

# Oddity

“Let’s Dance” and “Little China Girl” were the first David Bowie songs that I remember hearing on the radio. I think that speaks more to the musical tastes of my parents than my own, because previous to that point in time, I wasn’t old enough to have the privilege of changing the station. As I grew up, I learned about “Space Oddity”, “Life on Mars”, “Golden Years” and others.

What always struck me was that Bowie was constantly evolving. When I was a youngster first watching Much Music, aka MTV for Canadians, he was a New-Wave idol with a retro hairstyle and impeccably tailored outfits. You could cut yourself on the pleats of his trousers. By the time I was listening to industrial music, he was teaming up with Trent Reznor on brilliant tracks such as “I’m Afraid of Americans”.

His death pulled a little bit of magic out of our lives. The Goblin King, the narrator of the saga of Major Tom was gone at age 69 - two days after the release of his final album, Blackstar.

These mittens are my tribute to a great man who worked hard to broaden not only our perceptions about music, but also about ourselves.

I ‘m working on knitting these mitts up, so consider this “test-knit status”.

## **Gauge:**

The amount of stitches around for the main body of the mitten is 70 sts, so if you have wee tiny hands, you’ll probably want wee tiny needles with wee thin yarn. If you’re knitting for a man, you can probably go up to a size 2 needle. This is why we’re in test-knit. Gauge is going to be wonky.

CO 66 stitches

Join in round, being sure not to twist.

k1p1 around for 5 rows.

Begin cuff chart. Increase 4 sts as marked on last row of chart. 70 sts total.

Follow up with Mitten Body chart for appropriate cuff. See thumb and Latvian Braid sections for more info.

Once decreases are complete, cut yarn to leave a tail. Pull snug and weave through to inside of mitt, securing and weaving in ends.

## **Thumb:**

Start increasing for the thumb on the third row of the mitten body chart. Place markers on either side of this stitch to isolate the section. Increase every 2nd row in pattern as marked until top of thumb section on mitten chart. On the next row, place the 25 thumb stitches on waste yarn and remove the markers. Continue around in pattern.

Once the mitten body is complete, place held stitches onto needles and knit around in pattern, decreasing 1 at the gap at the base of the thumb. Knit around either in pattern or spiral until just short of desired thumb length. You may wish to place a lifeline if you think you may have under/over-estimated your length. Divide remaining stitches into 4 equal groups (6 sts per needle if using DPNs, markers after the 6th & 18th sts if using magic loop) and decrease at the end of each section until 4 sts remain.

Cut yarn to leave a tail and thread through remaining stitches, pulling snug. Weave through to inside of mitten, secure, and weave in ends.

## Latvian Braid

If you've knit my Warmer on the Inside mitts, you may have seen me refer to Latvian Braids as Landing Strips. That's what they remind me of!

A Latvian Braid is, essentially, stranded knitting done inside-out. I generally keep it to two colours, as the strands have a tendency to get tangled up.

Feel free to go wild and crazy with your braids on this mitt. You could have your braids all pointing to the thumbs, or away from the thumbs, or all in the same direction, or alternating direction...or go glam and flip a coin.

### Braid Pointing Left:

Start with an establishing row alternating colour 1 and colour 2 around.

Bring both strands to front, and be sure that the colour you wish to start with is on top.

Purl with the first strand, then bring the second strand over and purl. Continue in this fashion, always bringing the next strand over the previous. It will seem almost as though you're giving the strands a twist.

When you get to the end of the round, use the same colour order, but instead of bringing the strand over, you'll be going under, reversing your twist.

### Braid Pointing Right.:

Knit your establishing round of alternating strands, then perform the same steps as above in reverse order. Twist under for the first round, then over for the second.

## Chart Symbol Key

Obviously the blue and white squares are your colour choices. I won't dictate what you should use, only that they should have a good contrast.

**A handy tip:** if you take a picture of the skeins together on your cell phone and convert it to black & white using a filter (there's probably an app for that. I use Instagram/Flickr), they should be noticeably different shades of grey. If they're almost the same, try again.

m      Make 1 stitch

>>      Latvian Braid

<<

/      Knit two stitches together

\      Slip two stitches knitwise and knit them together through the back loop OR  
Slip first stitch to the right needle, knit 1 stitch, pass the slipped stitch over.

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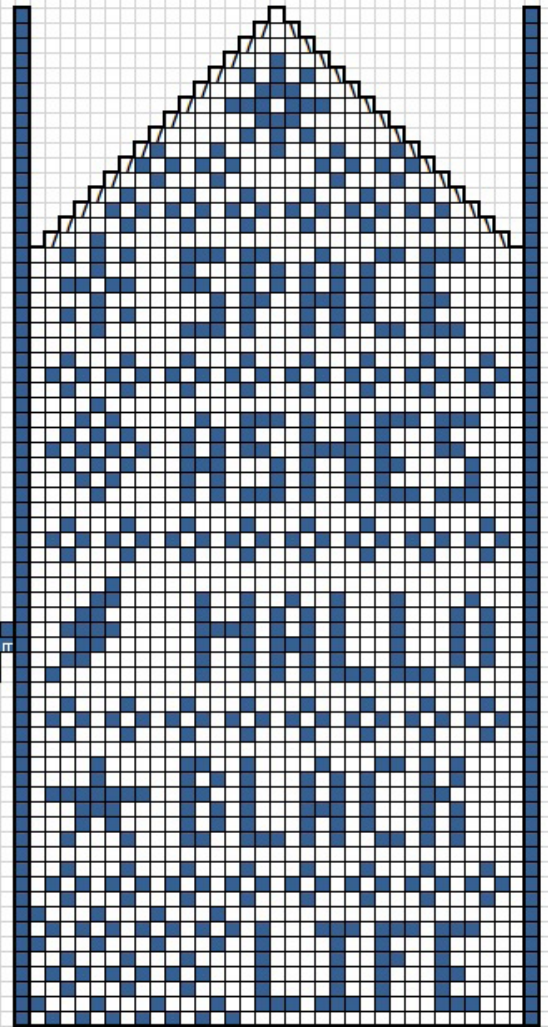
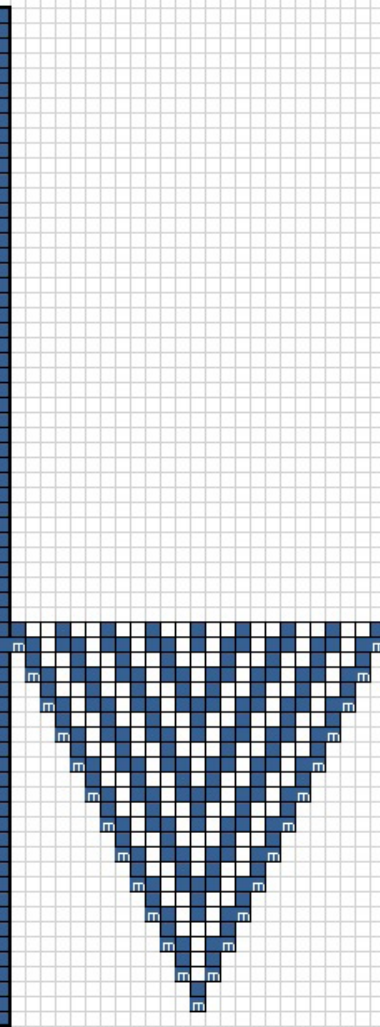
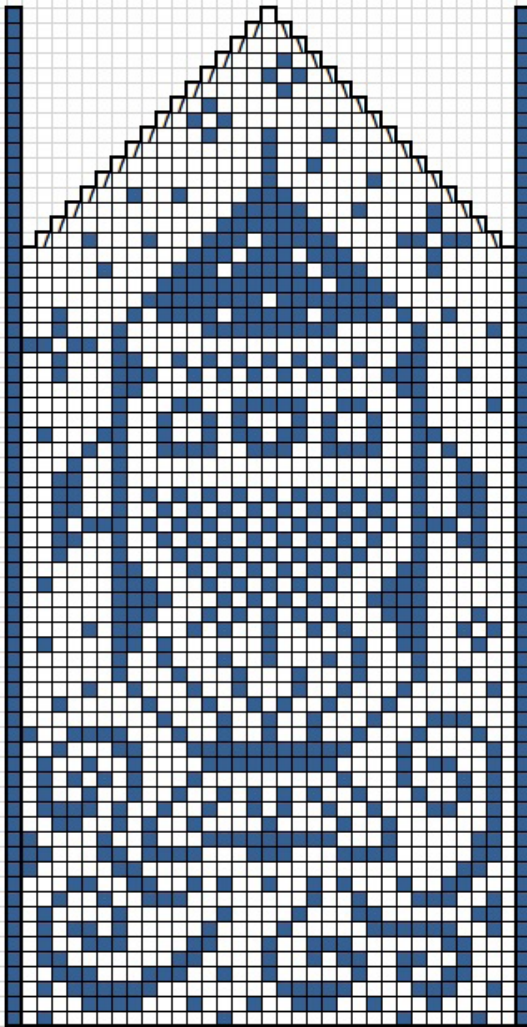
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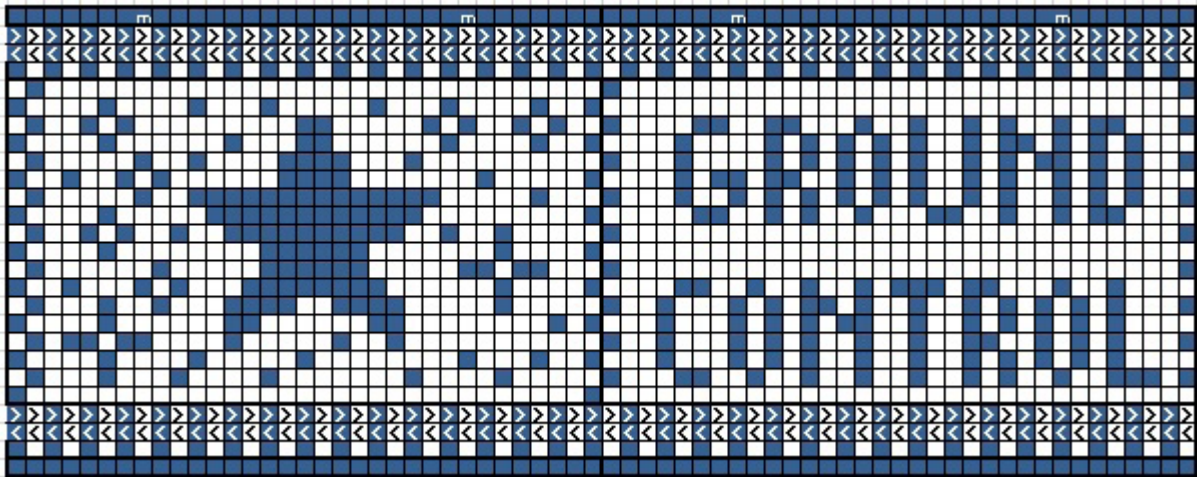
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Left Mitten Body



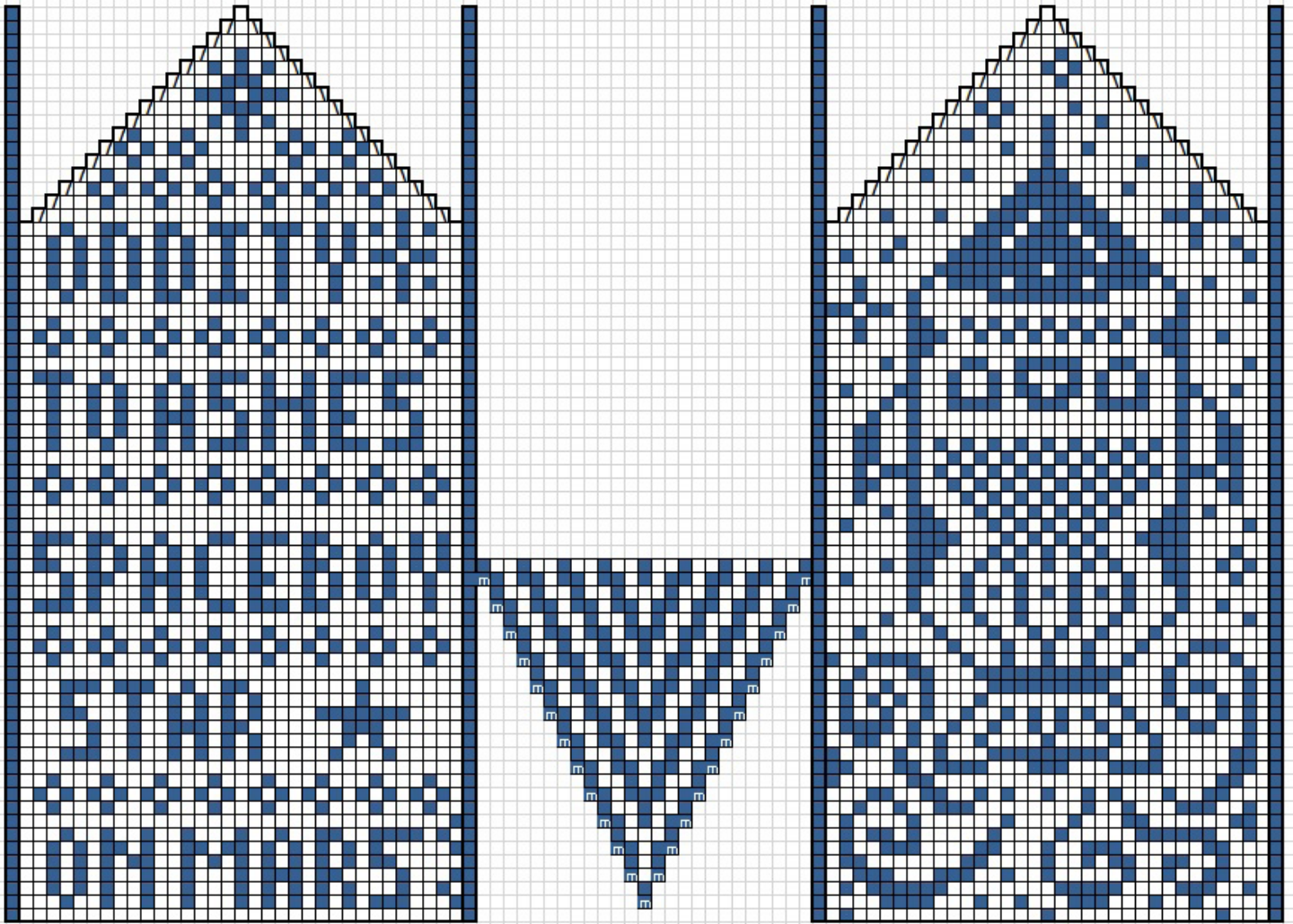
Left Cuff





# Oddity

Right Mitten Body



Right Cuff

