Christmas Balls
by Mary Ann Stephens

Pattern overview:

Three circularly-knit, ball-shaped ornaments – "Kilim", "Marius" and "Holly" - each with symmetrical, stranded knitting motifs repeated across all four panels. Optional duplicate stitch embroidery can be worked on Kilim; optional nupp stitches can be worked on Holly. All balls shown use an I-cord hanger loop, but the common crocheted chain loop will work, too.

For more discussion, see my blog post. For more designs in PDF format, click here.

Suggested yarn:

Either Dale of Norway **"Heilo"** 100% Norwegian or **"Falk"** 100% superwash wool yarns can be used for the main portions of all three balls. For the metallic accents on Holly, use **"Gullfasan"** 90% viscose / 10% polyamide yarn - a DK-weight novelty yarn that strands well with either Heilo or Falk.

Yarn note: If you have scraps of both Heilo and Falk to use up, you can mix them in the same ball, as long as you hand wash and air dry the resulting ball. All of these Dale of Norway yarns are available through my retail website, Kidsknits.com.

On the tree:

Seen from above/below:

KILIM BALL
Falk:
A = Natural #0020
B = Fern green #9155
C = Moss green #9133

MARIUS BALL
Heilo:
A **=** Norwegian blue #5744
B = White #0010
C = Red #4018

HOLLY BALL
Falk:
A = Off-white #0017
B = Red #4018
C = Green #8246
Gullfasan:
D **=** Dark silver #9861

GAUGE:

The gauge on the balls shown is about 28 stitches per 4" / 10cm. But, the gauge for these balls is not crucial. What matters is that you're happy with the resulting fabric and that you keep your gauge consistent across multiple balls, if they're going to be used together.

NEEDLES:

US #3 / 3.25mm, or whatever size needle you need to obtain your preferred gauge. You can use double-pointed needles (extra helpful, but not essential, for the I-cord hanging loop), one long circular needle with the magic loop method, or two circular needles.

NOTIONS:

Wool or polyester batting, to stuff the balls. I always love wool, and it makes a nice, firm stuffing, especially for balls that are meant to be decorative keepsakes. But, the balls shown will hopefully be over-loved by messy little hands. So, I filled them with common polyester batting, which will wash and dry easily. It works just fine!

Tapestry needle(s)

Used in defining the height and shape of the balls; you'll prefer the longest tapestry needle for that purpose. Also used for optional embroidery, in which case you might prefer a shorter tapestry needle.

Crochet hook, only for optional hanger method, not shown here, but commonly used.

Abbreviations:

A = background color
B = motif color
C = accent color
D = 2nd accent color
K = knit
K2tog = knit two stitches together as one stitch.
M = make one, back = insert left needle *back-to-front* under horizontal strand between previous stitch and next stitch; knit into *front* of stitch to increase one stitch.

m = make one, front = insert left needle *front*-to-back under horizontal strand between previous stitch and next stitch; knit into *back* of stitch to increase one stitch.
rd(s) = round(s)
rem = remaining
rep = repeat
ssk = "slip, slip, knit" = slip one stitch knitwise, slip another stitch knitwise, knit both slipped stitches together as one.

CHRISTMAS BALL INSTRUCTIONS

It's a good idea to read through the entire pattern before starting to knit. Feel free to email me at mas@kidsknits.com, if you have any questions.

Using A for Kilim, C for Marius or D for Holly, cast on 12 sts, leaving a yarn tail about 6"/15.2cm long. Distribute the sts evenly among your needles. Work chart rows 1 through 34 as follows: Start at lower right corner, always read from right to left; each square equals 1 st to be worked in color and method indicated in chart legend; 4 repeats of one chart row equal 1 complete rd of knitting.
<u>Kilim Ball only</u>: Work optional 3rd color in duplicate st (while you can still access the inside of the ball.)
<u>All balls</u>: Turn the ball inside out and weave in any loose ends. Turn the ball right side out and knit the remainder of the chart. Do *not* bind off.

HANGER METHODS:
I-cord loop (shown): *K2tog, rep from * until only 3 sts rem. Align the 3 rem sts on one needle and work the I-cord hanging loop as follows: Without turning work, * slide sts from left end of needle to right end of needle; bring yarn around back of sts, from left to right; K 3 sts; rep from * until I-cord is about 2 ½ "/6.4cm long, or desired length; bring yarn around back of sts, knit all 3 sts together (1 st rem). Break off yarn, leaving a tail of about 8" / 20.3cm inches; run the loose end through the 1 rem st and tighten. OR…

Crocheted chain: Leaving about 39"/1 meter of yarn, break off yarn from work and run the cut end through each of the rem 12 sts; tighten. Starting at the top of the ball, crochet a chain to desired length, leaving a yarn tail about 6" / 15.2cm long; run the cut end through your last chain st and tighten.

FINISHING THE BALL:
Stuff the ball: Push batting clumps in through the bottom opening to fill the ball. Thread the cast-on yarn end through a tapestry needle; run the end through each of the sts around the bottom opening; tighten to close the bottom hole; weave the loose end in place.

Secure the hanger: Thread the I-cord or crochet chain loose yarn end through a tapestry needle; run the threaded needle through the base of the I-cord / crochet chain loop, through the center of the ball, out the bottom of the ball; weave the loose end in place at the bottom of the ball, ensuring that it is pulled to the proper length to ensure a nicely rounded ball - not droopy (too loose) and not squat (too tight)…*juuuuust right!*
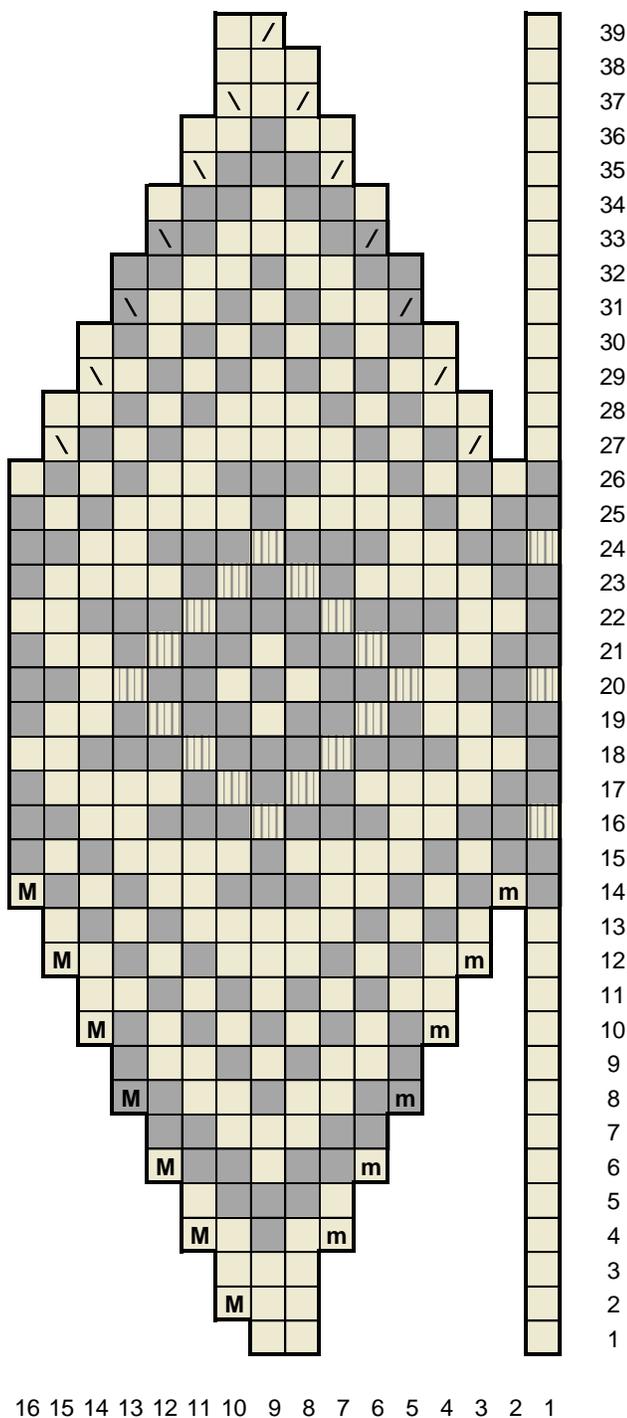
HAVE A WONDERFUL CHRISTMAS!

My Two Strands Blog
My Kidsknits.com Yarn Store
My Two Strands Ravelry Group

Kilim Ball Chart:

Kilim Ball Legend:

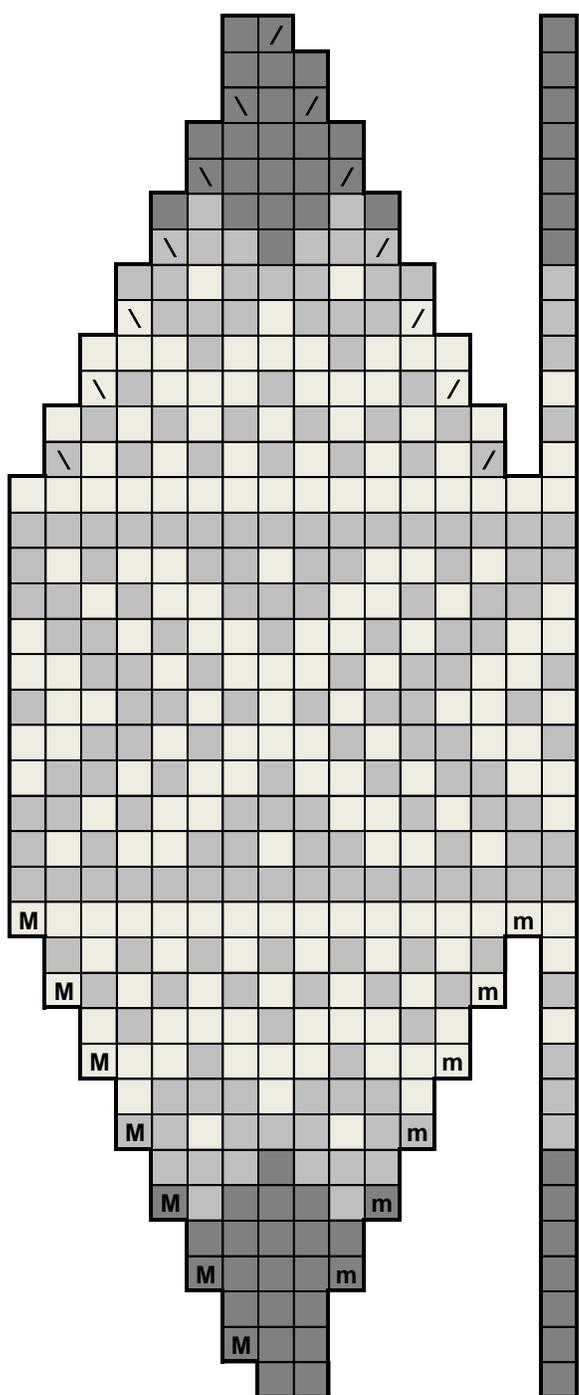Each square = 1 stitch; work each square without a symbol as a knit stitch, using the color shown below:

☐ Knit with A

☐ Knit with B

☐ Knit with A, duplicate stitch embroider with C

Work squares with symbols as follows, using color shown within that square:

M = "Make one, back" = insert left needle BACK-to-front under horizontal strand between previous stitch and next stitch; knit into front of stitch to increase one stitch.

m = "Make one, front" = insert left needle FRONT-to-back under horizontal strand between previous stitch and next stitch; knit into back of stitch to increase one stitch.

/ = K2tog, a right-leaning decrease = knit the next two stitches together as one.

**** = SSK, a left-leaning decrease = slip this stitch knitwise, slip the next stitch knitwise, knit both of these slipped stitches together as one.
(Alternatively, you may "K2tog through back loop".)

Chart rows (right side): 39, 38, 37, 36, 35, 34, 33, 32, 31, 30, 29, 28, 27, 26, 25, 24, 23, 22, 21, 20, 19, 18, 17, 16, 15, 14, 13, 12, 11, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1

Column numbers: 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

To work duplicate stitch: From the wrong side, through to the right side, insert a yarn-threaded tapestry needle at the base of the "V" of the stitch; *working on the right side, insert the needle at the top right of the "V", and feed it behind the 2 strands of the stitch immediately above; come to the front again at the top left of the same "V" and insert the needle, front to back, at the base of the same "V", where you started; bring needle up at the base of the next stitch's "V" and repeat from *.

Marius Ball Chart:

Row numbers (right side of chart, top to bottom): 39, 38, 37, 36, 35, 34, 33, 32, 31, 30, 29, 28, 27, 26, 25, 24, 23, 22, 21, 20, 19, 18, 17, 16, 15, 14, 13, 12, 11, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1

Column numbers (below chart): 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Marius Ball Legend:

Each square = 1 stitch; work each square without a symbol as a knit stitch, using the color shown below:

- Knit with A
- Knit with B
- Knit with C

Work squares with symbols as follows, using color shown within that square:

M = "Make one, back" = insert left needle BACK-to-front under horizontal strand between previous stitch and next stitch; knit into front of stitch to increase one stitch.

m = "Make one, front" = insert left needle FRONT-to-back under horizontal strand between previous stitch and next stitch; knit into back of stitch to increase one stitch.
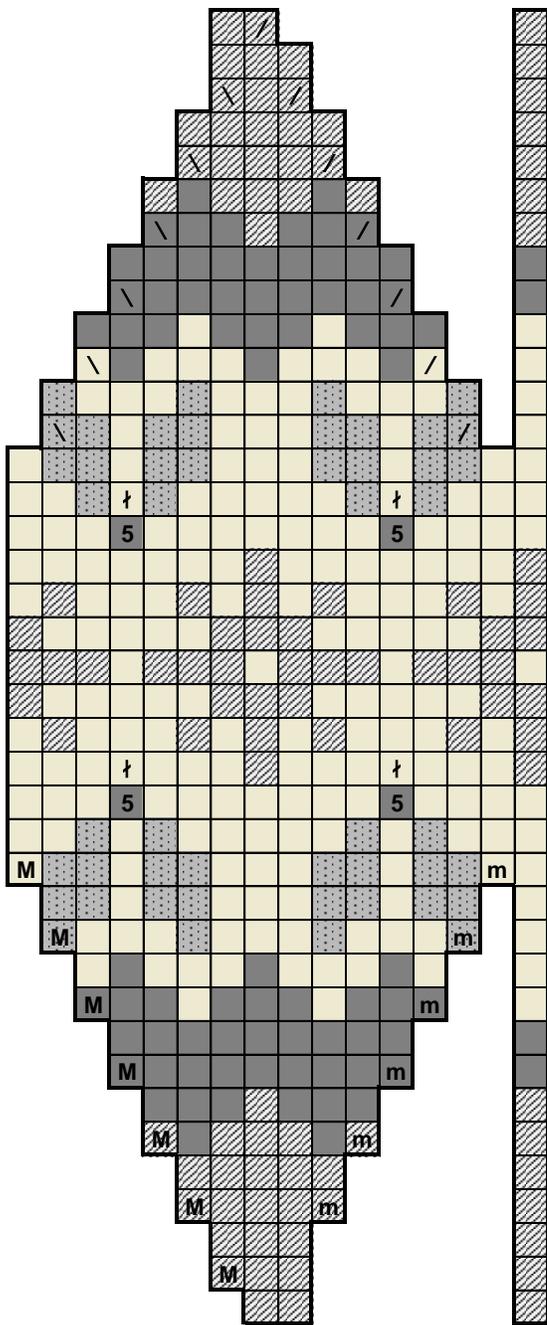
∕ = K2tog, a right-leaning decrease = knit the next two stitches together as one.

∖ = SSK, a left-leaning decrease = slip this stitch knitwise, slip the next stitch knitwise, knit both of these slipped stitches together as one.
(Alternatively, you may "K2tog through back loop".)

Holly Ball Chart:

Row numbers (top to bottom along right side of chart): 39, 38, 37, 36, 35, 34, 33, 32, 31, 30, 29, 28, 27, 26, 25, 24, 23, 22, 21, 20, 19, 18, 17, 16, 15, 14, 13, 12, 11, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1

Column numbers (bottom): 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Holly Ball Legend:

Each square = 1 stitch; work each square without a symbol as a knit stitch, using the color shown below:

- Knit with A
- Knit with B
- Knit with C
- Knit with D

Work squares with symbols as follows, using color shown within that square:

M = "Make one, back" = insert left needle BACK-to-front under horizontal strand between previous stitch and next stitch; knit into front of stitch to increase one stitch.

m = "Make one, front" = insert left needle FRONT-to-back under horizontal strand between previous stitch and next stitch; knit into back of stitch to increase one stitch.

5 = To make a nupp, (knit one, yarn over, knit one, yarn over, knit one) into one stitch, pulling right needle away from work with each movement to elongate the loops. Alternatively, you can omit the nupp and simply knit this stitch in B.

⅄ = If you're making the nupps, knit five stitches together through back of loops. If you're omitting the nupps, knit this stitch in A.

/ = K2tog, a right-leaning decrease = knit two stitches together, using this stitch and the next stitch.

**** = SSK, a left-leaning decrease = slip this stitch knitwise, slip the next stitch knitwise, knit both of these slipped stitches together. (Alternatively, you may "K2tog through back loop".)

What's a nupp? It's a traditional stitch, common in Estonian knitting. Several stitches are loosely knit into one stitch, then reduced back to one, on the following row/round, resulting in a puffy little cluster. Alternatively, you can simply work the nupp squares as knit stitches.