Criss-Cross Cotton Facecloth

With Slip Stitch Surface Design

US CROCHET TERMINOLOGY

By Merrian Holland

Materials

Aran or Worsted Cotton Yarn in 2 colours (each cloth uses 106.0 meters / 115.9 yards in Colour A & 48.5 meters / 53.0 yards in Colour B).
Hook – 4mm /G6.
Tapestry or wool needle.
6 Locking stitch markers or scrap yarn.

Key
beg - beginning
ch – chain
prev - previous
rem – remaining
rnd – round
rsc – reverse single crochet
sc – single crochet
sk – skip
sl st – slip stitch
sp – spaces(s)
st(s) - stitch(es)

Gauge
16 sts & 20 rows in sc.
Since this is not a fitted garment, gauge in regards to size isn't that important, you'll just end up with a slightly smaller or larger cloth! HOWEVER gauge in regards to row & stitch ratio is important if you want your cloth to be square and the criss-cross motif to be square.

Dimensions
28 x 28cm

Note:
For each of the flannels in the photos, I have used "The Cotton" by We Are Knitters – ½ a ball in the main colour and just under ¼ of a ball for the criss-cross design and border.

Face Cloth Pattern

Using the 4mm hook & yarn A, ch44
Row 1:
You're working into the back ridge of the chain for the entire row – 1sc into 2nd ch from hook and then each of the rem chs – **43sc**
**Row 2-47:**
ch1, turn work; do not sk any sts, 1sc in the first st and then in each of the rem 42 sts – **43 sc**
Edging :
You're now going to sc along the left-hand edge of the square. Ch1, do not turn work; 1sc into the edge of each row to the end, making sure to catch two strands of the edge stitch but not going around the whole stitch as this can cause an unsightly hole; *work along the bottom of the cloth (your starting chain)* ch1 and 1sc into each of the 43sts; now *work along the right hand edge of the cloth* ch1 and 1sc into the edge of each row to the end; fasten off.

Criss Cross Slip Stitch Embellishment:

The surface design is worked through the full thickness of the fabric, from the right side, between the rows and stitches.

4
8
8
8
total 48 rows
8
8
4

4 7 7 7 7 4
total 43 sts
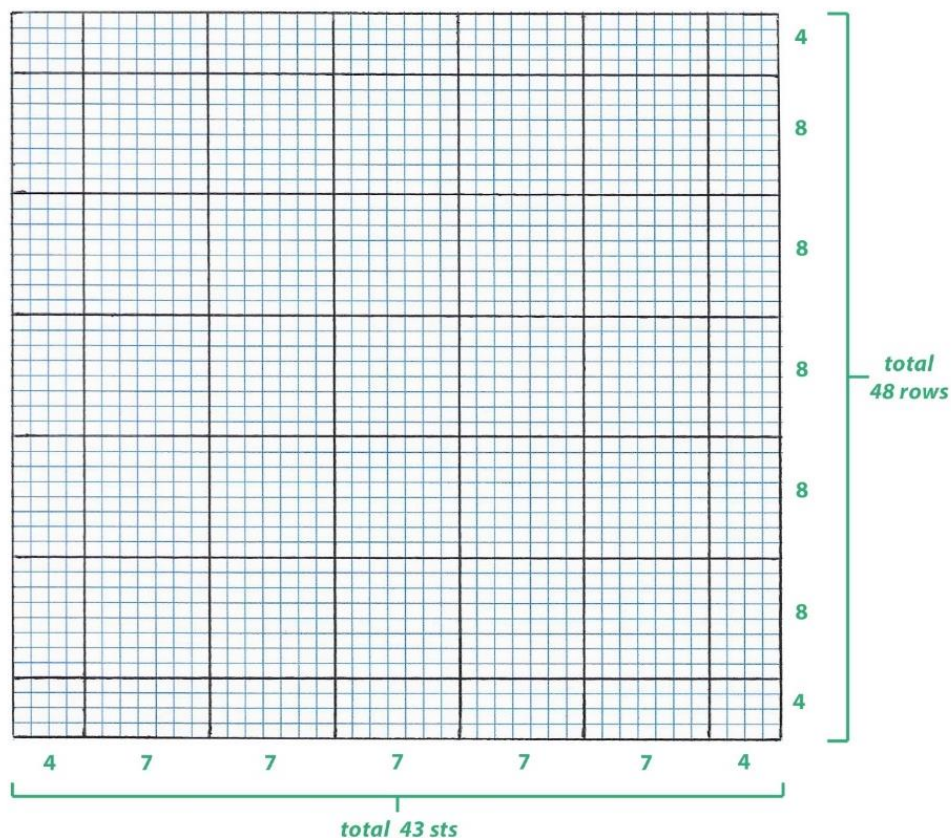
Horizontal lines – working between the rows.
First of all, evenly mark the start of each horizontal embellishment with a locking stitch maker or with scrap yarn and a wool needle. Place the marker as close to the right-hand edge as possible, dividing into 5 sections of 8 rows, and a section of 4 rows at each end *(see grid above & fig.1 for clarification).*

Using colour B, start with the yarn at the back of the work, leaving at least 10cm/4inches for weaving in; insert hook between the first and second stitches of your first marker, or as close to the edge as you can (again, don't worry if you can't get it right to the edge, as this can be easily rectified at the end), pull up a loop *(fig.2)*, insert hook in between the next 2 sts, pull up another loop, this time pulling it all the way through the loop already on the hook, i.e. make a slip stitch; continue all the way along *(fig. 3)*, working the last stitch as close to the edge as possible, but again, don't be too concerned if you can't get it right up to the edge; cut the yarn, leaving a tail of about 10cm; pull the live loop on the hook until the tail end pops out. Leave the end to sew in after the final border has been made.
In essence, you are slip stitching onto the surface of the fabric, or making a chain and catching the fabric in between the front and the back of the work.

Continue to make the remaining horizontal embellishments in the same way *(fig. 4).*

TIP: if this is your first attempt at this technique, it can feel awkward and cack-handed because you can't see the yarn you're feeding onto your hook, very often it feels like you're "fishing" for the yarn at the back of the fabric. But don't worry – after a bit of practise it soon becomes second nature
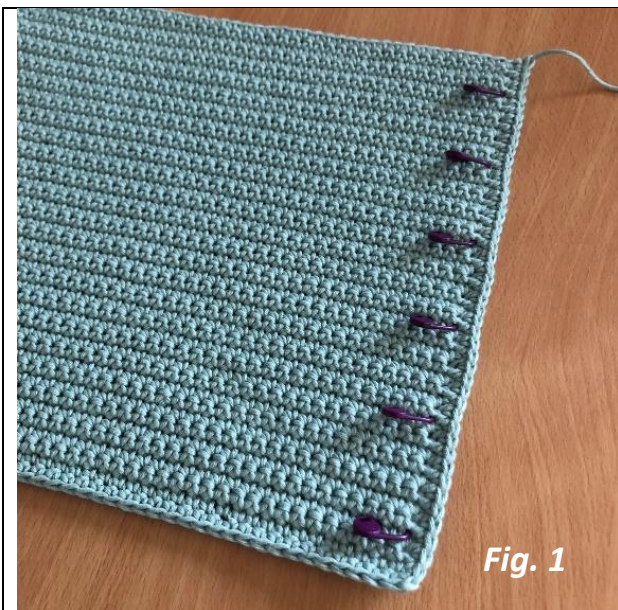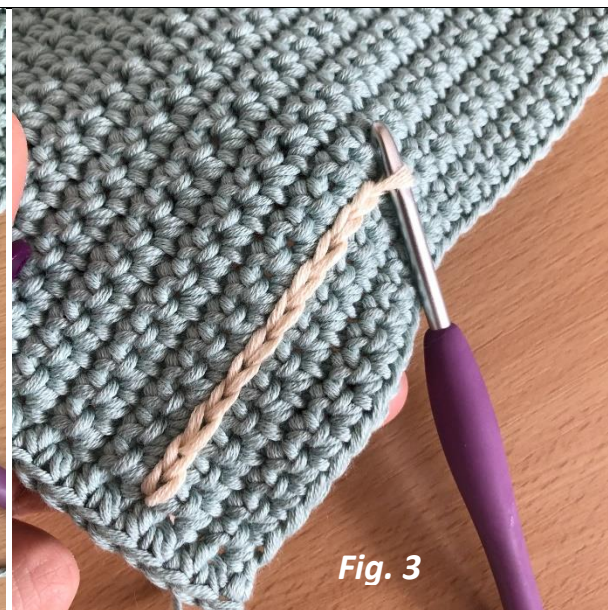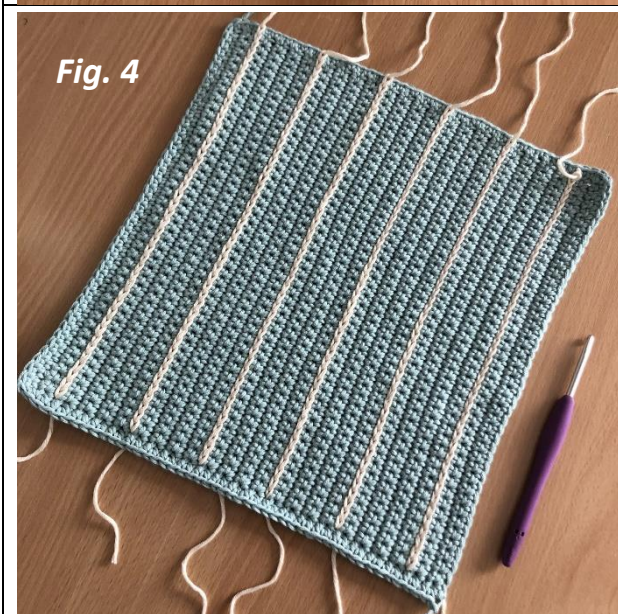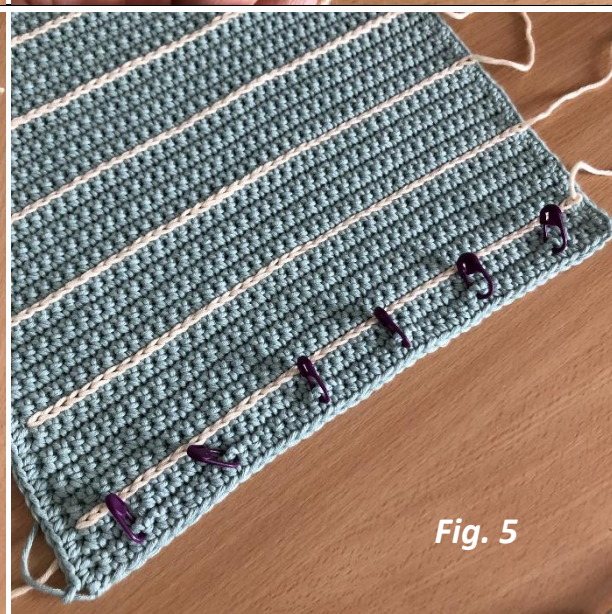
Fig. 1

Fig. 2

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

Fig. 5

Fig. 6

*Vertical lines – working between the columns of stitches.*

Evenly mark the start of each vertical embellishment with a locking stitch maker or with scrap yarn and a wool needle. Place the marker as close to the bottom edge as possible, dividing into 5 sections of 7 stitches, and a section of 4 stiches at each end (see grid & *fig.5* for clarification).

Hold your work up to the light so you can see the spaces between the stitches that you will be working into – you should be able to notice that the sc stitches don't stack up exactly on top of each other, rather they stagger left, then right, alternating with each right and wrong side row. As long as you follow this slight "zig zag" with your slip stitch surface work, the resulting line will be straight.

Continuing with yarn B, start with the yarn at the back of the work, leaving at least 10cm/4inches for weaving in; insert hook between the stitches of your first marker, or as close to the edge as you can (don't worry if you can't get it right to the edge, as this can be easily rectified at the end), pull up a loop, working up through the rows, betthween the columns of stitches, insert hook in between the next 2 sts and pull up another loop; continue in this way; when you come to a horizontal embellishment, work *into* the corresponding chain *(fig. 6)* – at first it can be tricky to identify the correct chain so simply work into the chain that looks in-line, make the next stitch and then check the back of the work – if you've mis-aligned your stitch, it's easily identifiable because they will be a "kink" in your grid design, see *fig.7*. When the stitches are correctly aligned, they will look like *fig.8*. Carry on in this way, working the last stitch as close to the edge as possible, leaving a gap of one stitch width; cut the yarn, leaving a tail of about 10cm; pull the loop on the hook until the tail end pops out. Leave the end to sew in after the final border has been made.

Continue to make the remaining vertical embellishments in the same way.

TIP: As you make your criss-cross design, take care to keep all the tales ends out of the way.

Fig. 7

Fig. 8
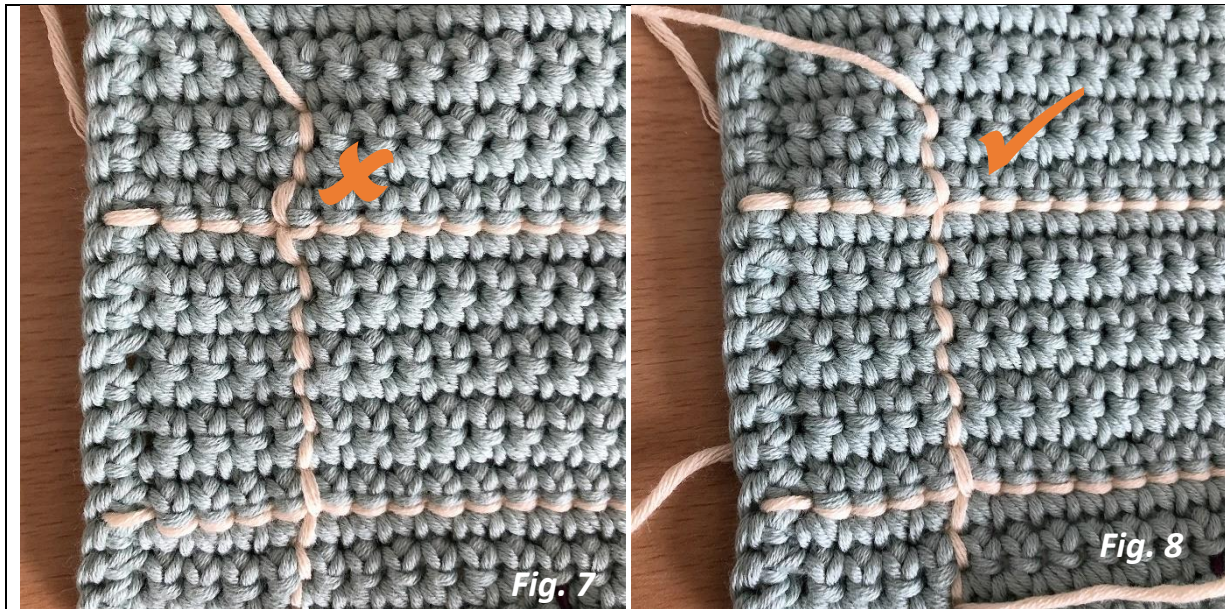
Final Border :

Using colour B and starting approx. half way along any edge, hold yarn at back and insert hook into an edge stitch & pull up a loop, ch1 (*fig.9*); ***WORKING FROM LEFT TO RIGHT in CRAB STITCH or REVERSE SINGLE CROCHET; if you are unfamiliar with reverse single crochet you may find the next set of instructions useful, it is a stitch that can feel very strange at first!* -** reverse single crochet (rsc) into the next stitch as follows : insert hook into next empty stitch to the right of previous stitch made, grab the yarn (*fig.10)* and pull up a loop, tilting the base of the hook away from you as you do so (*fig.11*) – this is to avoid pulling the loop straight through the loop you already have on your hook. Now with 2 loops on the hook, loosen the stitches slightly by levelling your hook parallel to your border and tilting the tip of the hook towards the ceiling (*fig.12*), this should automatically make the new loop slightly longer than the first one which is what's needed to get the unique look & texture of crab stitch. Yarn over & draw off the two loops on the hook – reverse single crochet stitch complete (*fig.13*)! Continue all along the edge, making 1rsc in each stitch until you come close to the corners; when 1sts rems, ch1, then without skipping any sts, make 1rsc; continue to rsc into each stitch along the edge; continue around in this way, making the last rsc in the same stitch as the ch1 start; cut yarn, leaving approx. 10cm/4in tail; pull the live loop on the hook fully open until the tail comes out, sew the tail into the border stitch, ensuring it's going in the same direction, i.e. from left to right to make a smooth finish.
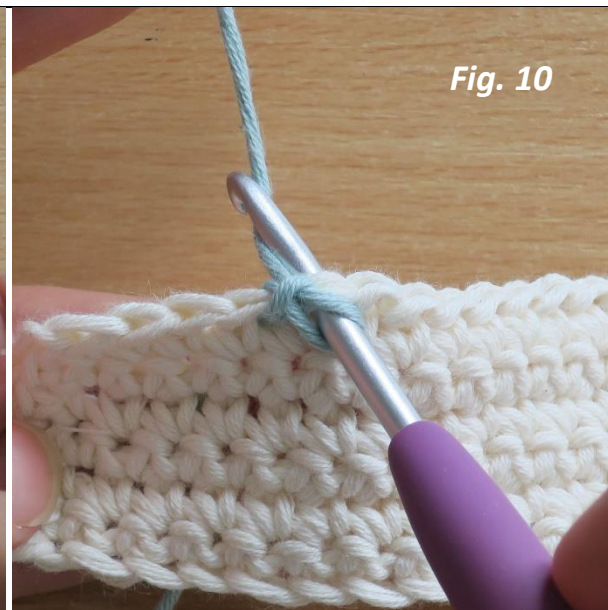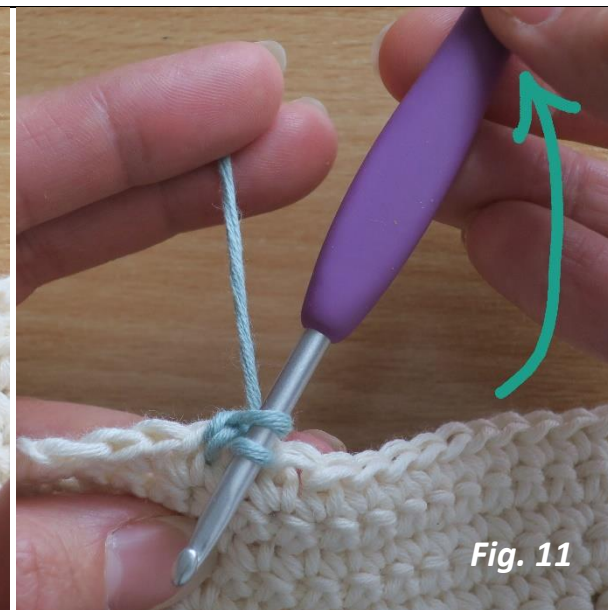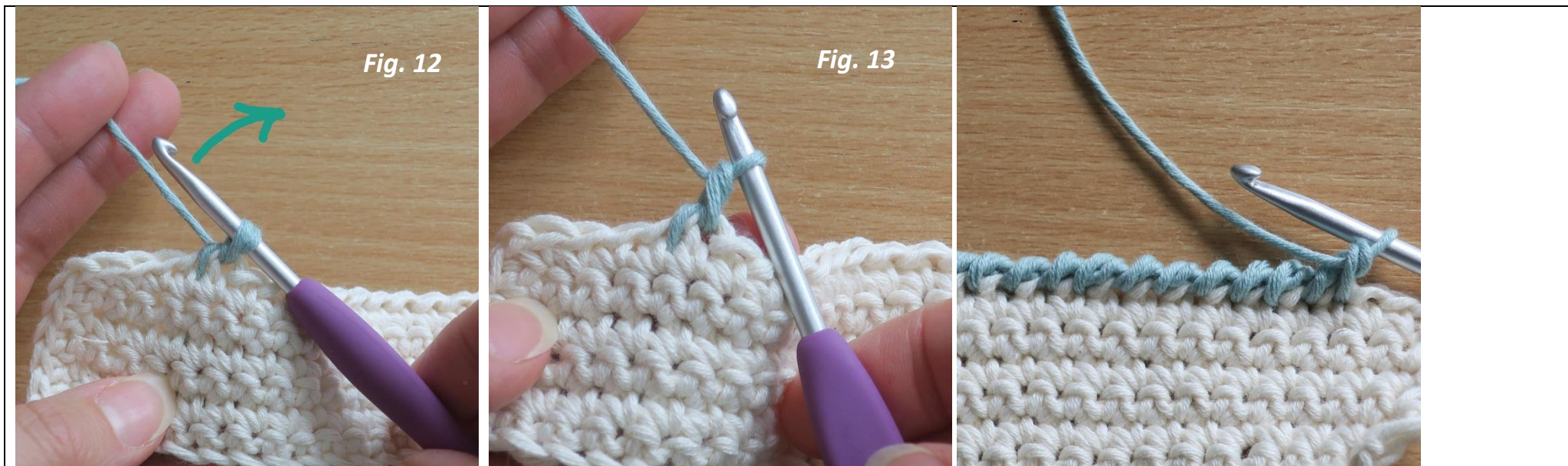

Fig. 9

Fig. 10

Fig. 11

Fig. 12

Fig. 13

Finishing the slip stitch embellishments to make them flush to the border:

Use a wool or darning needle to mimic the chain effect of the crochet slip stitch – make the horizontal and vertical lines connect to the border whilst at the same time sewing in the ends.

Beginning of the slip stitch line.
The tail end is at the back of the work. Thread the tail onto the needle. If you've managed to start the slip stitch lines close to the edges, you should only need to sew one stitch to close the gap. Insert the needle close to the border, or even through the border (if it looks ok) from the back of the work through to the front, making sure it lines up with the centre of your line of slip stitch *(fig. 14).* Now insert the needle through the loops of the first sl st, from right to left *(fig. 15)*, pull through *(fig. 16)*. Insert the needle back into the same spot where you sewed it up from the back *(fig. 17)*. Pull the needle through to the back and if necessary, adjust the size of the sewn stitch to match the crochet by gently pulling it or loosening it *(fig. 18)*. Turn the work over and sew the tail end into the border *(fig. 19)*. Carefully trim.
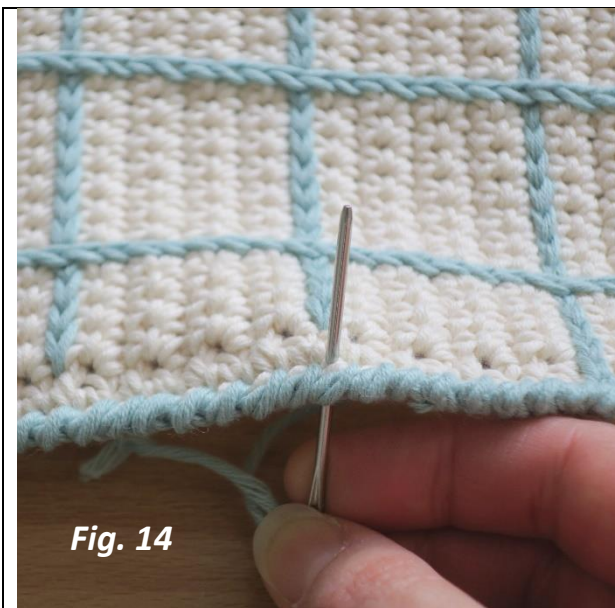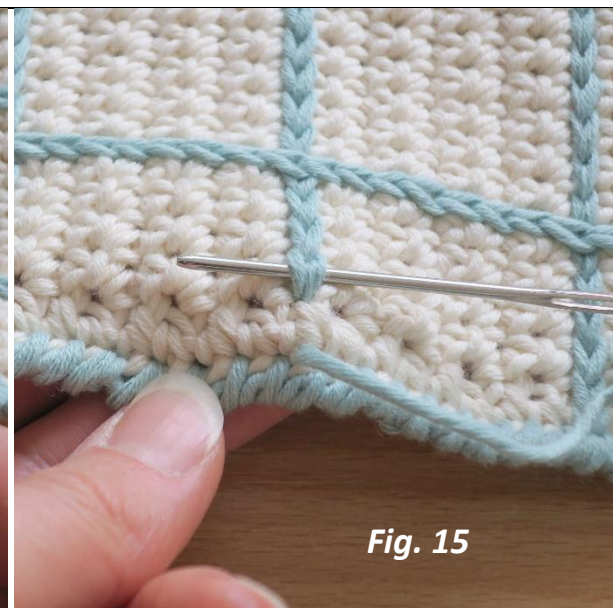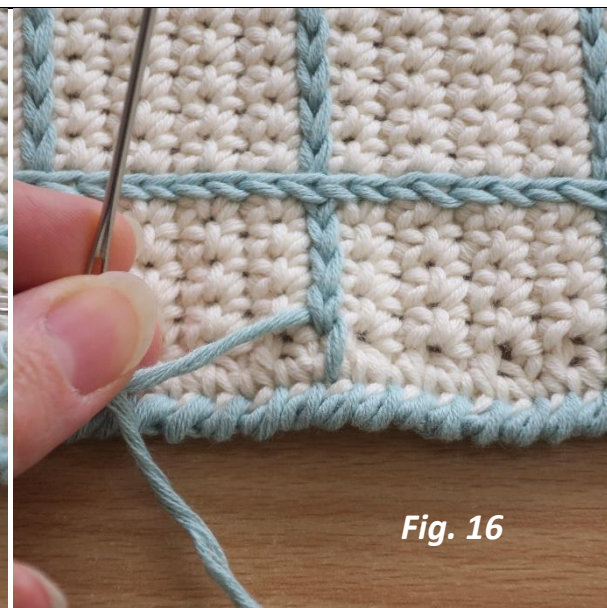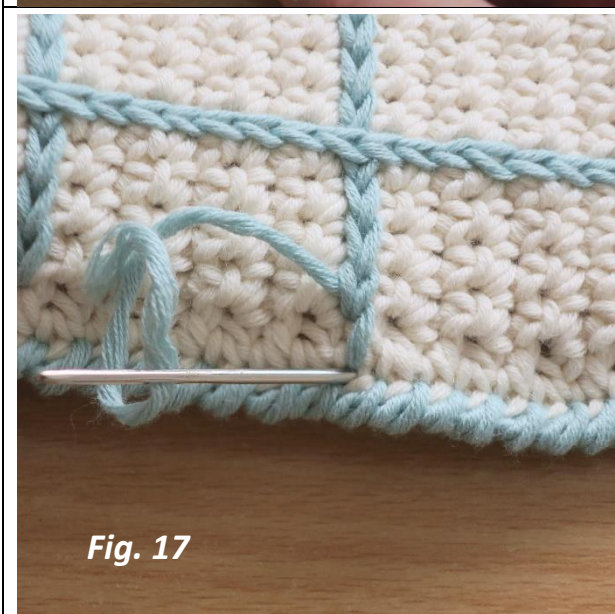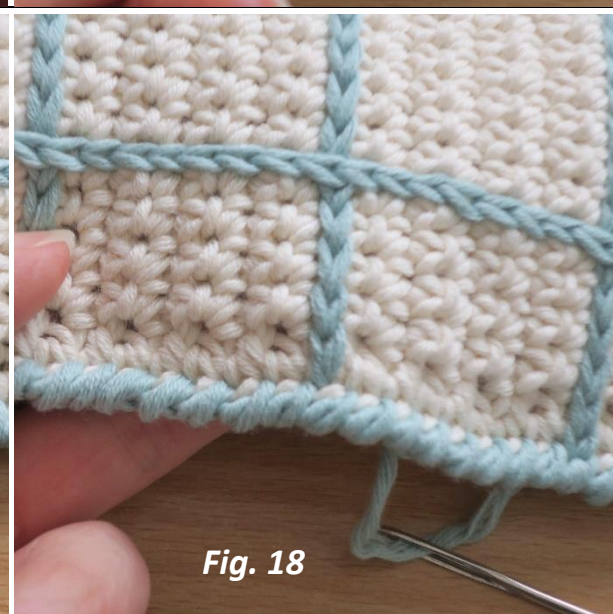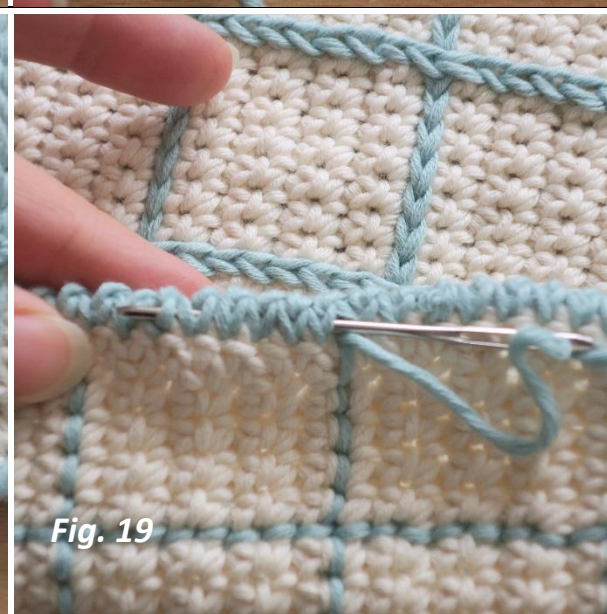
Fig. 14

Fig. 15

Fig. 16

Fig. 17

Fig. 18

Fig. 19

End of the slip stitch line.

The tail end is at the front of the work. Thread the tail onto the needle *(fig. 20).* If you've managed to start the slip stitch lines close to the edges, you should only need to sew one stitch to close the gap. There are two way to execute the stitch. The first is to thread the needle through a loop pf the border – again, making sure it lines up with the line of slip stitch *(fig. 21)*. Then insert the needle into the exact spot where it's coming out of the fabric *(fig. 22)* and out to the back *(fig. 23)*.

The second option is to sew down through the exact spot where it's coming out of the fabric but leaving a small loop of yarn on the right side *(fig. 24)*, roughly the same size as the stitches you're trying to replicate. Then bring the needle back up to the right side of the fabric, close to or through the border, at the same time coming up through the middle of the loop *(fig. 25)*. Pull the yarn gently to get the loop to the desired size *(fig. 26)*… or maybe you need to loosen it if it's too tight. Thread the needle back through to the back of the work *(fig. 27)*, in the process, making a tiny stitch to anchor the loop in place *(fig. 28)*. Turn the work over and sew the tail end into the border.

Fig. 20

Fig. 21

Fig. 22

Fig. 23

Fig. 24

Fig. 25

Fig. 26

Fig. 27

Fig. 28