



Basic Sock Tutorial

By
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Welcome to the world of knitting socks! If you are reading this short tutorial on sock loom knitting, it means that you are ready to embark in one of the most gratifying projects of your life! A pair of hand knit socks means only one thing—love for the recipient. Hundreds of hours can go into a pair of socks, especially if you are knitting a pair of socks for a size 14 shoe! Having said the above, please do not get discouraged as you see the time tick away and your knitting barely grows. Socks are time consuming, be sure to plan plenty of time for this specific project. How much time? An average pair, in women's size, can take approximately 40 hours to knit.

Sock Knitting Basics

Yarn: Choose a yarn that has natural fibers. Natural fibers have inherent characteristics that will allow the item to be more “breathable” and “elastic”. What does this mean? It means that your feet won't get as sweaty as the yarn will allow the air to pass through. Elasticity is especially nice as you want your socks to go “mold” to the wearers leg/foot. The yarn will stretch while the person is wearing it and “hug” their foot/leg. Once the wearer removes the sock, the sock will go back to its original shape. Natural fibers such as wool also provides the wearer with warmth and because it is a natural fiber it can also keep moisture out.

Now, what thickness of yarn do you need? Well that all depends on the type of sock you want to make and the loom you will be using.

Fingering weight yarn is suggested for socks worked on an Extra Fine Gauge Sock loom. Sport weight yarn is suggested for socks worked on the Fine Gauge sock looms, sometimes even the Small Gauge looms could work. Double knitting weight (DK) is suggested for small gauge knitting looms. Worsted weight yarn is suggest for regular gauge knitting looms.

Loom: Here is where you have to decide what type of socks you would like. Do you want slipper style socks, or do you want socks that you can wear with everyday shoes, or with heavy boots while out hiking? Each one of these will require a different loom. If you want chunky, slipper socks, then a regular gauge loom will do great. If you want everyday-wear type socks, then you will need an extra fine gauge sock loom, this sock loom will provide you with the tiniest stitches, therefore you will need to use the thinnest yarns. If your choice is to make thick, woolen socks for hiking, then you will want something in the small gauge range.

Stitches: What type of stitches can you use on socks? In this area, the sky is the limit! You can work socks in any stitch imaginable. Combinations of knits and purls, cables, lace, colorwork, everything has a green light when it comes to sock making. However, it is highly suggested to keep the sole portion in stockinette (all knit stitches). A stockinette sole will provide the wearer with the most comfortable feel under their foot. Remember to keep the characteristics of the stitches in mind when designing the top of your sock. Cables tend to make the item smaller, “shrink” it in width. Lace tends to make the item “bigger” in width. A combination of knits and purls tend to give it a nice flat “true” width”.

How do you begin to work a sock? Well, grab a sock that you have around, inspect it. If you look at it closely, you will see that a sock is basically a long tube. It has a little “cup” for the heel

to fit in, and then it is tapered for more comfort around the toe area. If you have made a hat, you can make a sock. Remember, it is just a very long hat, albeit smaller in circumference.

Socks are worked with a negative ease. As you knit your socks, they will appear smaller, that is okay. You want the sock to fit snugly. How much snugly, anywhere from 10-20% smaller than the wearers' size. The chars provided are taking 10% negative ease into consideration, if you want them smaller, please adjust the numbers accordingly.

In this tutorial, we will work a sock from the Top Down—meaning from the cuff to the toe. We will do a basic sock, basically what we know as a Tube Sock. The tube sock will have no shaping at all. The toe area will be gathered just like the top of a hat.

Practice Tube Sock

We will make a tube sock for a Man, size 8 shoe. We are going to make him a nice pair of thick hiking socks with worsted weight yarn.

First thing you need to do is work a swatch: What is a swatch? A swatch is a small piece of knitted fabric worked specifically with one intention: to find the gauge. Gauge is the number of stitches and number per rows you get within an 1 inch of work. Typically, gauge is measured over 4 inches.

Work the swatch: Work a small square, piece of knitted fabric in the stitch you plan to use, with the yarn you want to use, with the loom you want to use. The square should be at the minimum a 6 x 6 inch square.

Find the gauge: Lay the item on a flat surface, get a ruler and measure the number of stitches you get in 2 inches of work, then the number of rows you get in 2 inches of work. Count all the stitches, 1/2 stitches, 1/4 stitches, all of it counts and will make a difference.

Now that you have your gauge, you are ready for the next steps:

Locate the following information on the tables below:

Foot circumference: _____

Leg length: _____

Foot length: _____

Knitting loom gauge: _____

Knitted gauge: _____

How many pegs #: _____

Did you find it? No looking ahead—try to find it on your own.

Here is the information filled in:

Foot circumference: 8.75

Leg length: 9.25

Foot length: 10

Knitting loom gauge: RG

Knitted gauge: 10

How many pegs #: 40

How did I find the information?

For the foot circumference, simply go to the Men chart and find the shoe size, then in the following columns you will find the “Leg Length” and the “Foot Length”. The Knitting Loom Gauge came from the table “Suggested Amount of Yarn”. The How many pegs # came from the table “Suggested Number of Pegs for Sock. The last one is probably the most tricky of them all to assess. You will need the foot circumference for this one, as well as the gauge you received with your yarn and the loom. Based on the number you received in your gauge, you will locate the Foot Ball Circumference, and in the column on the right locate the number of pegs suggested for that size of foot circumference. In our example, the foot circumference for a shoe size 8 is an 8.75. My knitted gauge was 20 stitches at 4 inches. (See blue highlighted row in the chart below), the foot circumference falls between the 8 and 9.

Suggested Number of Pegs for Sock (according to gauge)		
Gauge (4 inches)	Foot Ball Circumference	Suggested Number of Pegs
36	6 (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)	48(56, 64, 72, 82, 90, 98)
32	6 (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)	44(50, 58, 64, 72, 80, 86)
28	6 (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)	38(44, 50, 56, 64, 70, 76)
24	6 (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)	32(38, 44, 48, 54, 60, 64)
20	6 (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)	28(32, 36, 40, 46, 50, 54)
16	6 (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)	22(26, 28, 32, 36, 40, 44)
12	6 (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)	16(,18, 22, 24, 28, 30, 32)

In this example, I have 3 choices: choice 1: choose 8, which will give me a peg number of 36; choice 2: choose 9, which will give me a peg number of 40; choice 3: go between the two numbers, 8 and 9, and thus end up with a number between 36 and 40, therefore 38. I am going to choose option 2.

I am now ready to begin my sock:

I will use a regular gauge sock loom. Set it up at 40 pegs. Use worsted weight yarn. I will make the leg length 9.25 inches long, and then the foot 10 inches long.

Instructions for Tube Sock

Using MC, on a regular gauge loom, cast on 40 stitches, join to work in the round.

Round 1-12: *k2, p2; rep from * to the end of round.

Round 12-15: k to the end of round.

Round 16-20: Join CC, k to the end of round.

Round 21-22: Pick up MC, k to the end of round.

Round 23-26: Pick up CC, k to the end of round. Cut CC, leaving 6 inch yarn tail.

Next rounds: Pick up MC, knit until item measures 19.25 inches from cast on edge.

Bind off with the gather method.

K=knit stitch

P=purl stitch

MC=Main color

CC=Contrasting color

Thank you for joining me for this tutorial into loom knitting a Basic Sock. The tables provided will help you on your journey once you explore the typical short-row heel sock.

If you have any questions, please contact me at purlingsprite@gmail.com. This tutorial was prepared for LoomKnit.com.

The following tables will help you in your journey. Find table, that fits your needs and follow the suggested numbers.

Suggested Number of Pegs for Sock (according to gauge)		
Gauge (2 inches)	Foot Ball Circumference	Suggested Number of Pegs
36	6 (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)	48(56, 64, 72, 82, 90, 98)
32	6 (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)	44(50, 58, 64, 72, 80, 86)
28	6 (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)	38(44, 50, 56, 64, 70, 76)
24	6 (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)	32(38, 44, 48, 54, 60, 64)
20	6 (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)	28(32, 36, 40, 46, 50, 54)
16	6 (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)	22(26, 28, 32, 36, 40, 44)
12	6 (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)	16(,18, 22, 24, 28, 30, 32)

Suggested Amount of Yarn					
	Loom Gauge	Toddler	Child	Women	Men
Fingering	EFG	270	350	450	550
Sport	FG	210	280	380	450
DK	SG	200	250	350	400
Worsted	SG & RG	180	225	320	350

Children			
Shoe Size	Foot Circumference (inches)	Foot Length (inches)	Leg Length (inches)
4	5	4.25	4
5	5.25	4.75	4.5
6	5.5	5	4.75
7	5.75	5.25	5
8	6	5.5	5.25
9	6.25	6	5.5
10	6.5	6.5	5.75
11	6.75	6.75	6.75
12	7	7	7
13	7.25	7.5	7.5

Women			
Shoe Size	Foot Circumference (inches)	Foot Length (inches)	Leg Length (inches)
5	7.5	8.75	8
6	7.75	9	8.25
7	8.25	9.25	8.5
8	8.5	9.75	9
9	8.75	10	9.25
10	9	10.25	9.5
11	9.25	10.75	9.75
12	9.5	11	10.25

Men			
Shoe Size	Foot Circumference (inches)	Foot Length (inches)	Leg Length (inches)
6	8.25	9.5	8.75
7	8.5	9.75	9
8	8.75	10	9.25
9	9.25	10.25	9.5
10	9.5	10.75	9.75
11	9.75	11	10
12	10	11.25	10.25
13	10.25	11.75	10.75
14	10.5	12	11