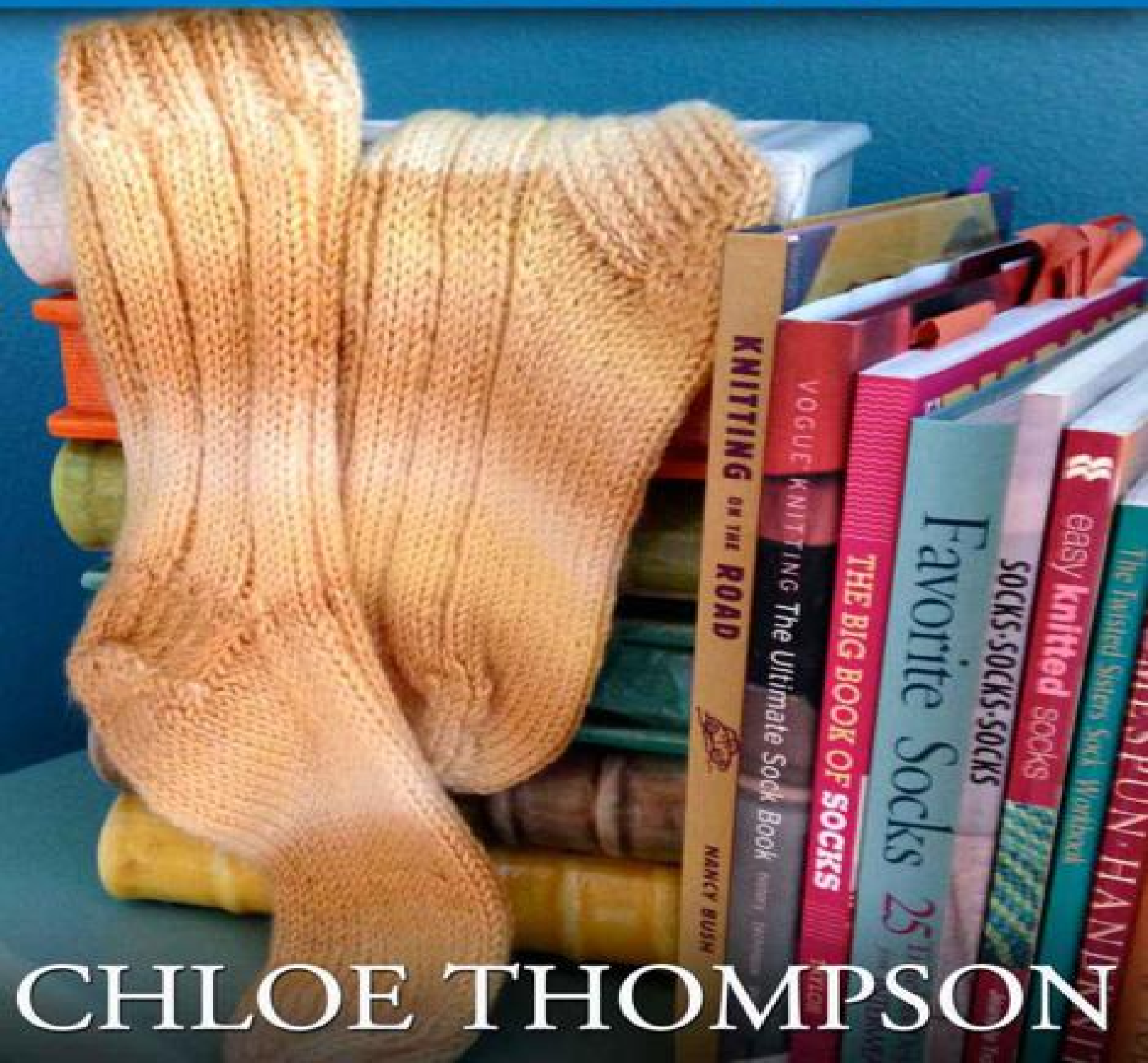


Beginners GUIDE TO KNITTING SOCKS



CHLOE THOMPSON

THE BEGINNERS GUIDE TO KNITTING SOCKS

By

Chloe Thompson

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AUTHORS OTHER BOOKS

(To view books please click the link or type the HTTP link in your web browser or search book title on Amazon)

3 BOOK BUNDLE: "Knitting Scarves The Easy Way" and "Beginners Handbook of Knitting Stitches" and "Beginners Guide To Knitting Socks"

<http://amzn.to/1cnBYH0>



2 BOOK BUNDLE: "Beginners Guide To Knitting Socks" and "Beginners Handbook of Knitting Stitches"

<http://amzn.to/11Da0RB>



2 BOOK BUNDLE: "Knitting Scarves The Easy Way" and "The Beginners Guide To Knitting Socks"

<http://amzn.to/15qaT32>



2 BOOK BUNDLE: "Knitting Scarves The Easy Way" and "Beginners Handbook Of Knitting Stitches"

<http://amzn.to/19EhhW3>



“The Beginners Guide to Knitting: Learn How To Knit The Easy Way”

<http://amzn.to/16iTkYr>



“Beginners Handbook of Knitting Stitches”

<http://amzn.to/14SxOh6>



“Knitting Scarves: The Easy Way”

<http://amzn.to/1cyUjPP>



PREFACE

I do not think there are any knitting projects as enjoyable as socks. It does not take a lot of skill to knit up something that just feels so good, both for your hands and your feet. With every row, you can see progress as your socks take shape. When you are done, there's no assembly required. You can slip them right on. How awesome is that?!?

I have probably knitted close to a hundred pairs of socks in my lifetime, and I have taught almost that many people to knit them as well. That is a lotta footwear!

In that time, I have probably encountered every kind of sock knitting dilemma; from the dreaded Second Sock Syndrome to the nasty little hole that appears when knitting the gusset. I have also worked with some students who were paralyzed at the sight of double-pointed needles; I believe they called them “sticks”, “chopsticks”, and “what the heck are those?”

In this book, I will guide you through the basics of sock knitting: from choosing the materials (yarn, needles) to figuring out the size, and then, best of all, knitting a pair of socks. Just like so many things in life, there are several routes to getting where you want to go. You can knit one sock at a time or do them both at once. You can start your sock at the top or at the toe. You can cast on your stitches and bind them off in various ways.

In this book I have chosen not to confuse you with every option in the sock knitting universe. I have found that when a person is given too many choices, they choose to make no choice at all. So, I'm giving you the benefit of many years of sock knitting, teaching and doing, so that you can get right down to it and join the community of sock knitting addicts.

CHAPTER 1: SOCK BASICS

Before you pick up your needles, let's talk about the sock itself, by starting with its anatomy (do not worry, there will not be a quiz at the end).

Think of a sock like any other knitted garment. For example, a sweater has different parts of it like the sleeves, cuffs, and neckline. Likewise a sock has different parts of it as well, unless you are knitting a tube sock, which never fits comfortably, right?

To get the wonderful shaping in your sock, you need to do a little maneuvering to allow for the curve in the heel, which is made up of the heel flap, heel turn, and gusset in the picture below.



*Take note of the other terms in this diagram because you will see them throughout the book.

GAUGE AND SWATCH

Knitting any garment without first making a swatch and checking your gauge is like baking without measuring cups. You might get it right, but if you do not, you have wasted your time and the “ingredients”.

What do I mean by “gauge”? In knitting, the term refers to how many stitches per inch you get from a particular yarn and needle size. The larger the needle, the fewer stitches per inch. Every pattern will include a gauge to indicate what they based the measurements on. So, if you are using a pattern that calls for 8 stitches per inch and the gauge for your choice of yarn and needle size is 6 stitches per inch, you are going to end up with a knitted garment that is way too big; if you follow the directions as written without making adjustments for the yarn weight.

I once had a customer come into my shop with a knitting crisis. She was knitting a bag to be felted, but her gauge was so far off from the instructions that her bag looked more like a small sleeping bag.

Please, please, please take the time to knit a swatch. Just cast on 20 stitches on the needle size you plan to use. Knit in stockinette stitch to four inches deep. Then place a ruler on top and count how many little “v’s” there are in a row (each “v” is one stitch). Also measure the depth. Most gauges in patterns will tell you the gauge in both depth and width; I do not always worry about the depth, because I can adjust that by reducing or increasing the number of rows, but width is **critical!**

If your gauge does not match the pattern, change the size of your needles. However, if you have chosen a pattern that calls for fingering or sport weight yarn and you have got a bulky weight, this suggestion will not work. Always aim for matching the weight of your yarn to the one in the pattern. Or find a math whiz that can recalculate the pattern for you!

SIZING

For store-bought socks you have to choose the size that is the closest match to your foot. But when you are knitting socks, you can do a custom fit. Here are the measurements you need before you get started:

Leg Length: The back of the leg, from where the top of the sock should be to the bottom of the heel.

Cuff Circumference: Around the part of the leg where the cuff will be.

Heel to Toe: The bottom of the foot, from the back of the heel to the end of the big toe.

Toe Length: Just the toes.

Foot Circumference: The widest part of the foot, at the base of the toes.

STANDARD SOCK SIZES

Child		
SHOE SIZE	CUFF	FOOT LENGTH
3 to 4	5 1/4"	3 1/4"
5 to 6	5 1/2"	3 3/4"
7 to 8	5 3/4"	4 1/2"
9 to 10	6 1/4"	5"
11 to 12	6 3/4"	6"
13	7"	6 1/2"
1 to 2	7 1/4"	6 1/2"
3 to 4	7 1/2"	6 3/4"

Women

SHOE SIZE	CUFF	FOOT LENGTH
5	7 3/4"	6 3/4"
6	7 3/4"	7"
7 to 8	8"	7"
9	8 1/4"	7 1/4"
10	8 1/4"	7 1/2"
11	8 1/2"	7 3/4"

Men

SHOE SIZE	CUFF	FOOT LENGTH
8 to 9	8 1/4"	7 3/4"
10	8 1/2"	8"
11	8 1/2"	8 1/4"
12	8 1/2"	8 1/2"
13	8 3/4"	8 1/2"
14	8 3/4"	8 3/4"
15	9"	8 3/4"

CHAPTER 2: CHOOSING YOUR MATERIALS

Knitted socks can range from lightweight to bulky, depending on the materials you choose. A sock can be knitted from any weight of yarn, as long as you use the right size needles and cast on the appropriate amount of stitches.

FIBER FUN

Think about the kind of sock you want to knit. Will you be wearing it inside a shoe? Is it more for warmth than fashion? Does the sock need to be machine washable or will someone be willing to lovingly hand wash your creation? These are the things you need to consider when choosing the yarn for your sock project.

You have a wide variety of fiber choices for sock knitting, but durability should be first and foremost in your mind. Think about where these socks are going. They will be rubbing the inside of a shoe with every step and hitting the floor for those people who shuffle around in stocking feet. This is no job for a flimsy yarn!

Secondly, consider comfort. As tough as your feet are, they still need tender loving care. Scratchy wool is not the kindest choice here.

You will find a category of yarns called “sock yarn”. Many of these are plied with some nylon, acrylic, or other synthetic, which gives the yarn more strength. Even if you are a diehard fiber diva who was shunned acrylic (guilty!), the truth is, you need it here. Most sock yarns are only 10 to 20 percent artificial fiber, so do not feel as though you have compromised your high ideals.

Here are your best options for sock yarn fiber:

Superwash Wool: This is 100 percent wool that has been blended or coated with a small amount of synthetic material to prevent shrinkage when machine washed. It has the look and feel of wool, with a tiny bit more smoothness.

Merino Wool: This fiber is the cashmere of wool. Made from the fleece of merino sheep, this is the softest wool you can get and will satisfy even the

most ardent wool opponent.

Camelid Fiber: This group is comprised of yarns made from the fibers of llamas, alpacas, vicuñas, or camels. All of them are luxuriously soft and durable; like a spa treatment for your feet. This yarn does require hand washing though.

Cotton Blend: Cotton is a comfortable and breathable yarn; so it is a natural match for socks. One big drawback of this yarn is that it does not have elasticity, which you have experienced if you have ever pushed up the sleeves on a cotton sweater and stretched out the cuffs. Cotton with a little bit of wool or elastic (like Cascade Fixation) gives you the benefit of cotton's comfort, with the practicality you need for a good-fitting sock.

Acrylic: For easy care and lowest cost, you cannot beat acrylic. This fiber tends to pill easily, so take that into consideration when making your fiber choice decision.

Exotic Blends: Fibers like silk and angora also work wonderfully for sock knitting. These fibers need to be blended with another fiber to give them the characteristics you need for a sock; e.g., elasticity, durability and washability. Cashmere blended with wool (like merino) and perhaps a little silk for sheen, produces the most luxurious sock. Socks mad from this fiber must be washed by hand; but it is worth the little extra effort for a great treat for your feet.

Another tip, is if you have not knitted with a particular fiber before, take the time to wash your swatch (approximately 4" X 4" will do). The way your swatch looks after the wash cycle is what your knitted sock will look like. If you don't like the outcome you can test different yarn swatches in the wash cycle or choose to hand wash your final creations.

WEIGH YOUR YARN OPTIONS

Yarns come in a variety of weights, which reflect the thickness of the yarn. The following are the most common weights used for sock knitting:

Sock: Slightly heavier than fingering weight, sock is the common choice for knitting lightweight socks (not the bulky, wooly type). *Gauge: 6.5-8 stitches/inch on US 1-3 needle*

Sport: Sport weight yarn is slightly thicker than sock yarn. *Gauge: 5.5-6.5 stitches/inch on US 3-5 needle*

DK/Light Worsted: The “DK” stands for “Double Knitting”, which is a type of knitting that creates a two-sided, reversible fabric. *Gauge: 5-6 stitches/inch on US 5-7 needle*

Worsted: Socks knitted with this yarn will be on the bulkier side. They would be great for wearing with boots or around the house on a cold day. *Gauge: 4-5 stitches/inch on US 7-9 needle*

SELF-PATTERNING SOCK YARN

Sock knitting became even more addictive when Opal introduced its self-patterning sock yarn. The multi-color yarn has been calibrated to knit up into a pattern of stripes, jacquard, or other prints, and all you have to do is knit like you would any other sock yarn.



Many other companies have followed suit, so self-patterning sock yarn is readily available. It usually comes in a 100-gram skein, which is about 400 yards; enough for a pair of adult and child's socks (unless you knit one with a really long leg).

HOW MUCH YARN DO YOU NEED?

Once again, the answer is “It depends.” The amount of yarn you need will be determined by the size of the sock and the weight of the yarn. Sock yarn is usually packaged in 50 or 100-gram skeins. You will need about 400 yards of sock or fingering weight yarn for a pair of adult socks (assuming you are not knitting knee socks), 300 yards for DK, and about 220 yards of worsted weight.

If you have a smartphone or tablet, you can download the Knit Handy app for the (iPhone <http://bit.ly/12YGdjK>) or (Android <http://bit.ly/18NFFFg>) and you will have a knitting calculator with you wherever you go!

NEEDLE KNOW-HOW

Next, you need to choose your needles. The size will be dictated by the yarn's weight and pattern gauge, but the type of needle is up to you.

Needles can be made of plastic, aluminum, nickel-plated, wood (walnut, rosewood, cherry, birch), and bamboo (it is considered a grass). Let me just say that no one should knit with plastic needles. Sure they bend (which also means they break) and come in fun colors, but I just do not like the feel. And who needs more plastic in their life? Confession time, the only time I have used plastic needles in the past is when I knitted a hammock from rope. I needed a size 35 needles, which were too large to be made of wood or metal. Other than this scenario, I just avoid plastic needles.

For any beginner, I also recommend bypassing aluminum needles. They are slippery, so stitches can easily fall off your needle. Also, the metal is hard on your hands, because beginners tend to hold their needles tightly. I suggest taking it easy on your hands and use a gentler needle.

I highly recommend bamboo or wood for the beginning knitter. Actually, it is my recommended needle of choice for anyone. Nickel-plated needles are wonderful and experienced knitters enjoy the faster pace they can get, but I just love putting two strands of yarn and wood together.

Knitting needles come in three basic types:

Straight: The classic knitting needle is straight, with one pointed end and one blunt end. Straight needles come in a variety of lengths, usually from 9 to 14 inches long.

Circular: Two short needles are joined together with a thin cable, which varies in length. Used for knitting in the round (seamless knitting in a circle, rather than back and forth). The longer needle length is also ideal for knitting wide items, like afghans. Circulars are also perfect for knitting scarves because you can use the two ends of the circular needle to go back and forth. When not knitting, the scarf can hang safely on the cable, so you do not have to worry about the stitches slipping off.

Double-Pointed: These needles have points on each end. They are designed for knitting a small circumference in the round (e.g., socks, sleeves, cuffs).

These needles are not recommended for scarves.

My experience shows that it is easier to start by using straight needles. Starting out with circular needles might be uncomfortable for the beginner. Once you are accustomed to moving the needles from hand to hand (after each row), consider the move to circular needles. For one reason, you will not have to invest in as many needles because circular needles can be used for flat (back and forth) and circular knitting.

Above exert taken from “Knitting Scarves The Easy Way” By Chloe Thompson



Knitting newbies are often fearful of double-pointed needles. It does not take long to master these little gems and you will be glad you did, particularly if you ever want to make mittens, hats, sleeves, or other items that are knitted in the round with just a few stitches.

When you buy your set of double-pointed needles, you will probably get five needles in the package. Americans, for whatever reason, tend to only work with four. You spread your stitches across three of them and then knit with the fourth one. Europeans will space out their stitches across four needles and knit with the fifth. Unless you have a really large sock with lots of stitches, the four-needle method is great, and you have one less needle to deal with.

CHAPTER 3: CASTING ON

The first step to knitting is called “casting on”. You need to create stitches on your needle. There are many methods of casting on. Some types are more suitable for certain projects, but for sock knitting, you just need to know two styles:

Long-Tail: When casting on the stitches for a sock that starts at the top of the leg, the long-tail cast-on provides the strength and elasticity you need to stand up to the numerous pull-ups and pull-offs that the sock will endure in their lifetime. I use this cast-on method for just about everything I have ever knitted and have never been disappointed.

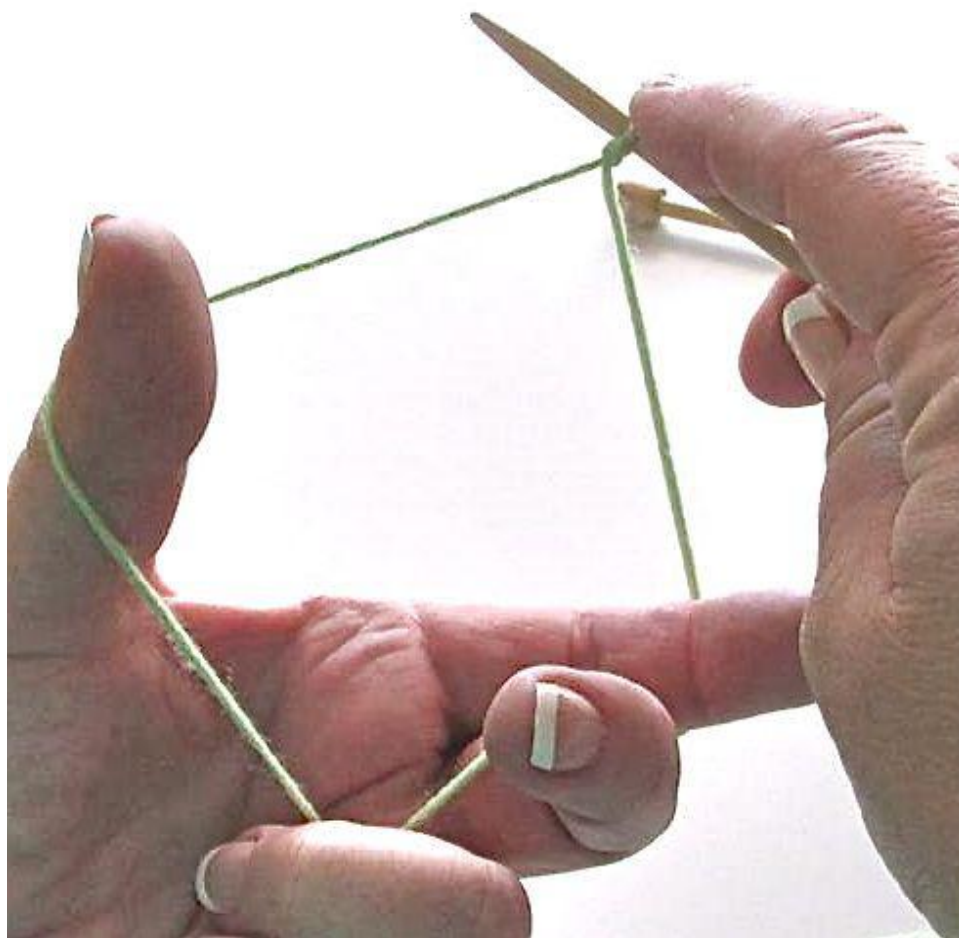
Eastern/Turkish: When you are knitting a sock from the toe up, you begin with just a few stitches that need to be in the round, but as close together as possible, avoiding any holes or gaps.

You will never go wrong by mastering these two methods!

LONG-TAIL CAST-ON

You need to start by determining the length of your tail. If you are working on a sock or sport weight yarn, estimate a half-inch per stitch you are casting on. So, if you will be casting on 48 stitches, you need a tail that is two feet (24 inches) long. If your yarn is worsted weight, estimate one inch per stitch (or a little less).

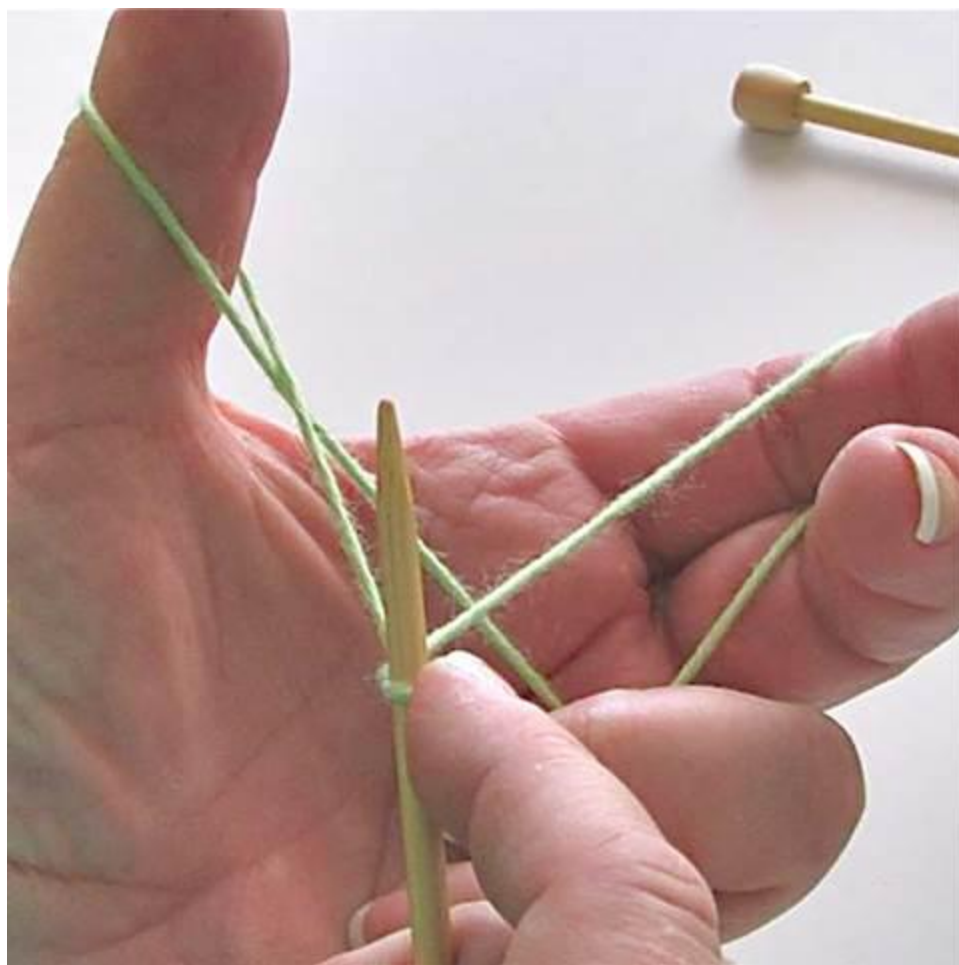
Step One: Use just one needle to cast on. Make a slip knot at the point where you have marked the length of your yarn for casting on. Slip the loop over one needle and pull the tail to tighten it.



Step Two: Hold the needle in your right hand with your index finger on top, holding the slip knot in place. With your left hand under the needle, wrap one strand around your index finger and the other around your thumb.

You should have a triangle shape with your needle at the top point and your two fingers making the two points for the triangle base.

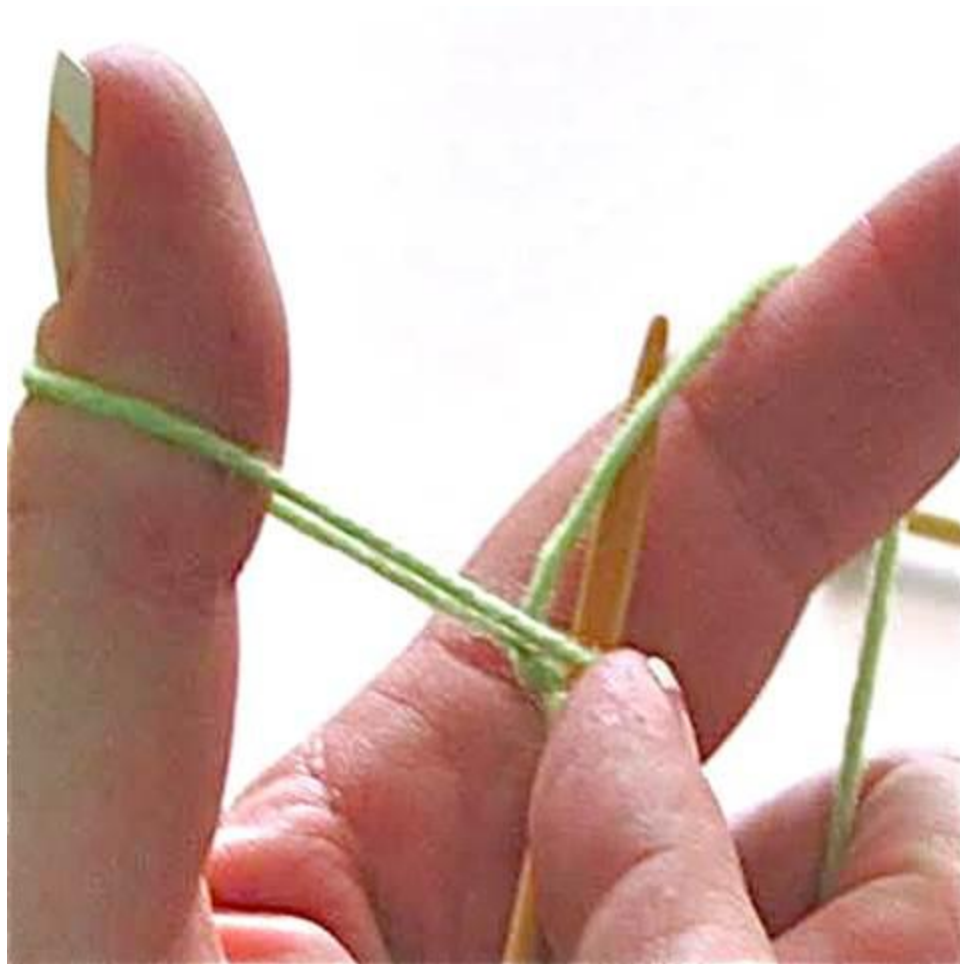
Step Three: Bring the needle down so the yarn makes a “V” between your thumb and forefinger, which are now positioned like you are getting ready to shoot a slingshot.



Step Four: With your right hand, guide the point of the needle under the left side of the yarn that is looped around your thumb.



Step Five: Guide the needle UNDER this point and OVER the yarn on the right side of your thumb.



Step Six: Move the tip of the needle OVER the left side of the yarn on your index finger.



Step Seven: Swing the needle back **THROUGH** the loop on your thumb.

Step Eight: You will see that you have a loop on your needle now. Pull your needle up and release the yarn on your finger. Then pull the two yarn ends to tighten the casted on stitch.

Basically, the cast follows this pattern: under your thumb, over your index finger, and back through the thumb loop. Use this as your Cast-on Mantra: Under-Over-Through, Under-Over-Through....

Cast on the remaining number of stitches that you need for your sock. If you are using double-pointed needles, cast the stitches onto one needle. Then slide some of the stitches onto a second and then a third needle as you accumulate too many for one needle.

EASTERN/TURKISH CAST-ON

This method of casting on stitches is used when you are starting your project with just a few stitches and working it in the round. It is ideal for toe-up sock knitting (Chapter 5).

Step One: Hold two double-pointed needles together, parallel to each other. Drape the tail over the top needle and bring it between the two needles. Holding the needles together, wrap the yarn four times around both needles, going from left to right. Bring the working strand between the two needles at the opposite end from where you started.



Step Two: Hold the needles tightly together. Hold the tail in place with your left hand. Insert a third needle (working needle) into the first loop on the top needle, as if to knit. Wrap the working strand, knitwise.



Step Three: Work the stitch off the top (left) needle, but be careful to keep it on the bottom (right) needle. It is easier if you slide the top needle down so the stitch is teetering at the point, while keeping the stitch on the bottom needle about half or one-third of the way from the point. Work the remaining three stitches in the same way.



Step Four: Rotate the two needles, clockwise, so that the top needle is now on the bottom. Using the working needle, knit the four stitches from what is now the top needle.



Step Five: Rotate the needles clockwise again. Using the working needle, knit two stitches from the top needle. You should now have two stitches on each of two needles and four stitches on the third needle.



HOW TO AVOID THE LADDER EFFECT

When you are working on double-pointed needles you might encounter what is known as the “ladder effect”. This is the gap as you move your stitches from needle to needle. When the stitches are not pulled tightly enough to overcome the needle shift, you get an elongated stitch. Over the course of several rows your stitches will begin to look like a ladder.

It is easy to avoid the dreaded ladder effect. The best way to avoid this is when you move to the next needle, give the first two stitches an extra tug as you wrap the yarn. This anchors them to the prior stitches. Do not tug every stitch or you will end up with a very tight knit and very sore fingers. Plus, it will be hard to move the stitches along the needle. When you get comfortable with your knitting, you will find a tension that works for you; but try to avoid pulling too hard on your yarn. Be gentle. Love your fibers.

CHAPTER 4: KNITTING FROM THE TOP

This chapter will cover the techniques for knitting the individual components of a sock. Chapters 7 and 8 will provide you with an actual top-down sock knitting patterns.

You have two choices for the knitting direction of your socks. You can start at the top or the bottom. A vast majority of patterns start at the top of the leg and work their way down to the tip of the toe, so you definitely need to learn this method; but it will not hurt to learn the toe-up method as well (which will be covered in Chapter 5).

Other than the larger choice of patterns, why knit from the top down? Well, if you have a somewhat intricate design for the leg, you can work the pattern before determining where you want to place the heel and instep stitches for your design. One drawback is that if you have a limited amount of yarn, you risk running out if you knit the legs too long. This is a problem you probably will not realize until you are well into the second sock; since you cannot try on the sock as you knit.

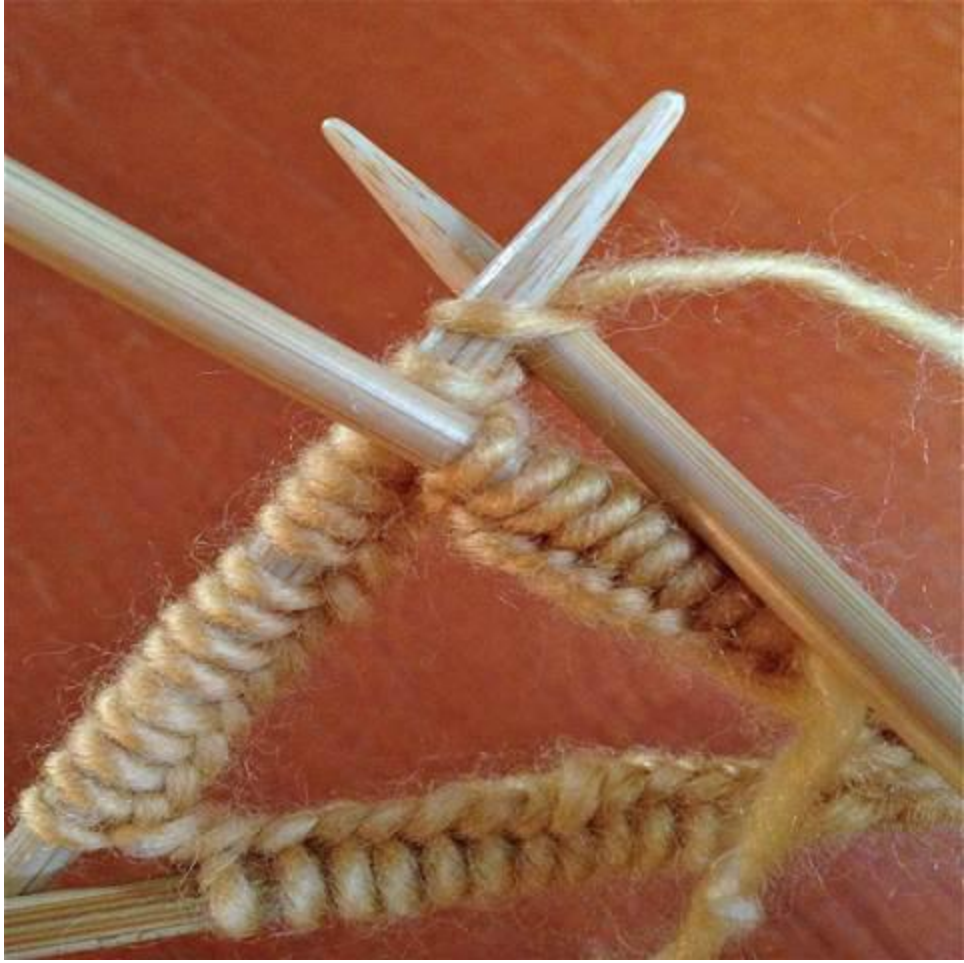
All things being equal, if I have ample yarn and an accurate measurement for the foot, I definitely prefer the top-down sock knitting method. Maybe it is because I learned this technique first and it is ingrained in my knitting fingers as much as knitting and purling. Give it a try and decide for yourself.

CAST ON

Using the long-tail method (see page Chapter 3). LOOSELY cast the stitches onto one needle and then divide them between three double-pointed needles. If you are a tight knitter by nature, cast on the stitches using a needle that is one or two sizes larger than you will be using for the sock. Then switch to the correct needle size after the cast-on.

Complete one row of ribbing and join the yarn. You do this by putting your three needles so that they form a triangle, with the base of the stitches all facing inward. The needle with the working strand should be on the right, pointing to the top of the triangle.

Insert your fourth double-pointed needle into the first stitch on the left-hand needle (the one that is also pointing to the top of the triangle). Wrap the stitch with the working strand and pull tight, leaving no gap between the two needles. Knit the stitch. Knit the rest of the leg according to the pattern and to the desired length (see Chapter 7 & 8).



HEEL FLAP

The heel flap is the section of the sock that covers the back of your heel. It needs to be sturdy, because of the stress and chafing that occurs here. Many sock yarns are reinforced with nylon for extra strength. If you want to make the heel even stronger, knit a strand of sock reinforcement thread or sewing thread along with your yarn when you knit the heel flap, heel turn, and the toe.

The flap is worked on **half** the total number of stitches. For example, if you have 48 stitches, you will work the heel over 24 of them. You will work the heel flap back and forth on short rows, not in the round.

Row 1: (Right side) Slip one stitch as if to knit, then knit the next stitch. Work across the heel stitches in this way: Sl 1, K1. Turn your work.



Row 2: (Wrong side) Slip the first stitch, purlwise, then purl across the row.

Repeat these two rows until the flap measures two inches (or whatever length you want for the back of the heel).



TURN THE HEEL

Once you have the back of the heel done, you need to create a 90-degree turn on the bottom in order to start the foot. Starting from the bottom of the heel flap, continue to work back and forth from the center of the heel and then pick up one stitch at the end of each row to build the bottom of the heel.

Here is how the heel turn is worked:

Row 1: (Right side) Knit to the center of the heel (half the stitches on your heel). Then knit 2 more. Slip the next stitch to your right hand needle, then slip the next stitch after that; then knit those 2 stitches together (SSK), K1.

*Turn your work so the purl side is facing you.

Row 2: (Wrong side) Slip the first stitch purlwise (Sl 1 pwise), purl 5 stitches, purl the next 2 stitches together (P2tog), P1.

Row 3: Sl 1, K6, SSK, K1.

Row 4: Sl 1 pwise, P7, P2tog, P1.

Row 5: Sl 1, K8, SSK, K1.

Row 6: Sl 1 pwise, P9, P2tog, P1.

Row 7: Sl 1, K10, SSK, K1.

Row 8: Sl 1 pwise, P11, P2tog, P1.

Continue in this pattern, working one more stitch on each row, until you have worked all the stitches.



SHAPE THE GUSSET

The gusset is the triangular part of the sock between the heel and the foot.



This is where you start “re-growing” your stitches to set up for knitting the foot of the sock. It should not be too difficult. If you can pick up stitches, you can shape a gusset. Remember how you slipped the first stitch of each row on the heel flap? Well, that created a nice pattern of stitches to be picked up, as shown in the next photo.



Start the shaping by knitting across the heel stitches. Then pick up the stitches along the edge of the heel (Needle 1). If you worked 20 rows of the heel flap pattern, you should have a total of 10 stitches to pick up.



-Knit in pattern across the instep (the top of the foot) (Needle 2).

-Using another needle, pick up and knit stitches along the other side of the heel (Needle 3). Divide the heel stitches between Needles 1 and 3.

-You are going to return to working in the round again now. Your goal now for the gusset is to decrease the stitches until you have the same number of stitches as the instep.

How to work the decreases:

Round 1: Knit across Needle 1 to last 2 sts, SSK, K1; work in pattern across instep; on Needle 3, K1, K2tog, K to end.

Round 2: Work even (no decreases).

Repeat rows 1 and 2 until the total of the heel stitches equals the number of instep stitches.

Your gusset is done! Easy, right?!

HOW TO AVOID THE GUSSET HOLE

Ask any sock knitter about the infamous “gusset hole” and you will get a knowing nod and an eye-roll. When you pick up the stitches along the heel flap, you will end up with a little hole in the top corner of the triangle. You can go back when your sock is finished and do a quick stitch on the inside of the sock to close up the hole, but why not avoid it altogether?

On each inside corner where the heel flap meets the instep, pick up an extra stitch on the flap, along with the stitch, one row below the first stitch on the instep. Then knit these two stitches together.



Once you have finished picking up and knitting the heel stitches, your work should look like the following picture:



FOOT

Once you have finished the heel: the flap, the turn, the gusset, the hard part is done. You will work the foot in the round, with no decreases. When the foot of your sock (from where the heel flap meets the turn) is the desired length of the foot, minus the length of the toe, you are ready to work the toe decreases and finish the sock.

SHAPE THE TOE

The toe is shaped on the outside edges, with decreases on each edge of the instep and the outside edge of the bottom stitches (Needles 1 and 3).

Decrease round:

-Needle 1 (1st heel side): Knit to last 3 sts, SSK, K1.

-Needle 2 (instep): K1, K2tog, K to last 3 sts, SSK, K1.

-Needle 3 (2nd heel side): K1, K2tog, k to end

Start the shaping by doing decreases every other round. After about 4 or 5 decrease rounds, do the decreases every round until you have got only 8 stitches remaining (or whatever your pattern specifies).



TOE BIND-OFFS

You have two options for binding off the toe of your sock. In the photo below, the sock on the left shows the drawstring bind-off. The one on the right shows the Kitchener stitch.



Kitchener Stitch

The Kitchener Stitch, also known as “grafting”, provides a flat edge created by weaving the remaining instep stitches with the bottom stitches. When using this stitch you need to first make sure there are the same numbers of stitches for the top of the toe as on the bottom. If you still have two needles for the bottom of the toe, slip those stitches onto one needle.

Step One: Cut the working strand of yarn, leaving about a six-inch tail, and thread it onto a tapestry or darning needle. Hold the needles parallel and tight to one another. The needle with the tail should be in the back.

Step Two: Insert the threaded needle, purlwise, into the first stitch on the right side of the needle in the front. Pull the yarn all the way through the stitch, but leave the stitch on the double-pointed needle.



Step Three: Insert the threaded needle, knitwise, into the first stitch on the back needle. Again, pull the yarn through the stitch, but leave it on the double-pointed needle.



These first three steps are your set-up stitches, which give some strength to the end of the grafting.

Step Four: Insert the threaded needle back through the first stitch on the front needle, knitwise this time. Then slip the stitch off the needle and pull it tight to close the gap.



Step Five: Insert the threaded needle into the second stitch on the front needle, purlwise and pull the yarn through, leaving this second stitch on the needle.

Step Six: Insert the threaded needle back into the first stitch on the back needle and purlwise this time. Pull the yarn through then slip the stitch off the double-pointed needle and pull it tight.

Step Seven: Insert the threaded needle into the next stitch on the back needle, knitwise. Pull the yarn through and leave the stitch on the needle.

Step Eight: Repeat steps four through seven until you have only two stitches left on your double-pointed needles. Then repeat Step Four and then Step Seven.

Drawstring Method

The second bind-off option for the toe is the drawstring method. Cut the working strand, leaving a six-inch tail. Thread it on a darning or tapestry needle. Weave the needle through the stitches on your double-pointed needles.



Slip all the stitches off the needles and pull the tail like a drawstring, so there is no hole in the center. Then weave the tail through those stitches one more time for a little extra strength.



CHAPTER 5: KNITTING FROM THE TOE UP

Knitting a sock starting from the toe is one way of putting your best foot forward. When you begin your sock this way, you have several distinct advantages over knitting from the top of the leg down.

-If you are not sure you have enough yarn for the socks, you can knit the foot first and then reduce the length of the leg, if need be. For me, this is the major reason to choose the toe-up method.

-You can try on the foot of the sock as you knit to make sure the width is correct before you move on to the leg. However, if you have an accurate measurement and check your work, this benefit may not really influence your decision.

-For those people who have a bitter distaste for shaping a gusset or dealing with the toe bind-off, the toe-up method excludes those steps.

I suggest you try this method to see if you like it. The Turkish cast-on is a bit clumsy at first, but once you master that skill, the rest is easy!

CAST-ON

Begin your toe-up sock with the Turkish cast-on (see page Chapter 3). Wrap the yarn 4 times around your two double-pointed needles. Then work them into 8 stitches. You now have 4 stitches on one needle (Needle 1), and 2 stitches each on Needles 2 and 3. Now you need to increase to shape the toe. You will need to do two different types of increases:

Right Slant (M1R): With your left needle, **insert from behind** and pick up the horizontal strand between the last knitted stitch on your right needle and the next one on your left needle. Knit this picked-up loop **from the front**.

Left Slant (M1L): With your left needle, **insert from the front** and pick up the horizontal strand between the last stitch on your right needle and the next one on your left needle. Knit this picked-up loop **through the back**.

How to shape the toe of your toe-up sock

-Increase round: On Needle 1, K1, M1R, knit to last stitch, M1L, K1; on Needle 2, K1, M1R, knit to end; on Needle 3, knit to last stitch, M1L, K1. You have added 4 stitches, for a total of 12.

-Repeat this round five more times. You should have 32 stitches: 16 on Needle 1 and 8 each on Needles 2 and 3.

-Knit one round even, without increases. Then alternate round until you have the desired number of stitches (this will vary according to your gauge).



KNIT THE FOOT

Knit evenly with no increases until the length of the sock (including the toe) equal 2 inches **less** than the total desired length.



SHAPE THE HEEL

You are going to work the heel in two halves. First, place half of your stitches on one needle, to be worked for the heel. Divide the other half of the stitches (the instep) across two double-pointed needles.

When working the heel, you will be doing a backward yarnover on the purl side. A backward yo means that you bring the yarn **clockwise** around the working needle instead of through the two needles, as shown in the following picture.



NOTE: Unless indicated in the following instructions as a “yo backward”, complete a “yo” as you normally would.

Row 1: (RS) Knit across the heel stitches to the last one, but do not work that last stitch. Leave it on the left-hand needle. Turn your work, so the

wrong side is now facing you and one stitch is left behind on the other needle.

Row 2: (WS) yo backward then purl to last stitch. Leave that stitch unworked on the left-hand needle. Turn your work.

Row 3: yo, knit across to the stitch pair created by the backward yo of the prior row. Leave that pair and the next stitch on the left-hand needle, so there are 3 on the needle.



Row 4: yo backward, purl to stitch pair created by the yo of the prior row. Leave that pair and the next stitch on the left-hand needle, so there are 3 on the needle.

Repeat Rows 3 and 4: Until you have the specified number of stitches remaining between the yarnover pairs (often this is about half of the number you started with minus 2, but your pattern will give you the exact number).

Now, you are going to work the other side of your heel. The right side should be facing you.

Row 1: (RS) Knit the first stitch of the yo pair. Then knit the yo together with the first stitch of the 2nd yo pair. Turn your work so that you have the yo left on the other needle.

Row 2: (WS) yo backward. Purl across to the first stitch of the yo pair. Purl that stitch. Slip the yo and then the next one. Purl those two slipped stitches together (ssp). Turn your work, leaving the next yo behind.

Row 3: Knit across to the yo pair. Knit the first stitch of the pair, then K3tog (yes, Three). Turn your work.

Row 4: yo backward, purl to the next yo. Slip 3 stitches purlwise, one at a time; purl the 3 stitches together **through the back loops**. (P3tog tbl).

Row 5: yo, knit across to the yo pair. K3tog.

Repeat Rows 4 and 5: Until you have worked all of the yarnovers. End with Row 4, so the right side is now facing you. You should now have the same number of stitches as when you began working the heel.

LEG

Put the stitches that had been the instep onto one needle (you divided them back before you started the heel). Then divide the heel stitches evenly between two needles.



Work evenly in the round until the leg is the length you want, minus the length of the ribbing at the top. Then work the ribbing of your choice.

BIND-OFF

When the ribbing is at the end of your knitting, you might have a tendency to bind off too tightly, which means someone is going to work hard to get your sock on and off. There are almost as many methods for binding off as there are for casting on. To save you time, I am going to share the best ways to handle the toe-up bind-off.

Go Bigger: Slip your stitches on a set of double-pointed needles that are two or three sizes larger than what you have used to knit the socks.

Yarnover In Reverse: Knit the first stitch for your bind-off row. Do a **reverse** yarnover for the next stitch. In other words, if you have a knit stitch, wrap the yarnover clockwise around the outside of the working needle, instead of through the middle of the two needles.



Knit the next stitch. Lift the yarnover over the knitted stitch and off the needle. Then lift the first worked stitch over the top one on your right-hand needle, just as you would do for a normal bind-off.



Continue until one stitch is remaining. Cut the tail and thread it through this last loop. Pull tightly to close up the loop. Weave the tail through your knitted stitches.



CHAPTER 6: HOW TO KNIT TWO SOCKS AT ONCE

Some knitters are plagued by the Second Sock Syndrome. If you share this common condition, there is a cure, knit two socks at the same time. Yup, you start them together. You will knit the heel flap, gusset, all the way to the toe, side by side, and you will finish your socks pretty much simultaneously. This method uses two circular needles instead of four (or five) double-pointed needles. It also uses two skeins or balls of yarn, one for each sock.

THE CONCEPT

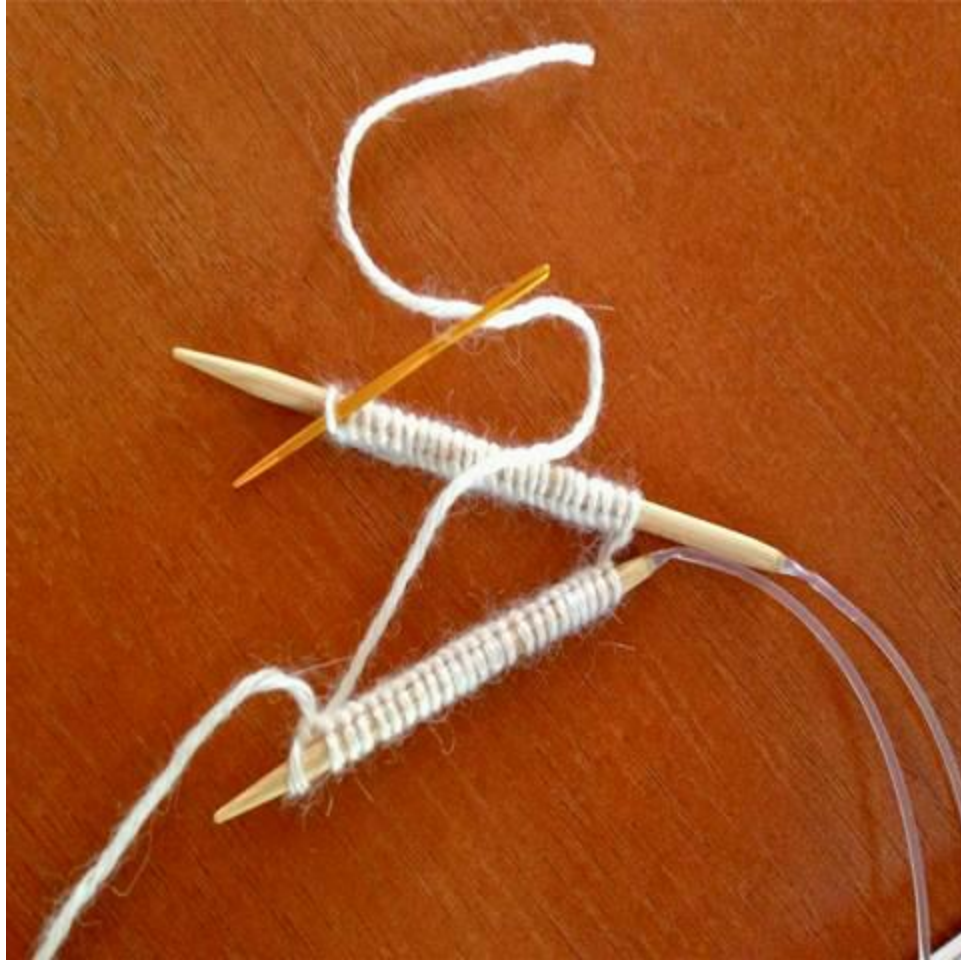
How can you knit two socks at once? Well, you use two circular needles and two balls of yarn. The needles should be the same size, but use two different cable lengths: 16-inch and 24-inch. Having different lengths allows you to differentiate between the two needles, so you can tell where you are in your knitting, sort of like a stitch marker.

CASTING ON

Using the long-tail cast-on method, cast the total number of stitches for one sock on the 24-inch needle. Then slide half of the stitches to the 16-inch needle so that the open end of the sock (as well as the working strand and tail) are on the cable end of the needle.



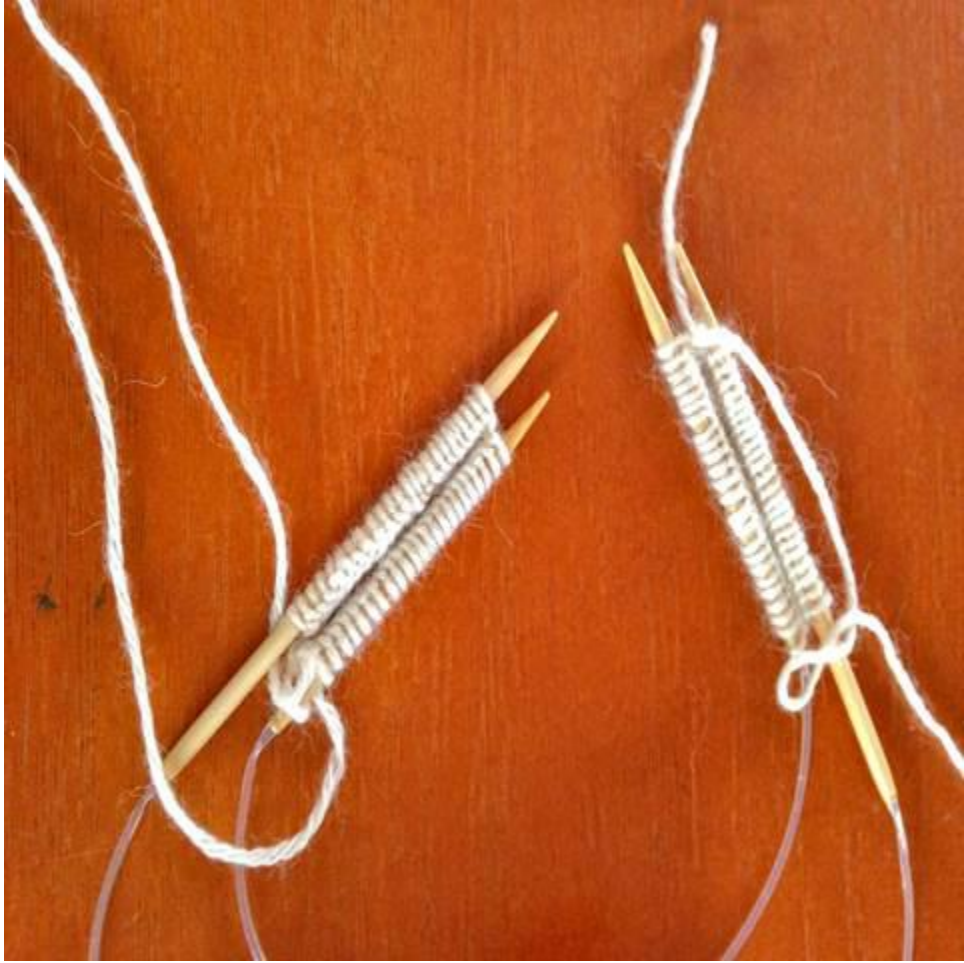
Slide the stitches to the opposite end of the circular needles. Make sure the stitches are straight (not twisted around the needles).



Thread the tail on a darning needle and weave it through the first stitch on the opposite needle to connect the round. Tie a knot to secure it.

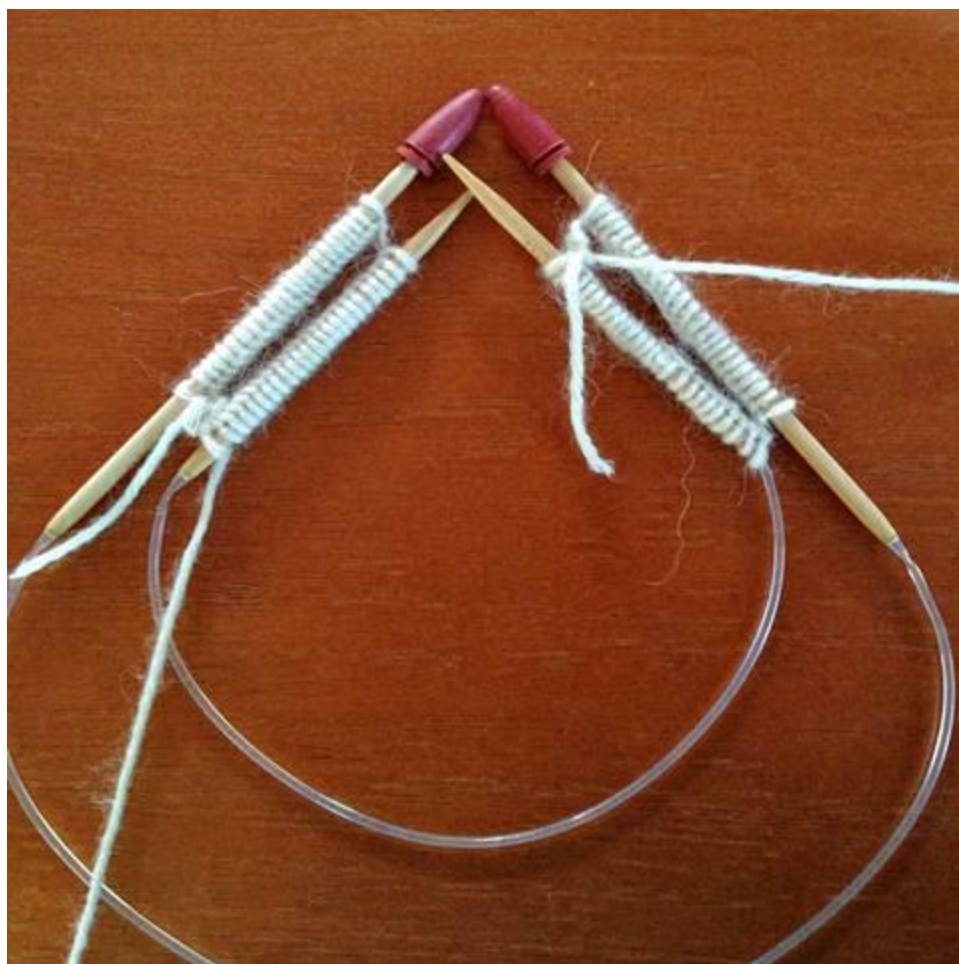


Repeat the cast on for the second sock, using the second ball of yarn at the opposite end from your first cast-on. As with the first sock, the working strand and open end of the second sock should be facing toward the circular cables, not the pointed end of the needles.



START YOUR KNITTING

Place a needle protector on each end of the 24-inch needle. Slide the stitches up to the needle points on each end of the needles.



Notice in the above photo the working strand for the two socks are diagonally across from each other. This is the correct position. You will slide the second sock so it is just behind the first one. Then as you knit across Sock One, the working strand will end where Sock Two picks up. You need that continuity to keep going around and around. Now flip the needles so that the right-hand needles shown in the above photo are on your left and vice versa.

Insert the right-hand, 16-inch needle into the first stitch on the left-hand, 16-inch needle and work down that row only; leave the stitches on

24-inch needle alone for now. Then start working the second sock stitches that are on the 16-inch needle. This is considered half a row.

Switch the point protectors to the 16-inch needles. Now work the stitches on the larger circular needle in the same way as you did the first half of the stitches. Keep working the sock in this manner, knitting the two socks on one circular needle and then knitting the other side. You can tell you have finished a round when the cables from both circular needles are facing the same direction.

Knit the sock as your pattern instructs: the cuff, leg, heel, gusset, foot, and toe. You will work in the round, except for the heel, when you will go back and forth with half of your stitches.



CHAPTER 7: BASIC SOCK PATTERN



These instructions are for an adult pair of socks. If you are using self-patterning yarn, pay attention to where in the skeins design you start. You will need to start your second sock at the same point of the skein; unless you do not care about matching the pair!

MATERIALS

-400 yards of fingering or sock weight yarn

-Size US 2 [2.75mm] double-pointed needles (dpn)

-Darning needle

Size:

-Women's Medium (Foot circumference: 7 inches)

Gauge:

-9 stitches and 12 rows = 1 inch

INSTRUCTIONS

Loosely cast on 60 stitches and divide them evenly between 3 dpns. Make sure the stitches are straight and join the yarn for the round.

Cuff:

-K1, P1 ribbing for 1 ½”.

Leg:

-Knit evenly until leg measures desired length to the top of the back of the heel.

Heel Flap:

-Worked on the first 30 stitches only.

-Row 1: *Sl 1, K1*. Repeat from * to * across. Turn your work.

-Row 2: Sl 1, P across. Turn.

-Repeat these two rows 14 more times.

Heel Turn:

-Row 1: K17, SSK, K1. Turn

-Row 2: Sl 1, P5, P2tog, P1. Turn.

-Row 3: Sl 1, K6, SSK, K1. Turn

-Row 4: Sl 1, P7, P2tog, P1. Turn.

-Row 5: Sl 1, K8, SSK, K1. Turn

-Row 6: Sl 1, P9, P2tog, P1. Turn.

-Continue working the rows in this pattern, working one more stitch in the center with each row until all the heel flap stitches have been worked. You should have 18 sts on your needle.

Gusset:

-Knit across the 18 heel stitches. Pick up and knit 15 stitches from the side of your heel flap. Knit across instep. Using a 5th dpn, pick up and knit 15 sts from the other side of the heel flap. Then knit 9 stitches from the next needle.

-You should now have 24 stitches on each of the 2 heel needles (Needles 1 and 3, and 30 stitches on your instep needle (Needle 2).

Gusset Shaping:

-Round 1: K to last 3 sts on Needle 1, SSK, K1. Knit across Needle 2. On Needle 3, K1, K2tog, knit to end.

-Round 2: Knit even.

-Repeat Rounds 1 and 2 until you have 15 stitches each on Needles 1 and 3.

Foot:

-Knit evenly until the foot measures the desired length from the back of the heel to the base of the toes (about 2 inches short of the finished foot length).

Toe Shaping:

-Round 1: K to last 3 sts on Needle 1, SSK, K1. On Needle 2, K1, K2to, K to last 3 sts, SSK, K1. On Needle 3, K1, K2tog, knit to end.

-Round 2: Knit even.

-Repeat Rounds 1 and 2 until 24 stitches remain (6 sts each on Needles 1 and 3, 12 sts on Needle 2).

Bind-Off

If you are going to use the **Kitchener Stitch** to finish your sock, transfer the stitches on Needles 1 and 3 to one needle. Then hold the needles parallel and graft them with the Kitchener stitch.

If you prefer the **Drawstring Method**, repeat Round 1 until a total of 8 stitches remain. Then cut the tail, thread the strand through a darning needle, and weave the needle through all 8 stitches. Pull tight to close. Run the needle through the stitches again, and weave the end through before cutting.

CHAPTER 8: RIBBY SOCK PATTERN



The rib stitching in these socks goes from the top of the leg to the toe, giving a snugger (but not tight!) fit.

MATERIALS

-220 yards of worsted weight yarn

-Size US 7 [4.5mm] double-pointed needles (dpn)

-Darning needle

Size:

-Women's Medium (Foot circumference: 7 inches)

Gauge:

-5 stitches and 12 rows = 1 inch

INSTRUCTIONS

Loosely cast on 36 stitches and divide them evenly between 3 dpns. Make sure the stitches are straight and join the yarn for the round.

Cuff:

-Round 1: *K2, P2*. Repeat from * to * on every round for 1 ½”.

Leg:

-Round 1: *K4, P2*. Repeat from * to * on every round desired leg length to the top of the back of the heel.

Heel Flap:

-Worked on the first 18 stitches only.

-Row 1: *Sl 1, K1*. Repeat from * to * across. Turn your work.

-Row 2: Sl 1, P across. Turn.

-Repeat these 2 rows 8 more times.

Heel Turn:

-Row 1: K10, SSK, K1. Turn

-Row 2: Sl 1, P5, P2tog, P1. Turn.

-Row 3: Sl 1, K6, SSK, K1. Turn

-Row 4: Sl 1, P7, P2tog, P1. Turn.

-Row 5: Sl 1, K8, SSK, K1. Turn

-Row 6: Sl 1, P9, P2tog. Turn.

-Row 7: Sl 1, K11.

-You should have 12 sts on your needle.

Gusset:

-Knit across the 12 heel stitches. Pick up and knit 9 stitches from the side of your heel flap. Continue K4, P2 across the 18 instep stitches. Using a 5th dpn, pick up and knit 9 sts from the other side of the heel flap. Then knit 6 stitches from the next needle.

-You should now have 15 stitches on each of the 2 heel needles (Needles 1 and 3, and 18 stitches on your instep needle (Needle 2).

Gusset Shaping:

-Round 1: K to last 3 sts on Needle 1, SSK, K1. Continue K4, P2 across Needle 2. On Needle 3, K1, K2tog, knit to end.

-Round 2: Knit evenly on the heel (no decreases) and the rib stitch on the instep.

-Repeat Rounds 1 and 2 until you have 9 stitches each on Needles 1 and 3.

Foot:

-Knit evenly until the foot measures the desired length from the back of the heel to the base of the toes (about 2 inches short of the finished foot length).

Toe Shaping:

-At this point you will end the rib stitch and just knit in the round for the toe.

-Round 1: K to last 3 sts on Needle 1, SSK, K1. On Needle 2, K1, K2to, K to last 3 sts, SSK, K1. On Needle 3, K1, K2tog, knit to end.

-Round 2: Knit even.

-Repeat Rounds 1 and 2 until 16 stitches remain (4 sts each on Needles 1 and 3, 8 sts on Needle 2).

Bind-Off

If you are going to use the **Kitchener Stitch** to finish your sock, transfer the stitches on Needles 1 and 3 to one needle. Then hold the needles parallel and graft them with the Kitchener stitch.

If you prefer the **Drawstring Method**, repeat Round 1 until a total of 4 stitches remain. Then cut the tail, thread the strand through a darning needle, and weave the needle through all 4 stitches. Pull tight to close. Run the needle through the stitches again, and weave the end through before cutting.

KNITTING TERMS GLOSSARY

Knitters have a language all their own. As you move beyond this book, you will encounter books and patterns that use a variety of standard abbreviations. Here's a list of what you will need to know in order to understand the instructions.

*** *:** Repeat the instructions between the two asterisks.

Alt: alternate (as in "alt rows").

Beg: beginning

Bet: between

BO: bind off

CA: color A (when you are using more than one color)

CB: color B (see above)

CC: contrasting color (ditto!)

Cn: cable needle, which could be either a small hook or something that looks like an overgrown toothpick with a curve in the middle, used to holding stitches when making a cable stitch

Cont: continue

Dec: decrease

DK: double knitting; a yarn weight or knitting technique

Dp, dpn: double-pointed needle

EON: end of needle

EOR: end of row

Fl: front loop

Foll: follow or following

G st: garter stitch (knitting every row)

Incl: including

K: knit

K tbl: knit through back loop, which creates a twist on the finished stitch

K1 f&b: knit into the front of the stitch and then into the back of the same stitch

K2tog: knit two stitches together

K2tog tbl: knit two stitches together through the back loop instead of the front

LC: left cross, a cable stitch where the front of the cross slants to the left

LH: left hand

Lp: loop

LT: left twist, a stitch that creates a mock cable slanted to the left

M1: Make 1 stitch, which requires an increase method

MC: main color

P: purl

P tbl: purl through the back loop instead of the front

P up: pick up

P2tog: purl two stitches together

P2tog tbl: purl two stitches together through the back loop instead of the front

Patt: pattern

Pm: place stitch marker

Prev: previous

Pssso: pass slipped stitch over (as in binding off)

Pu: pick up (stitches)

RC: right cross, a cable stitch where the front of the cross slants to the right

Rem: remaining

Rep: repeat

RH: right hand

Rnd: round(s); when knitting on a circular or double pointed needle when the yarn is joined, you knit in rounds, not rows

RS: right side

RT: right twist, a stitch that creates a mock cable slanted to the right

Sk: skip

Sk2p: slip 1 stitch, knit 2 together, and then pass the slipped stitch over the knitted ones to create a double decrease

Skp: slip 1 stitch, knit 1 stitch, and then pass the slipped stitch over the knitted one to create a single decrease

Sl, slst, slip: slip or slide a stitch without working it

Sl, k1, pssso: same as “skp”

Sl1k: slip 1 stitch knit-wise

Sl1p: slip 1 stitch purl-wise

Ssk: slip 1 stitch, slip the next stitch, and then knit the 2 stitches together to create a left-slanting decrease

Ssp: slip 1 stitch, slip the next stitch, and then purl the 2 stitches together to create a right-slanting decrease

Sssk: slip 1 stitch, slip the next stitch, slip the 3rd and then knit the 3 stitches together to create a double, left-slanting decrease

St: stitch

Sts: stitches

St st: stockinette stitch; alternately knit a row and purl a row

Tbl: through the back loop (of a stitch)

Tog: together

WS: wrong side

Wyib: with yarn in back

Wyif: with yarn in front

Yfwd: yarn forward (same as yarn over)

Yo: yarn over, move yarn to the opposite direction

Yrn: yarn 'round needle (same as yarn over)

OTHER RESOURCES

(To view books please click the link or type the HTTP link in your web browser or search book title on Amazon)

2 BOOK BUNDLE: "Knitting Scarves The Easy Way" and "Beginners Handbook Of Knitting Stitches"

<http://amzn.to/19EhhW3>



“The Beginners Guide to Knitting: Learn How To Knit The Easy Way”

<http://amzn.to/16iTkYr>



“Beginners Handbook of Knitting Stitches”

<http://amzn.to/14SxOh6>



“Knitting Scarves: The Easy Way”

<http://amzn.to/1cyUjPP>



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