

Knit Mosaic: “Wow” Color Work without the Ow!

What Is Mosaic Knitting?

Mosaic knitting is a colorwork technique that creates bold patterns using slipped stitches, while working with only one color at a time.

Only one color is worked per row, usually for two rows total (a right side row and the following wrong side row), and then you switch to the next color.

The pattern emerges from the contrast between:

- Knitted stitches (worked stitches)
- Slipped stitches (which carry the previous color upward)

Mosaic can be worked flat or in the round.

It's especially effective for bold, geometric motifs — and it's very approachable. If worked flat, mosaic is typically knit entirely in garter stitch (knitting every row), which keeps things simple and tidy.

(Our project today is a coaster, knit flat. Yay!)

How to Read a Mosaic Chart

Mosaic charts are unique:

- Charts show only the Right Side (RS) of the work.
- Each square represents one stitch.
- The color of the first square in each row indicates the working yarn for that row.
- That same color will also be used on the following Wrong Side (WS) row.

Slipped stitches are marked with a **V** on the chart.

Slipping Stitches & Yarn Placement

For this project:

- On Right Side (RS) rows:
 - Knit the worked stitches.
 - Slip V marked stitches purlwise with working yarn in back.
- On Wrong Side (WS) rows:
 - Knit all worked stitches with the same color as the preceding RS row.
 - For slipped stitches, **MOVE** the working yarn to the **FRONT** of the work, slip the stitch/stitches purlwise. Then, move the yarn to the **BACK** before knitting the next stitch.

Tip: Before moving to the next row, check the RS of your work to ensure that your slipped stitches are in the correct places and that you didn't accidentally slip a stitch with the yarn on the incorrect side (creating a funky look on the right side). It's much easier to "tink" back one row and correct it right away, rather than to drop down later to fix an error.

Troubleshooting:

“My pattern looks wrong.”

Check:

- Are you using the correct color for this row?
- Did you slip the stitches marked with a V?
- Did you accidentally knit a stitch that should have been slipped?

Reminder: The chart only shows the Right Side. On the Wrong Side, you're repeating everything...the knitted stitches are knit, and the slipped stitches are slipped.

“My stitches look tight.”

Most common cause:

- Pulling the yarn too tightly after slipping.

Tip: After slipping a stitch, gently spread your stitches along the right needle before knitting the next one. This keeps tension even.

“There are long strands in the back.”

That's normal — those are “floats” from the slipped stitches. Because we're only slipping stitches (not stranding multiple working yarns), mosaic floats are short and manageable.

“There are long strands in the front.”

Whoops! You forgot to switch the yarn to the front when working on the WS...tink it back and redo it (or, drop down and move the strand to the back)