

Free Pattern of the Month – October 2003

Y.S.A. Socks

(Yarn Shortage Anxiety socks)

Since I had only one ball of a great hand-dyed yarn and really wanted another pair of socks, these were knit with short cuffs and with one eye always on the rapidly disappearing ball of yarn



Yarn: Araucania Nature Wool 100% wool, hand dyed. This yarn is made in Chile and distributed by KFI here in the States. The color is 20 Ve 0320.

Gauge: 6 ½ sts and 9 rows per inch on a US #2 needle. These socks are thinner than I make most of my winter socks, but still quite cozy and they fit in most of my shoes.

Needles: I prefer a wood or bamboo needle to knit socks. They are warmer to my always-cold hands, and they "give" a little as I knit, making them more comfortable.

These instructions assume that you are familiar with DPN needles and that you know how to knit and purl. I place the stitches on four needles and knit with the fifth.

Cast-on 60 stitches and join in the round, being careful not to twist. I like to arrange the stitches on the needles so that the beginning of each needle starts with a Purl stitch. Having a Purl stitch at the beginning seems to help eliminate the "ladders" that can form where the needles come together.

Knit 15 rounds of Knit 2, Purl 2 ribbing and then work 5 rounds plain - this forms the cuff. I ended up with some yarn left over, so you may want to make each sock an inch or so longer.



Heel -

This sock has a Dutch heel worked in heel stitch on half the stitches - 30.

Row one - Slip 1 stitch, Knit 1 stitch all the way across - 30 stitches.

Row 2 - Slip the first stitch and Purl all the way back - 30 stitches.

By slipping the first stitch of each row, you will have a series of loops on each side of the heel flap, which makes it easier to pick up stitches for the gusset.

Repeat these two rows 25 times, or about 2.5 - 3". It will depend on how deep you need your heel flap. Measure from your anklebone to the floor to get a rough idea. The only sure way to know is to knit a sock and try it on.

Heel turn -

Row one - Slip the first stitch, Knit 19, Knit 2 together, turn.

Row two - Slip the first stitch, Purl 10, Purl 2 together, turn.

Row three - Slip the first stitch, Knit 10, Knit 2 together, turn.

Repeat rows two and three until there are 10 stitches left on the needle. You will not be knitting every stitch on each row - you will be creating short rows that will form a cup that will follow the shape of your heel.

End on a RS row. With a crochet hook, pick up one stitch in each of the slipped stitches on the sides of the heel flap. The number will vary, and that's okay. It's always good to "fake it" and pick up a couple of extra stitches at the beginning and end of the heel flap - this will help eliminate any holes.

Now for the gusset decreases: Knit one round even - this will even out the picked-up stitches and make the decreases easier to perform - picked-up stitches sometimes are tight and don't like to be knit together.

Put the stitches on four needles again: The picked-up stitches on the left side of the gusset on needle 1, the instep stitches on needle 2, the picked-up stitches on the right side of the gusset on needle 3, and the heel stitches on needle 4.

Next round:

Knit to the 3rd stitch from the end, Knit 2 together, Knit the last stitch on needle 1.

Knit the instep stitches even.

Knit 1, Knit 2 together, knit to the end of needle 3.

Knit even across needle 4 to the end.

Next round: Knit even.

You can repeat these two rounds until you reach 60 stitches, alternating a decrease round with an even round.



After the gusset decreases are done, work the foot of the sock even until you're 2 ½" shorter than you need and its time for the wedge toe. I put the stitches on three needles at this point - the stitches on the bottom of the foot divided between needles 1 and 3 and the instep stitches on needle 2.

Knit until 3 stitches from the end of needle 1, Knit 2 together, Knit 1.

Knit 1, Knit 2 together, Knit until 3 stitches from the end of the needle, Knit 2 together, Knit 1 on needle 2.

Knit 1, Knit 2 together, Knit to the end of needle 3.

Next round - Knit even around.

Repeat these two rounds 7 times - 32 stitches remain.

Then work the next four rounds as decrease rounds - 16 stitches remain.

Knit across needle 1. Put the stitches from needle 1 and 3 onto one needle. Graft the two together, run in all the loose ends on the inside of the sock, and you're done! I worked a 3-needle bind off on this pair and I like it just fine.

There are many sites on the web for the Kitchner stitch, and every good knitting reference has instruction and pictures, so I won't include them here.

Send me a picture, and I may post it on my web site - with credit to you, of course.

Enjoy!

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