



**Basic Socks – Knit Cuff Down
Customized for Foot Measurements & Stitch Gauge**

Enter Foot Measurements:

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Circumference of Ankle: | |
| Circumference of Foot: | |
| Length of Heel: | |
| Length of Foot: | |
| Toe Length: | |

Note: If the circumference of the ankle is nearly the same as the foot – you only need this measurement for the number of stitches.

Determine Stitch Gauge: You need to cast on 60 stitches and knit a swatch using the circular method you will use for the socks (i.e. DPNs, 2 circulars or magic loop). Knit about 2 inches and then measure the width of the fabric laying flat (2 layers) without stretching.

To calculate your stitch gauge:

| | | |
|---------------------|---|-----------------|
| 30 stitches* | | |
| | Divide by the # inches in width of swatch | # Stitches/inch |

**(Note: you use 30 stitches because you are only measuring the width you get for one-half of the stitches in your swatch).*

Factor in Ease:

The amount of ease allowed is a personal preference and is often overlooked when using prescriptive sock patterns. If you have experienced too tight or too loose socks – you need to adjust your ease accordingly. Ease can vary from 1/2 inch to 1 inch, depending upon the stretchiness of the yarn. Use 3/4 inch for a place to start. If you find that the socks are too loose with 3/4 inch, then increase the ease factor to 1 inch. If too tight, decrease the ease to 1/2 inch.

To factor in ease: subtract the ease amount from the ankle measurement. For example, if your ankle measures 9 1/2 inches, subtracting 3/4 inch for ease leaves you with 8 3/4 inches.

| | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| | | |
| Ankle Measurement | Minus amount of Ease | Sock Circumference |

Cast On: Multiply the sock circumference by the stitches/inch to get the number of stitches you need to cast on for your sock. Join and divide between your needles (depends upon your circular method).

Knit the cuff:

For a very basic sock, knit in desired ribbing for the desired length of the sock cuff. Note: this is a matter of preference and is entirely up to you to decide.

For a sock using a pattern stitch:

Option 1: knit 1 to 2 inches of ribbing, then begin stitch pattern.

Option 2: begin knitting the cuff in the desired stitch pattern.

Option 3: Picot Edge: knit 5 rows in stockinette. Picot row: *K2tog, yo, repeat throughout round. Knit 5 rows in stockinette. Fold row: pickup loop from cast on edge and knit it together with stitch on needle, repeat throughout round. This causes the hem to fold in half with the picot row now on top of the sock. Begin stitch pattern. [Note: this is done on even number of stitches]

Notes on stitch patterns for socks – you will need to do some math based upon the number of stitches per pattern repeat and you may need to adjust the total number of stitches used for your sock based upon the pattern stitch requirements.

For instance: Your pattern stitch is a multiple of 10 stitches over 10 rows. If your initial stitch calculation for your sock is 48 stitches, you will need to increase your stitch count to 50 in order to fit the stitch pattern. If your stitch pattern is a multiple of 6 stitches, plus 1 over 10 rows, you will need to use 49 stitches instead of 48.

Heels:

Note: regardless of which circular method used, the heel flap is knit flat using half the total stitches of the sock. These stitches become the sole of the sock after the heel is turned.

Option 1: Stockinette Stitch Heel Flap – Place half of stitches (instep stitches) on hold. Knit the remaining heel stitches flat in stockinette for the desired heel length. The first stitch of every row should be slipped (these are used to form the gusset later)

Option 2: Slipped Stitch Heel Flap – As above, place the instep stitches on hold. To knit the heel stitches: Row 1: Slip 1, knit 1 across, end with knit stitch. Row 2: Slip 1 stitch, purl across the row. Repeat these two rows until the desired heel length is reached.

Option 3: Short Row Heel --The short-row heel is worked with no heel flap, but with short rows to form a cup for your heel. Using the short rows replaces the need to turn the heel and make a gusset. It is the hand knit heel that most resembles that of a commercial sock. As above, it is worked on half the leg stitches. Place the instep stitches on a holder (or two) while working this type of heel. Place a marker at the center of the heel stitches.

You will be leaving the last stitch (or the last un-wrapped stitch) un-worked on each row. This is the stitch that gets wrapped.

Row 1 – Knit across, leaving one stitch un-worked. Slip this stitch to the right needle, bring the yarn to the front, put the stitch back onto the left needle, and put the yarn to the back in preparation of a Purl row. Turn your work.

Row 2 – Purl across, leaving one stitch un-worked. Slip this stitch to the right needle, bring the yarn to the back, put the stitch back onto the left needle, and put the yarn to the front in preparation of a Knit row. Turn your work.

Repeat these two rows, until you have 1 inch of un-worked stitches ($\frac{1}{2}$ inch on either side of your marker,) wrapping the last un-worked stitch on each row.

At this point, it's time to work longer short rows.

Row 1 – Knit to the first wrapped stitch. Pick up the wrap around that stitch and place it on the left needle. Knit the stitch and wrap together as one stitch. Turn your work.

Row 1 – Purl to the first wrapped stitch. Pick up the wrap around that stitch and place it on the left needle. Purl the stitch and wrap together as one stitch. Turn your work.

Repeat these two rows until all wrapped stitches have been worked. If your wraps look sloppy, twist the wrap as you put it back on the needle.

Pick up a stitch or two where the heel meets the instep stitches on the next round. Decrease them away on the next round (or two) by Knitting 2 together – this will help prevent the hole that sometimes forms there.

Heel Turns: If you do either the Stockinette Heel Flap or the Slipped Stitch Heel Flap, you will need to turn the heel using one of the following options:

Option 1: Round Heel Turn – this works best with an even number of heel stitches.

- Knit half way across the completed heel flap.
- Knit 2 more stitches, work a left slanting decrease, k1 and turn.
- Slip 1, p5, p2tog, p1, turn.
- Slip 1, knit to within 1 stitch of the gap created in first row – work a left slanting decrease to close the gap, k1, turn.
- Next row: slip 1, purl to within 1 stitch of the gap, p2tog to close gap, p1, turn.

- Repeat these last two rows until all heel stitches have been used up, end with a purl row.

Option 2: Square Heel Turn – can be worked over even or odd number of heel stitches.

- Determine the number of stitches you want in the middle of your heel: this should be approximately 1/3 of your stitches, but if the number of your heel stitches is not evenly divisible by 3, you can adjust the number to work with the number of stitches you have. For example, if you have 25 stitches in the heel flap, use 9 stitches as the number in the middle third of your heel, with 8 stitches on each side.
- Knit across the first third of the heel stitches and then knit across the middle third of the heel stitches to the last stitch of this third (do not knit the stitch). [Using the 25 stitch example, knit 8 stitches, then knit 8 more stitches]. Work the last stitch of this group with the first stitch of the third group, using a left slanting decrease. Turn.
- Slip 1, purl to within 1 stitch of the first third of stitches, p2tog. Turn.
- Slip 1, knit 8, make a left slanting decrease. Turn.
- Slip 1, purl 8, p2tog. Turn.
- Repeat last two rows until all edge stitches have been used up – leaving only the middle stitches.

Gussets:

This step joins the heel flap to the instep and reduces the number of heel stitches back to the original number. Start with the right side of the heel flap facing you. Short Row Heels do not have gussets – so you do not do this if you have done a short row heel.

Pick up gusset stitches:

- Begin at the heel, pick up stitches along the right side of the heel flap
 - Knit the instep stitches
 - Then pick up stitches along the left side of the heel flap
- Note: the gusset stitches will be tighter if you pick up the front half of the chain stitches and knit through the back loop.*

To avoid having a hole where the gusset meets the instep stitches, pick up an extra stitch between the last chain stitch of the heel flap and the beginning of the instep stitches. Knit this stitch together with the instep stitch on the next round.

Shape the gusset:

- You will have more stitches on your needles holding the heel stitches than the needle holding the instep stitches. To shape the gusset, you will decrease the number of heel stitches back to the original number of

stitches you had at the beginning of the heel. You will continue to knit the instep stitches each round while doing these decreases.

- To decrease the stitches:
 - Rd1: At the beginning of heel, knit 1, SSK, knit across to last 3 stitches, K2tog, k1.
 - Rd2: Knit all stitches
 - Repeat these 2 rounds until the total number of heel stitches equals the number of stitches you started with.

Foot:

Once the gusset is completed, you knit even until the sock is the desired length [from the joint of the big toe to the heel – approximately 2 inches less than the length of the foot] *Hint: if you are knitting on circular needles – try the sock on, if it comes up to the big toe joint, you are ready to start the toe of the sock.*

Toe:

Option 1: Standard Toe Shaping:

Note: decreases are made on each side of the toe, every other round. Decreases are done on both the instep stitches and the sole stitches.

To decrease:

- K1, SSK, knit to last 3 stitches, K2tog, k1.
- Knit even all stitches
- Repeat these two rounds until there are 10-16 stitches left on each needle. Note: you should have approximately 1 ½ to 2 inches left.
- Graft remaining stitches together using the Kitchener Stitch. Weave in ends to finish.

Option 2: Star Method

Using DPNs:

- Rd 1: *Knit to last 2 stitches on needle, K2tog; repeat from * across all needles.
- Rd 2: Knit even all stitches.
- Repeat rounds 1 and 2 until there are 2 stitches left on needles #1 and #4 and 3 stitches each on needles #2 and #3. (10 stitches total)
- Next round: Needle #1 -- knit 2; needles #2 and #3 -- knit 1, knit 2 together; needle #4 -- knit 2. (8 stitches remain)
- Break yarn and thread tail through remaining stitches. Pull tight to close toe. Weave in all yarn ends to wrong side of work.

Using 2 circulars or Magic Loop:

- Place marker to mark the center of the stitches for the instep and the sole.

- Rd 1: Knit to 2 stitches before the center, K2tog, slip marker, knit to last 2 stitches on needle, K2tog – repeat on second half of stitches.
- Rd 2: Knit even all stitches.
- Repeat until there are 4 stitches on each needle.
- Break yarn and thread tail through remaining stitches. Pull tight to close toe. Weave in all yarn ends to wrong side of work.

References:

Socks Soar on Two Circular Needles, Cat Bordhi, Passing Paws Press, 2006.

Knitting on the Road, Nancy Bush, Interweave Press, 2001.

Knitting Circles Around Socks: Knit two at a time on circular needles, Antje Gillingham, Martingale Company, 2007

How to Make Socks With Any Weight Yarn”, Nancy McMullen, Internet article, <http://www.sockknitters.com/PATTERNS/anyweight.htm>

This is a compendium of basic sock techniques found in most sock patterns. What I find is that most patterns are written with specific directions for a particular circular knitting method or technique – either for double point needles, two circular needles or Magic Loop. However, knitting a sock is a process and it is the same regardless of the method you choose to knit them. This “pattern” provides the basic instructions for knitting a sock from the top down, giving options for the cuff, the heel and the toe shaping. It is intended to allow the user to create her/his own sock based upon the preferred method of circular knitting and yarn choice (that’s what the gauge and measurements are for). My intent was to create a handy reference that fits in a knitting bag and replaces what I refer to as “prescriptive” sock patterns. I hope you find this pattern useful.

-- *Lindy*