn Over—YO

Place Bead—B

Knit two together—K2tog

Thread the beads on the cord.

Cast on 8 stitches on one DPN.

Alternately, you may cast two stitches on each of four needles and join round one, as the original states. However, I find it easier to cast on one needle and the bottom of the bag closes just fine when you join row two instead.

Row 1: Knit each stitch, knitting two stitches on each of the four remaining needles so that each needle has two stitches on it—8 stitches total.

Row 2: Work this row in the round. Knit 1, increase one by knitting into the front and back of the next stitch, repeat—12 stitches total

Row 3: Knit—12 stitches total

Row 4: Knit 2, increase one by knitting into the front and back of the next stitch, repeat—16 stitches total

Row 5: Knit—16 stitches total

If using the chart, start chart one here.

Row 1 of star pattern: YO, K1, B, repeat (there will be two repeats on each needle)—24 stitches total

Row 2 and all even rows: K

Row 3: (YO, K1, B2) repeat—32 stitches total

Row 5: (YO, K1 B3) repeat—40 stitches total

Row 7: (YO, K1, B4) repeat—48 stitches total

Row 9: (YO, K1, B5) repeat—56 stitches total

Row 11: (YO, K1, B6) repeat—64 stitches total

Row 13: (YO, K1, B7) repeat—72 stitches total  
Row 15: (YO, K1, B8) repeat—80 stitches total  
Row 17: (YO, K1, B9) repeat—88 stitches total  
Row 19: (YO, K1, B10) repeat—96 stitches total  
Row 21: (YO, K1, B11) repeat—104 stitches total  
Row 23: (YO, K3, B10) repeat—112 stitches total  
Row 25: (YO, K5, B9) repeat—120 stitches total  
Row 27: (YO, K7, B8) repeat—128 stitches total  
Row 29: (YO, K9, B7) repeat—136 stitches total  
Row 31: (YO, K11, B6) repeat—144 stitches total  
Row 33: (YO, K13, B5) repeat—152 stitches total  
Row 35: (YO, K15, B4) repeat—160 stitches total  
Row 37: (YO, K17, B3) repeat—168 stitches total  
Row 39: (YO, K19, B2) repeat—176 stitches total  
Row 41: (YO, K21, B1) repeat—184 stitches total  
Row 42: K

You now have 46 stitches on each needle for a total of 184 stitches.

Begin pattern two, the spots. The first row of spots is centered between the points of the star. The second row of spots is centered over the points.

Repeat the spot pattern three times for a total of six rows of spots.

Row 1: K10 (B, K, B, K20) repeat to last ten stitches, K10  
Row 2: K9 (B2, K, B2, K18) repeat to last nine stitches, K 9  
Row 3: K11 (K, K22) repeat to last 11 stitches, K11  
Row 4: K9 (B2, K, B2, K18) repeat to last nine stitches, K 9  
Row 5: K10 (B, K, B, K20) repeat to last ten stitches, K10  
Rows 6-14: K

Row 15: K1, B (K20, B, K1, B) repeat to last 21 stitches, K20, B

Row 16: K1, B2 (K18, B2, K1, B2) repeat to last 20 stitches, K18, B2

Row 17: (B1, K22) repeat

Row 18: K1, B2 (K18, B2, K1, B2) repeat to last 20 stitches, K18, B2

Row 19: K1, B (K20, B, K1, B) repeat to last 21 stitches, K20, B

Rows 20-29: K

On the third repeat, make eyelets on row 25 as follows:

K7, K2tog, YO, YO, K2tog, K8, K2tog, YO, YO, K2tog, repeat

Bind off!

To make a drawstring, take a few lengths of your knitting cord, a little over double the length you want your drawstrings. Tie or pin the ends to something stable—I use the pull on a coffee table drawer or pin them to the couch. Treating them as one, twist them together until you can't twist any more, pulling them to keep a firm tension as you do it. Fold the twisted thread in half, and it will twist on itself into a cord. Be sure that the twists in the cord is facing the same direction, and twist in that direction.

You'll want to make two drawstrings. Thread one from right to left with both ends coming out on the same side, and thread the others opposite—from left to right. This creates a bag that cinches up easily.

My drawstring is made of just one twisted length as I ran out of cord.



### Chart 2, Spots

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### Chart 3, Eyelets

X	O	O	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	O	O	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25
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### Key

Knit -      Yarn Over O      Place Bead B      Knit Two Together X

## XXXV KNIT BAG OF PURSE TWIST AND STEEL BEADS—Original Pattern

Work with common-sized purse twist. The bottom of the bag consists of a star of steel or gold beads, having eight points, and the centre of the bag spotted over with six rows of little stars.

Work with 4 wires of No. 19 ; cast on 2 stitches on each of 4 wires, with a 5th wire work a plain row.

During the forming of the star, you always work a plain and a bead row alternately.

2d Row, increase a stitch on each wire, by knitting the last stitch in the common way ; still leave it on the pin ; knit it again from the back part of the loop (this is the way to increase without making a hole). You will now have 3 stitches on the first wire, repeat with the other three as this, which will make 12 loops in all.

3d Row, plain.

4th Row, increase 1 stitch on each wire, which will make 16 loops.

5th Row, plain.

6th Row, or first bead row, bring forward ; knit 1 , knit 1 bead bring forward ; knit 1, knit 1 bead ; this finishes the first wire, repeat with the other three as this.

7th Row, plain.

8th Row, bring forward; knit 1, knit 2 beads, bring forward; knit 1, knit 2 beads ; this finishes the first wire : repeat with the other three as this.

9<sup>th</sup> Row, plain

10th Row, bring forward ; knit 1 , knit 3 beads, bring forward ; knit 1, knit 3 beads ; this finishes the first wire ; repeat with the other three as this.

You will observe, by bringing forward, it makes a row of holes up each division ; consequently it increases 2 loops on each wire every time your beads are knit ; there fore 1 bead each division must be increased on every row knit with beads. (You will find two divisions on each wire.)

Continue working in the same way as the three bead rows already described, al ways adding a bead to each division, till you have worked 11 rows of beads, then you will have 11 beads on each division.

Next row plain as before. You must now begin to decrease your beads, but still make more stitches, till you get to 1 bead.

1st Row of decreasing of beads, bring forward; knit 3, knit 10 beads, bring for ward; knit 3, knit 10 beads; this finishes the first wire; repeat with the other three as this ; then 1 plain row.

2d Decreasing row, bring forward ; knit 5 stitches, knit 9 beads, bring forward ; knit 5, knit 9 beads ; this finishes the first wire ; repeat with the other three as this ; then 1 plain row.

3d Decreasing row, bring forward ; knit 7, knit 8 beads, bring forward ; knit 7, knit 8 beads.

Continue decreasing in the same way as the three rows above described, till you diminish to 1 bead.



When the star is complete, and a plain row worked, you will find 23 plain stitches between each point. Commence the spots.

1st Row, knit 10, knit 1 bead, knit 1, knit 1 bead, knit 20, knit 1 bead, knit 1, knit 1 bead, knit 10 ; this finishes the first wire ; repeat with the other three as this. There are no plain rows between the bead rows, while forming the spots.

2nd Row, knit 9, knit 2 beads, knit 1, knit 2 beads, knit 18, knit 2 beads, knit 1, knit 2 beads, knit 9 ; this finishes the first wire ; repeat with the other three as this.

3d Row, knit 11, knit 1 bead, knit 22, knit 1 bead, knit 11 ; this finishes the first wire ; repeat with the other three as this.

4th Row, knit 9, knit 2 beads, knit 1, knit 2 beads, knit 18, knit 2 beads, knit 1, knit 2 beads ; knit 9 ; this finishes the first wire ; repeat with the other three as this.

5th Row, knit 10, knit 1 bead, knit 1, knit 1 bead, knit 20, knit 1 bead, knit 1, knit 1 bead, knit 10 ; this finishes the first wire ; repeat with the other three as this.

The spot will now be finished. Knit 9 plain rows between each row of little spots. Commence the next row of little spots in the centre of the other two, by working thus : —

1st Row, knit 1, knit 1 bead, knit 20, knit 1 bead, knit 1, knit 1 bead, knit 20, knit 1 bead ; this finishes the first wire ; repeat with the other three as this.

Proceed with this as described in the first five rows of spots.

The bag finishes with 9 plain rows. Eight hanks or pieces of cords are required for a bag, and 12 rows of beads. This receipt may be worked for a short purse, by working with fine twist, wires, and beads ; also for a tambour bag, worked with common-sized purse twist ; and also a short tambour purse, worked with 3d sized purse silk, and beads to suit.