Six steps to sock success

Most socks are simple tubes with shaped heels and toes. Our six-step overview of a basic sock takes the mystery out of knitting and turning heels, working gussets, and shaping toes. If you have not knit socks before, read this section carefully, then knit a Baby Sock. It’s as easy as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6!

1. **Leg** Cast on and divide the stitches on 3 double-pointed needles (dpn). Place a marker and knit a tube to the ankle. Since a ring marker would fall off the end of the dpn, use a safety pin marker.

2. **Heel** Rearrange the stitches on the dpn: place half the stitches (12, in our example) on the first dpn and divide the rest of the stitches between the 2nd and 3rd dpn. Work back and forth on the 12 stitches of first dpn only. The other 12 stitches are for the instep (the top of the foot) and are on hold.

3. **Turn heel** Continue on the heel stitches, working back and forth in short rows (for a short row, knit only part way across the dpn, leaving the rest of the stitches unworked, and turning to work back) and decreasing at the end of each short row until approximately one-third of the stitches have been decreased. The heel stitches have been turned: they were at the back of the heel; now they are at the bottom.

4. **Shape Gusset** Now it is time to work around on all three dpn. With an empty dpn, pick up stitches along the side of the heel and slip them to the first dpn. With 2nd dpn, work across the stitches from the next two dpn. With 3rd dpn, pick up stitches along the other side of heel and work half the heel stitches. The beginning of the round is now at the center of the heel. (4a) The extra stitches that are picked up are decreased at each side of the foot. (4b)

5. **Foot** When back to the original number of stitches (24), work around on all stitches to beginning of toe shaping.

6. **Toe** Decrease stitches at both sides of the foot: decrease 1 stitch at end of first dpn, 1 stitch each at beginning and end of 2nd dpn, and 1 stitch at beginning of 3rd dpn. In our example, alternate a decrease round with a plain knit round until 16 stitches remain, then work 2 decrease rows, draw 8 remaining stitches together and fasten ends. The sock is ready to wear.
Here’s a simple pattern ideal for churning out pairs and pairs of socks. In just a few hours, this design will give you a pair perfect for gift giving. Using various weights of yarn will give you options. Follow our details for getting started.

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Playful Pairs

SSK Slip 2 stitches separately to right needle as if to knit. Slip left needle into these 2 stitches from left to right and knit them together.

Note Slip stitches purlwise with yarn at WS of work.

SOCK

Leg
Cast on 24 stitches onto a double-pointed needle. Arrange stitches with 8 stitches on each of 3 needles (8/8/8). Join, being careful not to twist stitches. Work in k1, p1 rib for 16 rounds. Knit 3 rounds.

Heel Flap

Next row Knit 6, turn work.

Nextrow Purl back over these 6 stitches and next 6 stitches (12 stitches for heel). Divide remaining 12 stitches onto 2 needles to hold for instep.

Work back and forth on heel stitches as follows: Row 1 (RS) Slip 1, k11. Row 2 Slip 1, p11. Repeat Rows 1 and 2 five times more.

Turn Heel

Row 1 (RS) K7, k2tog, k1, turn.
Row 2 (WS) Slip 1, p3, p2tog, p1, turn.
Row 3 Slip 1, k4, k2tog, k1, turn.
Row 4 Slip 1, p5, p2tog, p1—8 stitches.

Gusset

Slip 12 instep stitches onto 1 needle, then using a free needle, k4 heel stitches, using another free needle, k4 other heel stitches, and using same needle, pick up and knit 6 stitches along side of heel. Using another needle, k12 instep stitches. Using another needle, pick up and knit 6 stitches along other side of heel, and using this same needle, knit remaining 4 heel stitches—32 stitches (10/12/10). Beginning of round is now center of heel.

Shape gusset

Heel Flap

Next round Knit.
Decrease round Knit to last 3 stitches of first needle, k2tog, k1; k12 instep stitches on 2nd needle; k1, SSK, knit to end of third needle. Repeat last 2 rounds 3 times more—24 stitches (6/12/6).

Foot

Knit 10 rounds, or until foot measures desired length to beginning of toe shaping.

Toe

Decrease round Knit to last 3 stitches of first needle, k2tog, k1; k1, SSK, knit to last 3 stitches of second needle, k2tog, k1; k1, SSK, knit to end of third needle. Next round Knit. Repeat last 2 rounds once more. Repeat decrease round twice more—8 stitches. Break yarn. Draw yarn through remaining stitches, gather together and secure yarn to WS.

WORKING WITH 4 DOUBLE-POINTED NEEDLES (DPNS)

Cast stitches onto 1 dpn.
1 Rearrange stitches on 3 dpns. Check carefully that stitches are not twisted around a dpn or between dpns before beginning to work in rounds.
2 With a 4th dpn, work all stitches from first dpn. Use that empty dpn to work the stitches from the 2nd dpn. Use that empty dpn to work the stitches from the 3rd dpn—one round completed.

Place a marker between first and second stitch of first needle to mark beginning of round. Notice that you work with only 2 dpns at a time. As you work the first few rounds, be careful that the stitches do not twist between the needles.