CREATE AN ILLUSION

The finished pattern is very effective, and depending on which angle you look at it, the pattern will disappear and reappear. The effect is very similar to the hologram you see at the bottom of a credit card.

To machine knit these patterns, you MUST have a garter carriage. Hand knitting instructions can be found below on page 3. You will need to use 2 well-contrasting yarns - the better the contrast, the better the finished effect. Navy & cream, or black & white work best, though you could try a light and a dark shade of the same colour. The yarns MUST also be changed every 2 rows. You can start with either the light or the dark yarn, it doesn't matter, though the finished pattern will look different either way. Also make sure that you start on row 1 of the pattern - you must always start with a blank row or the pattern just will not work.

The garments are ALWAYS knitted sideways, or you will not be able to see the Illusion. If you are knitting the sleeves in the illusion pattern also, then they need to be knitted from the cuff to armhole.

Normally, the illusion is knitted over the whole of the garment, but the pattern I designed (see the my website) just has the illusion pattern down a central front panel. This made it a lot faster to knit.

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How to design your own illusion patterns

The chart below is part of the original geometric pattern that I used for the sweater panel. (And yes the grid is straight - it's an optical illusion this time!). I've found that Geometric patterns work best, though don't use anything longer than about 40 rows, or you'll end up with a huge unmanageable pattern. It's best to design a normal geometric pattern first, or use one you've already got.

On a blank graph, draw the first pattern row of your original pattern on the *second* row of the graph. Then leave 3 blank rows, then draw the second pattern row. Carry on like this, drawing the pattern rows on every 4th row, and leaving 2 blank rows at the end.

Then, you draw the background stitches in. You'll be drawing them on the middle of each of those 3 blank rows right to the end. So what you'll end up with, starting from the bottom, is 1 blank row, 1 pattern row, 1 blank row, 1 background row, all the way to the end.

….and after. This second chart shows the original geometric pattern above, now converted to an illusion pattern. The entire illusion pattern chart is 80 rows in length, the original geometric pattern was just 20 rows long.
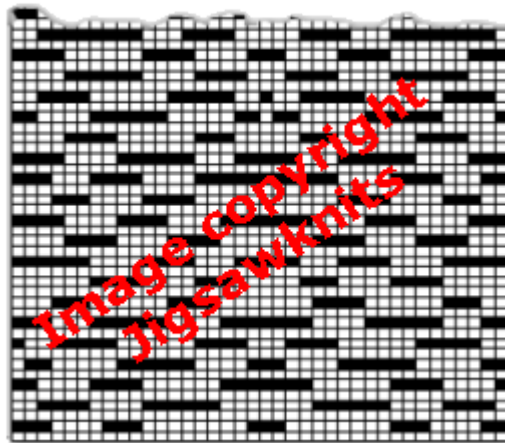
You MUST always start your knitting with that first blank row, or it just won't come out right, all you'll end up with is stripes. (Don't ask me how I know!!) And make sure that the sequence is correct if you're knitting more than one repeat. To check you've got it right, you should always end up with a pattern that is exactly 4 times longer than the original.

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Hand knitting instructions

Following the sample chart from the bottom:
Row 1: Colour one, knit the whole row of white squares
Row 2: Colour one, purl the white squares, and knit the black squares
Row 3: Colour two, knit the whole row of white squares
Row 4: Colour two, purl the white squares, and knit the black squares

Repeat the colour sequence as in rows 1 to 4, changing your colour every two rows. ALWAYS start with that plain row, or it won't work.

To see the illusion, garments should be knitted sideways. I found that knitting with a tighter tension than normal gave the best results.