

Africa's Socks

By Gina Doherty

Recently I decided that a particular friend deserved a pair of socks. This friend had done a very amazing thing. He read my entire blog, all the archives, all 150 posts. Whilst I do believe this speaks of extreme boredom, it is still an impressive act of persistence worthy of socks. When I couldn't find a pattern I liked for the yarn I wanted to use, I made one up. It is a very basic pattern and I've tried to make it one that even a first time sock-knitter could follow.



Needles: 3mm dpn

Yarn: sample knit in Austermann Step, "Grass"
use any fingering weight sock yarn

Cast-on 64 stitches, loosely. Join to knit in the round being careful not to twist stitches. If using 4 dpns, it is best to divide the stitches as follows: needle 1- 20, needle 2 – 24, needle 3 – 20. Mark beginning of round. Knit in K1, P1 rib for 1" .



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Begin Rib Pattern.

Row 1: K3, P1 repeat across round

Row 2: P1, K1, P2 repeat across round

Continue until leg measures 7.5" or desired length.

Knit 5 rounds in plain stockinette.

Begin Slipped Stitch Heel.

Slip 12 stitches from needle 2 onto needle 1 (32 stitches). You may place the remaining 32 stitches on a piece of scrap yarn to hold them for the instep if you wish. Sometimes this can help to reduce the tendency for a hole to form at the top of the gusset.

Row 1: Slip 1, Knit 1

Row 2: Slip first stitch purlwise, purl to end

Repeat rows 1 and 2 for a total of 36 rows.

Turn heel:

Begin with right side facing

Row 1: k22, k2tog, k1 TURN WORK (there is no need to wrap stitches)

Row 2: p14, p2tog, p1 TURN WORK

You should have 7 unworked stitches on each side.

Row 3: k15, k2tog, k1 TURN

Row 4: p16, p2tog, p1 TURN (5 left on each side)

Row 5: k17, k2tog, k1 TURN

Row 6: p18, p2tog, p1 TURN (3 left on each side)

Row 7: k19, k2tog, k1 TURN

Row 8: p20, p2tog, p1 TURN (1 left on each side)

Row 9: k21, k2tog, TURN

Row 10: p21, p2tog, purl to end of row. (22 stitches on needle)

Row 11: knit 22

Do Not Turn. You should have 22 heel stitches.

Pick up for gusset:

With right side facing, pick up and knit 18 stitches.

Knit across held instep stitches.

Pick up and knit 18 stitches on remaining edge of heel flap.

You should have 90 stitches.

Redistribute your stitches. Needle 1, centre of heel to end of gusset, 29 stitches

Needle 2: instep, 32 stitches

Needle 3: start of gusset to centre of heel, 29 stitches

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Begin gusset shaping:

Round 1: needle 1 – knit to last 3 stitches, ssk, k1
 Needle 2 – knit across
 Needle 3 – k1, k2tog, knit to end

Round 2: Knit all

Repeat these two rounds until you have 64 stitches again. (16-32-16)

Continue in stockinette until the length of the foot measured from the back of the heel is 1.5" shorter than the desired length.

Begin toe shaping:

This is very similar to the gusset shaping except that this time you will work decreases on all needles.

Round 1: needle 1 – k to last 3 stitches, ssk, k1
 Needle 2 – k1, k2tog, k to last 3 stitches, ssk, k1
 Needle 3 – k1, k2tog, k to end

Round 2: Knit all

Continue these rounds until you have 28 stitches remaining (7-14-7). Using needle 3, knit across needle 1 (14-14).

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Graft the toe:

Kitchener stitching is easy but it does take a little practice. I still use the little reminder note in the “knitting basics” section of the magazine on the top of the pile just to get me started. Excellent instructions are also available online. Try <http://www.knittingatnoon.com/kitchenerst.html> or <http://www.knitty.com/issuesummer04/FEATtheresasum04.html>



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