Dot and Dash Top-Down
Baby Sweater

Designed By Betty Balcomb
Dot and Dash Top-Down
Baby Sweater
Designed by Betty Balcomb

This baby sweater is a basic top-down sweater pattern decorated with two easy design elements: (1) change colors among the colorful choices of Bentley many of which work beautifully together because of the common colors in the multi-colored strands, (2) work in a pattern by weaving strands of the second color across the fabric of the first color to create a design, a simple one here of dots and dashes, but once the technique is learned open to many, many variations. The sweater knits up quickly and requires almost no finishing. I hope the weaving without knitting trick will be one that inspires creativity and becomes part of your regular repertoire.

Materials: 1 skein of Color A, and 1(1,2) skeins of Color B of Cascade Bentley yarn in sharply contrasting colors. Pictured sweater is colors 07 and 10, but there are many combinations of the colorways which will work well. Black has become a popular color for baby clothes and the black can be paired with several choices. Size 5 and 7 needles, 16 inch circular for both sizes, 24 inch circular for larger size and DPNs for both. (Or just 32 inch for both sizes if you do magic loop). A couple extra circular needles in size 7 or smaller any length to serve as sleeve holders (or hold sleeve sts on scrap yarn) OR SIZE REQUIRED TO OBTAIN GAUGE. Markers, 4 in one color and 1 in a contrasting color.

Gauge: 5 sts/inch in stockinette st.

Size: The directions are for size 6 mon(12 mon,18 mon). Where only 1 number is given it applies to all sizes. Chest measurements are about 22(23, 24) inches. Pictured sweater is 12 month.

Glossary:
PM: Place marker.
SM: Slip marker.
RM: Remove marker.
KFB: Knit into front and back of st, single increase.
Sl: Slip stitch from left needle to right inserting the needle as if to purl.
WYIB: slip sts with the working yarn to the back of the work.
WYIF: slip sts with the working yarn to the front of the work.

Directions:

Top: W/16-inch circular needles and Color A, CO 72(72, 76) sts. PM (the odd-colored one to mark beginning of rows) and join in the round being careful not to twist sts.
Note: join falls in the middle of the back. Work 7(7,8) rows of K2, P2 ribbing. Purl 2 rows. Cut Color A. Change to 16-inch larger needles and attach Color B. K 1 row placing markers as follows: K12(12, 12), PM, K11(11,12) PM, K25(25, 26), PM, K11 (11,12), PM, K13(13,14).

Row 1: *K to 1 st before next marker, KFB, SM, KFB, rep from * 3 more times, K to end of row. Although you KFB 2 sts in a row, the 2nd stands out as a single stitch that slants down as the raglan.

Row 2: Knit, slipping markers.

Repeat rows 1 and 2 until there are 51(52, 54) stitches in front and back sections, changing to 24-inch needle when there are enough sts. The length of the sweater from the cast-on edge should be 4-1/2(4-3/4, 5-1/4) inches. If it is less than that, work a couple of rows without increases.

Establish body and sleeves: This isn’t as complicated as it looks. You need to get the front, back and all 4 raglan sts in the body of the sweater and the 2 sets of sleeve sts on holders as follows: K to first marker, RM and K the raglan st, place the sleeve sts on spare needle or scrap yarn. (DO NOT use a straight holder, the sleeve sts need to wrap around to allow joining of back and front.) Cast on 3(4,5) sts at the underarm, K front sts, RM, K the raglan st, place 2nd sleeve sts on another spare needle/scrap yarn, cast on 3(4,5) and K rest of sts onto working needle. There will be 110(114, 120) sts on working needle for body of sweater. The markers at the raglans are gone, just the one at the join in the back remains. The front, back and all 4 raglan sts are all in the body of the sweater and the 2 sets of sleeve sts are on holders.

Continue in stockinette with Color B for 4(6,8) rows. Join Color A but do NOT cut Color B. With Color A, K 1 row increasing 1(0,0) at end of row so there is a multiple of 3 for the pattern. With Color A, Purl 2 rows. Begin pattern stitch

The pattern: Repeat of 3 sts, 10 rows

Rows 1-3: with Color A, knit all 3 rows.

Rows 4 & 5: With Color B, *SI2 WYIF, SI1 WYIB. Yes, you have not knit or purled a single stitch on these rows, just woven the contrast color in and out of the fabric. Be careful not to pull the yarn too tight or it will draw in the fabric. You want to maintain the gauge. Err on the side of too loose rather than too tight. You can always pull some extra yarn to the wrong side at the back seam, tack it down and weave it in. Don’t worry, you will get the feel for the right tension for the floating strand very quickly.

Rows 6-8: with Color A, knit all 3 rows.

Rows 9 & 10: with Color B, *SI2 WYIB, SI1 WYIF. The floats are the opposite of the first set.
Repeat rows 1 to 10 2(2,3) times, repeat rows 1-8. P 2 rows with Color A. Cut Color A. Attach Color B and knit one row, decreasing 2(2,0) sts so there is a multiple of 4 for the ribbing. Change to smaller needles and work K2, P2 ribbing until sweater is the desired length, about 12(13, 14) inches is standard but adjust for baby that is shorter or taller than average. For a considerably longer sweater, feel free to work an extra repeat or 2 of the dot and dash pattern or work more rows of Color B before starting pattern. Bind off loosely.

Sleeves: With Color B and larger needles, starting at middle of underarm, pick up and K 1 st in the top edge of the left half of the cast on sts, 1 st in gap next to underarm, K the sts from the sleeve holder, pick up and K 1 st in gap and the remaining sts from top of cast on edge. Knit every row until sleeve measures 5(6, 7) inches from join. Cut Color B. Attach Color A and knit 1 row decreasing evenly around cuff so there are 32 (32,36) sts. Purl 2 rows. Change to smaller needles and work K2,P2 ribbing for 8 (10,12) rows. **Note:** the sleeve lengths provided are suggestions based on standard sizes; feel free to tailor the sleeves to the length of your baby’s arms. You may even be able to get some extra months of wear out of this sweater by adding to the cuffs over time since babies at this time of life seem to grow arms and legs without corresponding increases in their bodies.

Finishing. Weave in ends. Sew up any small holes at underarms as you weave in the end that is right there. If the floats are too loose and droop too much, pull them in on wrong side at back seam and tack down in place.

Now design your own pattern of floating dots and dashes and make another sweater.