

Toe-Up Socks on 2 Circulars

Sizing

One of the nice things about toe-up socks is you can try them on as you go, and adjust as necessary. For a nice snug sock, I suggest measuring around the ball of the foot and subtracting 10%.

Example

Your foot measurement: 8.5 inches

$$8.5 * .9 = 7.65$$

(multiplying by .9 is the same as subtracting 10%)

So, for an 8.5 inch foot, your sock should measure approximately 7.65 inches.

Gauge

Another nice thing about toe-up is that you don't have to do a gauge swatch. That doesn't mean you don't need to care about gauge though.

You want to make sure your gauge is tight enough for socks. I always go as tight as or slightly tighter than the stated gauge for a yarn. A tighter gauge is more comfortable to wear (the purl bumps don't stretch out and dig into your foot) and they'll last longer as well.

How Many Stitches?

You should know the approximate gauge you want to get with your yarn. Let's say it's 7 stitches per inch (SPI).

Calculate

Multiply the size you want your sock to be (7.65 inches in our example) by the SPI (7).

$$7.65 * 7 = 53.55$$

You'll need to round up or down to come up with a good number.

For beginners, I'd suggest getting to a multiple of 2 or 4 (giving you several basic ribbing options).

So, in our example we could choose 52 (multiple of 4) or 54 (multiple of 2). I love K3 P1 ribbing for socks, so let's go with 52 – a multiple of 4.

Casting On

You'll be casting on one half the total stitches. For our example that would be 26.

That's 26 total stitches – 13 stitches on each needle.

Now, 13 stitches is not a good number to use. Why? On each needle we increase 2 stitches per row. If our goal is to get 26 stitches per needle (52 total) we'd need to start with an even number of stitches. I suggest increasing the case on by 1 stitch per needle. If we're casting on 14 stitches per needle, we need to CO 28 stitches in total.

Cast on 28 stitches using a Figure 8 cast on. There's a good tutorial for a figure 8 cast on here <http://www.knitty.com/ISSUEwinter02/FEATtiptoptoes.html>.

After you cast on your stitches, knit a single plain row. Remember, the stitches may be a little loose but that's OK. You can always go back later and make it tighter.

Toe Increases

Row 1: k1, kfb, knit until 2 sts rem on the needle, kfb, k1. Do the same on needle 2.

Calculate Follow Row 1 until 85% of the stitches are on your needles. In our case that's
 $52 * .85 = 44$
This means you should follow Row 1 until you have 22 stitches on each needle.

Once you have 44 stitches on your needles (22 per needle) you'll want to increase more slowly. This will give the toe a nice rounded shape.

To do this, add Row 2 into the repeat as well.

Row 2: k all sts on both needles (no increases)

Continue knitting rows 1 and 2 until you have 52 stitches total (26 stitches per needle).

Foot

Knit evenly in st st until the sock measures approximately 1.5 inches less than the desired length. Note: for a child's sock knit to within 1 inch, and for a baby sock, knit to within $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch.

Heel

The heel is worked on one needle – half the stitches of the entire sock. The second needle will not be touched while working the heel. You can leave it dangling in the back, or if it is bothersome, you can thread through some waste yarn so you're not contending with 2 circulars while doing the short rows.

Technique **Wrap & Turn (w&t)**
On a knit row: Slip the next stitch purlwise from the left needle to the right needle. Move working yarn to front as if to purl (move the yarn *between* the needles – not over it – so you do not make a yarn over). Slip the stitch back to the left needle. Turn work to begin purling.
On a purl row: Slip the next stitch purlwise from the left needle to the right needle. Move working yarn to the back as if to knit (move the yarn *between* the needles – not over it – so you do not make a yarn over). Slip the stitch back to the left needle. Turn work to begin knitting.

Row 1: Knit until there is 1 stitch remaining on the left needle, w&t.

Row 2: Purl until there is 1 stitch remaining on the left needle, w&t.

Subsequent rows: Continue in the same manner as above, leaving one more stitch on the left needle for each set of rows. In other words, for Rows 3 and 4 you would knit or purl until there were 2 stitches on

the left needle. For Rows 5 and 6, you would knit or purl until there were 3 stitches on the left needle, and so on.

Continue in this manner until you have approximately 1 inch of stitches left unworked and unwrapped in the center. For our example of 7 stitches per inch you'll work until you've left 8 or 6 stitches unworked. I recommend rounding up to 8 stitches.

Now you'll start picking up your wraps and working the second half of the heel.

Technique **Picking up Wraps**

On a knit row: Pickup the wrap(s) by inserting your needle knitwise – first into the wrap(s) and then into the stitch that is wrapped. Knit the wrap(s) and stitch as if it is one stitch.

On a purl row: Pickup the wrap(s) by inserting your needle purlwise into the wrap and placing the wrap(s) on your lefthand needle. Purl the wrap(s) and the stitch as if it is one.

Row 1: Knit across the live stitches to the first wrapped stitch. Pickup wrap, then w&t next stitch (you will be adding a second wrap to this stitch).

Row 2: Purl across the live stitches to the first wrapped stitch. Pickup wrap, then w&t next stitch (you will be adding a second wrap to this stitch).

Continue in this manner, knitting to the next wrapped stitch in each row (you will be working one extra stitch per row). Please note on subsequent rows you will need to pickup both wraps at once.

Once you are done and have picked up all stitches, continue knitting in st st in the round. If there is a small gap where the needles join, you may want to pickup a stitch in between the needles and knit it together with a stitch at the beginning or ending of a row.

Leg

Once you've knit a few rounds in st st you can start ribbing. I like k3 p1 ribbing for socks. It's decorative and has good stretch. However, many different ribs and stitch patterns can be used with great success in socks.

Fit Tip

If you have wide legs, you can increase a few stitches now to accommodate your leg and make for a more comfortable fit.

Knit the leg in your ribbing of choice until it is the length you want it to be. The nice thing about toe-up is you can try it on until it's the length you like. You can even knit until you're just about out of yarn without worry.

Bind Off

Bind off using a stretchy bind off. I use Elizabeth Zimmerman's **Stretchy Bind Off**.

Cut the working yarn 4 times the width of the sock. Remember to stretch the ribbing when estimating its length. Thread the yarn through a darning needle.

Step 1: Sew through the 1st 2 stitches on the needle as if to purl and leave them on the needle.

Step 2: Sew through the 1st stitch on the needle (yes, this is one of the stitches you went through in step 1) and drop the stitch. One stitch is bound off.

Repeat steps 1 and 2 until you run out of stitches. Weave in ends.