

Toe-Up Socks in a Hurry

Designed by Amy M. Swenson for Make One Yarn Studio

Practice your short-row toe-up techniques on worsted weight yarn, knitting a mini sock. Then, move to traditional sock-weight yarn and “toothpick” needles to make a “real” sock!



Supplies for Mini Sock:

1 set 3.5mm - 4.5mm dpns
Approx. 25m worsted-weight yarn
1m scrap yarn in a contrasting color

Supplies for Real Sock:

1 set 2.5mm - 3mm dpns
Approx 320m sock-weight yarn
1 m scrap yarn in a contrasting color

Gauge for Real Sock:

30 sts to 4 inches in stockinette stitch

Abbreviations & Techniques:

K2tog: Knit two sts together.

P2tog: Purl two sts together.

P3tog: Purl three sts together.

K2tog TBL: Knit two sts together through the back loops.

K3tog TBL: Knit three sts together through the back loops.

W&T: Wrap and Turn

On the knit side, bring yarn to the front as if to purl the next stitch. Slip the next stitch from the left to the right needle. Turn the work so the purl side is facing and bring the yarn back to the front, effectively wrapping the yarn around the slipped stitch. Slip the wrapped stitch back to the right needle.

On the purl side, bring yarn to the back as if to knit the next stitch. Slip the next stitch from the left to the right needle. Turn the work so the knit side is facing and bring the yarn back to the back of the work, effectively wrapping the yarn around the slipped stitch. Slip the wrapped stitch back to the right needle.

Instructions:

Provisional Cast On:

First, hold one dpn in your right hand and make a slip knot with the working yarn. Next, hold scrap yarn parallel to needle, maintaining tension with both hands. Then, holding the yarn you wish to use for your sock over your left index finger, cast on as follows:

1. Swoop needle under scrap yarn and behind working yarn. Pull working yarn under scrap yarn and up.
2. With needle over scrap yarn, place behind working yarn and pull forward.

Repeat last two steps until **15 (30)** sts are on the needle. Tie both ends of scrap yarn together to make holder for provisionally cast on stitches.

Short Row Toe:

The idea with short row toes is that on each row, you work 1 fewer stitch without actually decreasing out any stitches. By using the Wrap & Turn technique described above, you will leave stitches on the needles, unworked until you get to the tip of the toe. At that point, you'll start picking up all the slipped and wrapped stitches and working 1 more stitch each row until you're back with the right number of "live" stitches.

Row 1: Knit to last st, W&T. 1 st wrapped.

Row 2: Purl to last st, W&T. 2 sts wrapped.

Row 3: Knit to the stitch before the previously wrapped stitch, W&T. 2 sts wrapped on left side, 1 st wrapped on right side.

Row 4: Purl to the stitch before the previously wrapped stitch, W&T. 2 sts wrapped on each side of work.

Repeat rows 3 and 4 until you have **5(9)** wrapped stitches on each side and **5(12)** “live” stitches in the middle. You’ll now begin the second half of the toe.

Row 1: Knit to the first wrapped stitch. Slip the stitch to the right needle to move it out of the way. Use the tip of your left needle to pick up the wrap. Move the slipped stitch back to the left needle and k2tog. (You’re knitting the wrap together with the slipped stitch). W&T.

Row 2: Purl to the first wrapped stitch. Slip the stitch to the right needle to move it out of the way. Use the tip of your left needle to pick up the wrap. Move the slipped stitch back to the left needle and p2tog tbl. (You’re purling the wrap with the slipped stitch, through the back loops). W&T.

Row 3: Knit to the first wrapped stitch. Slip the stitch to the right needle. Use the tip of your left needle to pick up BOTH wraps. Move the slipped stitch back to the left needle and K3tog. W&T.

Row 4: Purl to the first wrapped stitch. Slip the stitch to the right needle. Use the tip of your left needle to pick up BOTH wraps. Move the slipped stitch back to the left needle and P3tog tbl. W&T.

Repeat rows 3 and 4 of the second half of the toe until all stitches have been unwrapped and are again live on the needles. On your last two rows you’ll only pick up the wraps and work with the sl st. You won’t need to W&T.

Now, with a second pair of dpns, remove sts from scrap yarn and divide equally over both needles. You should have **30(60)** stitches at this point. Divide equally over your 4 double pointed needles. Please do make sure to keep the sets of 15(30) separate for the top and bottom of the foot. Otherwise, your heel will surely point in the wrong direction!

The Foot

You should now be set up to knit in the round. Decide which two needles are the top and which two are the bottom of the work. Knit around all sts.

Continue in this rib pattern as established until sock is **1(7.5)** inches from tip of toe to needle. *For the real sock, this is approximately 1.5 inches shorter than the length of the bottom of your foot from toe to heel.*

The Heel

Slide the next **15(30)** knit stitches onto a single dpn. You’ll now work the heel over just these stitches. So, pretend the 25 rib stitches no longer exist.

Work the heel exactly as for the toe, ending having just completed the final purl row.

Knit across the first **15(30)** sts, pick up 2 or 3 sts in the corner gap. Work across the next two needles. Pick up 2 or 3 sts in the next corner gap, knit across all heel stitches. You’ll now have 4 or 6 extra sts. Over the next few rounds, decrease these sts until only 30(60) remain.

The Ankle

Continue in rounds until sock is at least 1 inch shorter than desired height. Switch to K1 P1 rib. Continue for 1 inch, or as desired. Cast off in rib.



Close-up of short row heel.

HELPFUL HINTS:

If you find yourself getting lost in the short row section, remember that after finishing a WS (purl) row, you’ll have the same number of wrapped stitches on each side of the needle. If you don’t, something went wrong and you should probably rip back.

Use a lifeline when beginning the heel! With spare yarn and a sewing needle, thread the yarn through all the stitches just before beginning the heel. Leave the thread in place. If you have to rip back, you’ll be able to simply remove the needles and rip back to the lifeline without risking any dropped stitches.

It’s easy to add in a stitch pattern across the top of the foot and continuing around the entire ankle. After finishing the toe, decide which pair of needles will be on the top of the foot, and work the pattern across these. Continue to knit all sts as usual for the bottom of the foot. After finishing the heel, work the stitch pattern all around the ankle and cuff.