



"Plain Jane" Sock Class

with [Gina House](#)

How to Make the Class More Enjoyable:

1. Please arrive 5-10 minutes early so you will have time to get your supplies/yarn assembled and take a trip to the ladies room if necessary.
2. Remember to bring all necessary supplies to class - sock yarn, sock needles of choice, pattern, pen/pencil, small notebook, stitch markers, scissors, tapestry needle and water...if needed.
3. I recommend making a copy of your sock pattern so that you can scribble notes and make marks on the pattern itself as you knit along. This truly helps when knitting the second sock.
4. Try your best to do the "homework" given at the end of each class. Each class is only a short period of time and I would like to be able to cover each of the 4 basic elements of knitting socks per class. If you are not able to finish part of the sock indicated before the next week, you may feel overwhelmed or confused in the next class. I completely understand that time sometimes gets the best of us with work and family, but if you can try your best, you'll be glad you did!
5. Please feel free to email me during the week between classes if you are in dire need of sock knitting help. My email is gina.house@comcast.net. Make sure to leave me your name, email, phone number (if necessary) and specific question(s) about what you're having trouble with.

I think we'll have a wonderful time knitting socks and I hope you will end up loving it as much as I do! Thanks! Gina ;)

Recommended SOCK BOOKS:

1. **Getting Started Knitting Socks** by Ann Budd - a wonderful introduction to sock knitting with simple, easy to follow instructions. Highly recommended!
2. **The Twisted Sisters Sock Workbook** by Lynn Vogel - a truly creative workbook giving instructions on how to knit many types of socks, including directions on how to dye and spin your own sock yarn. One of my favorites!
3. **Socks Soar on Two Circulars** by Cat Bordhi - my second sock book that I loved immediately. Beautiful sock patterns and a very detailed book showing you how to knit socks using two 24" circular needles instead of dpns.
4. **New Pathways for Sock Knitters** by Cat Bordhi - my current favorite sock book which will dazzle you with the amazing and unique new sock architectures for knitting/creating socks. Includes very detailed instructions, mini sample socks to knit and has directions for dpns, 2 Circs and Magic Loop knitting.
5. **The Magic Loop** by Bev Galaskas - the ultimate guide on knitting socks using only one 32-40" circular needle. Includes two patterns to try and simple-to-understand instructions.

Recommended SOCK YARNS:

These sock yarns come in either fingering (f), sport (s) or dk weight (dk)

1. **Sereknity "Sock Options"** (www.sereknity.com) - (f, s)
2. **Mountain Colors "Bearfoot"** (www.mountaincolors.com) - (s, dk)
3. **Regia Sock Yarn** - (f, s, dk)
4. **CherryTreeHill Supersocke (f)/SockitToMe(s)** (www.cherryarn.com)
5. **Madeline Tosh Superwash Merino** - (f)
6. **Blue Moon Fiber Arts "Socks that Rock"** (www.bluemoonfiberarts.com) - (f, s, dk, and also worsted)

Sock Class 1:

Knitting the Cuff

Topics

- Three types of cuff/leg styles
- Getting comfortable with your needles
- Getting your gauge
- How to cast on for your sock

Cuff/Leg Styles

*There are three types of cuff styles that are used most often. That is not to say that you cannot use any other (or even create your own!), but these are the easiest and most comfortable to wear. Find the one that is right for you and start knitting!

1. **1x1 Rib**– This cuff is made by knitting one stitch and purling one stitch all the way around your sock. You will need to cast on an **even** number of stitches and it is written like this: (k1, p1). This ribbing has a “finer” look and is nicely snug on the leg.

2. **2x2 Rib**– This cuff is made by knitting two stitches and purling two stitches all the way around your sock. You will need to cast on a **multiple of 4 stitches** and it is written like this: (k2, p2). This ribbing is more flexible and comfortable for all types of legs.

3. **Combination of ribbing and stockinette**– This cuff is made with a combination of 1-2” of ribbing (your choice) and then the rest of the leg in stockinette (knit every row in the round). This combination gives you the best of both worlds. Flexibility, comfort and also the stockinette shows off the yarn much better than the ribbing does, so it’s a prettier sock.

Getting Comfortable with Your Needles

*It is important to be comfortable with your knitting needles. If you are unhappy knitting then, not only will your sock be a burden to knit, but it will not be as pretty and enjoyable as it could be if you were knitting

happily away at it. There are three types of needles that you can use for sock knitting...that is, excluding straight needles for flat sock knitting.

1. DPNS - these needles come in a variety of materials: wood, bamboo, metal, casein, and metal alloy. You usually use 4-5 needles for knitting socks in the round. I recommend the Crystal Palace bamboo, Clover Bamboo, Brittany Birch or Pony Plastic.

2. 2 Circs - these needles also come in either wood, bamboo or metal. You would use 2 24" circs for knitting socks. I recommend the Addi Turbos, Addi Naturals, Knit Picks Classic Circulars or Harmony Circulars. These types have the nicest and most flexible cords for sock knitting.

3. Magic Loop - these needles are the same as the 2 Circs, except you would only need 1 32-40" circ for knitting socks. I recommend the same brand needles as above.

Good and Bad:

*There are several good and bad points for each type of needle. Here are the basic arguments:

-**DPNS** are **good** because they are inexpensive, can be used for many other knitted items besides socks (hats, mittens, icord, etc.) and are small and portable. They are **"bad"** because the needles are easily lost or broken and, when traveling with dpns, the stitches frequently fall off the needle ends, which is frustrating.

-**2CIRCS** are **good** because there is less complication with moving needles compared to the ML method and you can use the needles for other knitted items, like sweaters, sleeves, scarves, etc. They are also used for smaller things such as hats, mittens, icord, etc. They are **"bad"** because you have to buy 2 sets of needles instead of one and the ends you are not using dangle distractedly while knitting.

-**MAGIC LOOP** is **good** because you only have to buy one needle. You can also use the ML method for small things like sleeve cuffs, hat tops, mittens and scarves. They are **"bad"** because the ML method takes a while to get used to and can be a bit confusing. There is a greater chance of pulling out the "wrong" side and losing all your stitches.

Try all three and see which one is RIGHT for you!

Getting Your GAUGE!

*Gauge is very important for socks. If your gauge is off, your sock will either be too big or too small....and not fun to wear. Wearing socks should be a great joy, so remember to follow these simple instructions:

1. Using the needles and yarn you plan to use for your socks, cast on 20 stitches for dk or sport yarn and 28 for fingering weight.
2. Knit in stockinette (knit one row, purl the next row) until your swatch is SQUARE.
3. Gently take the swatch off your needles and place on a firm, flat surface. Being careful not to stretch, carefully measure your swatch from left to right. Be very accurate.
4. Take the number of stitches you cast on and divide by your swatch measurement. This is your stitches/inch number...GAUGE!

For example,

I'm using Sereknity Sock Options fingering and size 1 needles. I cast on 28 stitches and knit a square in stockinette. I carefully take the swatch off the needles and measure. I get a measurement of 4 inches. So, I divide $28/4$ and I get a GAUGE of 7 stitches per inch! Now, YOU try!

Once you have gotten your gauge, you can look on your [sock pattern chart](#) for the specific directions on how many stitches to cast on for your size foot. Generally, 7 stitches/inch is fingering, 6 stitches is sport and 5.5/5 stitches is dk, 4.5/4 is worsted.

Did you know that the measurement of the length of your foot (from back of heel to the tip of the big toe) is almost exactly the measurement of the circumference of your foot at the widest section (ball)?

Right now is a good time to think about how TALL you want your cuff/leg to be. [Take a measuring tape and measure from the very top off where you'd like your sock to be on your leg to the ankle bone.](#) Be accurate. Use this as your cuff/leg length.

How To Cast On For Socks

*Casting on for socks is usually the most difficult part of the knitting process and the least fun. Once you get past this part, you're free! And you will be so happy that you spent the time being a bit frustrated at first. Don't worry...you'll get it!

DPNS- Using only one dpn, cast on necessary stitches. Divide equally between the other 2 or 3 needles. Being VERY careful not to twist, join the round by switching the last stitch for the first stitch. (I will show this in class) Place a marker to note beginning of the round.

2CIRCS- Using only one circular, cast on necessary stitches. Using the other circular, carefully transfer HALF the stitches (purlwise) from the first needle to the second. Being VERY careful not to twist, join the round by switching the last stitch for the first stitch.

MAGICLOOP- Using the one circular needle, cast on necessary stitches. Count out HALF the stitches and mark that place with your fingers. Holding firmly on each needle tip with one hand, gently pull the cord out into a LOOP between the two halves of the stitches with your other hand. Being VERY careful not to twist, join the round by switching the last stitch for the first stitch.

You will need to start your ribbing on this first round. It will seem very "loose" and "wiggly" and be a bit uncomfortable, but once you get past this one round, all the others will be a snap! Continue your ribbing of choice (1x1, 2x2, etc.) for at least 1-2 inches. Some people like 3 inches or more. It's up to you. Whatever you like better. After your cuff ribbing is done, you can start on the leg. This can either be:

Stockinette- you will start the next round (and all subsequent rounds) with straight knitting and end only when the leg is as long as you like it.

Continued Ribbing- you will continue with your ribbing until the length of leg is as long as you like. You can even go with 1x1 ribbing for a couple of inches and then switch to 2x2 for the leg. Again, it's up to your personal preference.

Homework-for next class, make sure you have your cuff/leg completely done so we can start on the heel flap and turning of the heel. If you are a slow knitter or have little time this coming week, consider making an anklet sock with cuff/leg about 3-4" total.

Sock Class 2:

Heel Flap, Heel and Gusset

Topics

- Heel flap
- Heel turn
- Gusset Decreases

Heel Flap

*The heel flap is the square part of the sock that covers the back of your heel. It is knitted back and forth on two needles (or needle tips), not in the round. The two rows that you follow for the heel flap are:

Starting with the yarn coming from the right side and the right side of the sock facing you,

Row 1: *[Slip 1 stitch purlwise (with yarn in **BACK**), k1], *repeat across row.

Row 2: Slip 1 stitch purlwise (with yarn in **FRONT**), purl across the rest of the stitches on that row.

Repeat rows 1 and 2 until the heel flap is approximately 2-2.5" tall. End with a row 2.

Heel Turn

*Turning the heel seems difficult and confusing at first, but it is actually very simple and fun to do. Once you get the hang of it, you'll be able to breeze through it. *(I am assuming from here on that you cast on 64 stitches to start with fingering weight yarn.)***

Starting with the yarn coming from the right side and the right side of the heel flap facing you,

Row 1: Slip 1 stitch purlwise (with yarn in **BACK**), knit across 17 stitches, k2tog, k1, and turn. (11 stitches on left needle)

Row 2: Slip 1 stitch purlwise (yarn in **FRONT**), purl across 6 stitches, p2tog, p1, turn. (11 stitches on left needle)

Row 3: Slip 1 stitch purlwise (yarn in **BACK**), knit to ONE stitch before the

open "gap" and knit that one stitch together with the stitch on the other side of the "gap" (k2tog) , k1, and turn.

Row 4: Slip 1 stitch purlwise (yarn in FRONT), purl to ONE stitch before the open "gap" and purl that one stitch together with the stitch on the other side of the "gap" (p2tog), p1 and turn.

Continue to repeat rows 3 and 4 until all of the stitches have been worked. If you had used 32 stitches for the heel flap (half of the number of stitches you cast on), you should have 16 stitches left after the heel turn.

Gusset Decreases

*The Gusset decreases come in two parts: picking up stitches along the SIDE of the heel flap on both sides and decreases on those sides, until you arrive at the same number of stitches as you started with for the heel flap. If you cast on 64, you should have 32 on each needle by the end for Magic Loop/2Circs and 32 on instep needle(s)/16 on each heel needle for dpns.

Round 1: Using the same needle that the heel is on, pick up 16 stitches in the "holes" on the side of the heel flap and then 1 or 2 in the "gap" between the heel and instep stitches. Knit across the instep stitches (the stitches on the other needle). Pick up 16 stitches along the other side of the heel flap and 1 or 2 (same number as other side) in the "gap". Arrange stitches so that you have the instep stitches on one side and the heel/heel flap stitches on the other side. It will be tight for a while.

Round 2: Knit across the heel stitches and continue until you come to 3 stitches before the end of the "heel" side...k2tog, k1. Knit across the instep stitches. K1, ssk, and knit to the center of the heel stitches.

Round 3: Knit across all stitches.

Repeat rounds 2 and 3 until you come back to the SAME number of stitches on each side...the instep and heel side.

Homework—for next class, try to have your heel flap, heel turn and gusset finished. If you finish that before the next class, start the foot of your sock. This is just knitting every single round until the the foot part of the sock (measured from the back of the heel to where your needle is) is 1.5–2" less than the length of your foot.

For the heel flap, the number you work on is exactly HALF the number originally cast on. Use the same two rows for creating the flap and end when the flap is 2–2.5" tall. For the heel itself, the number you work across for the knit side is HALF the number on the heel flap + 2, then k2tog, k1. Make note of the number of stitches remaining on the left needle (N) before turning. Turn, slip the first stitch, purl until you have N+3 remaining on the left needle, p2tog, p1. Work the other rows the same as stated above. The final heel stitch count will differ from mine above.

Sock Class 3:

Foot and Toe Decreases

Topics

- Measuring your foot
- Knitting the foot
- Toe Decreasing

Measuring Your Foot

*To get a personalized, nicely fitting sock, measuring the foot in a **MUST**.

- Place a ruler against a flat wall. Stand with the back of your heel flat against the wall, while standing directly on the ruler. The zero end should be touching the wall.

-Look down and find the measurement that is just at the tip of your big toe. This is how long your total sock foot length will be.

Knitting the Foot

*Make sure to measure your sock from the very back of the heel to the current row you are knitting.

-If you usually take a wide width shoe or you like to have the width of your sock a bit roomier, **KNIT ALL ROUNDS** until your sock measures 1.5" less than your foot measurement.

-If you have a normal or narrow foot, you should **KNIT ALL ROUNDS** until your sock measures 2" less than your foot measurement.

Toe Decreases

*You will be doing decreases (k2tog and ssk) on each end of **BOTH** sides of the sock.

Round 1: *k1, ssk, knit to three stitches before end, k2tog, k1...*repeat once more for the other half of the toe stitches.

Round 2: Knit all stitches

Repeat rounds 1 and 2 until there are **20/24 (10/12 stitches on each needle) stitches TOTAL** on the needles. *10 for a narrower toe area, 12 for a med/wide width* (ssk = slip one stitch knitwise, slip another stitch knitwise, place left needle in front of these slipped stitches and knit through the back.)

Homework: Try to finish the foot of the sock and as much of the toe decreases as you can. Also, using size 7 or 8 straight needles and worsted weight yarn, co 20 stitches and knit in stockinette (knit one row, purl the next) for at least 10 rows. Bring this swatch, the needles and yarn to class with a tapestry needle. We'll be using this for the next class. Thanks!

Sock Class 4:

The Kitchener Stitch...dun dun dun

Topics

- The idea of the kitchener stitch
- quick hint guide

The Idea of the Kitchener Stitch

*This process is a bit intimidating to some people and some others never really like it. There are a couple other ways of finishing your toe: one is by knitting your sock from the toe up and the other is to thread the yarn through the remaining stitches on your needle and pull tight, as you would for the top of a hat.

The kitchener stitch has several advantages:

- 1. If done correctly, it leaves a smooth, perfect finish to your toe and the stitches are indistinguishable to the others knit. Making a beautiful sock.*
- 2. This stitch can be done, not only for toes, but also for shoulders, bottoms of bags and other places of knitting where two pieces need to fit together nicely and firmly.*

This stitch process is done with the **WRONG** sides of the knitting facing each other (right sides out) and with an equal number of stitches on two separate needles...or the knitting needles you were working on. **You will have just finished the toe decreases and should cut the sock yarn, leaving a tail of 18-24".**

SET UP PROCESS:

With yarn coming from the **BACK** needle on the right end side and a tapestry needle threaded with the sock yarn, put the needle through the first stitch on the **FRONT** needle as if to **PURL**. Pull firmly, but do **NOT** take stitch off of needle. Use tapestry needle and go through the first stitch on the **BACK** needle as if to **KNIT**. Pull firmly, but do **NOT** take stitch off of needle.

Start of Kitchener Stitch Process-please try to go somewhere quiet and relaxed, where you will not be disturbed. It's difficult to start the process and then have to stop in the middle of it.

TN = tapestry needle

1. With TN, go into the **FIRST** stitch on the **FRONT** needle as if to **KNIT**. Pull firmly and then slide the stitch off the needle. Pull firmly again.
2. With TN, go into the **SECOND** stitch on the **FRONT** needle as if to **PURL**. Pull firmly and but **DO NOT TAKE STITCH** off.
3. With TN, go into the **FIRST** stitch on the **BACK** needle as if to **PURL**. Pull firmly and then slide the stitch off the needle. Pull firmly again.
4. With TN, go into the **SECOND** stitch on the **BACK** needle as if to **KNIT**. Pull firmly and but **DO NOT** take the stitch off.

You will continue to do steps 1-4 over and over until all the stitches on the knitting needles are done.

Make sure to go IN and OUT through the MIDDLE.....between both of the knitting needles.

QUICK HINT GUIDE:

- *Stitches on each needle are **EQUAL** numbers.
- *Work in the **MIDDLE** of the needles when pulling yarn in and out.
- ***Wrong sides** are facing each other.
- *Yarn should always come from the **BACK** needle.
- *Remember to **pull the yarn very snugly** between each step!

Front Needle- first knit slip off, second purl stay on

Back Needle- first purl slip off, second knit stay on

Pull yarn through last stitch. Pull yarn end to the inside of the sock and weave in the ends.

Hope you enjoyed this class and that you have begun to get the hang of the sock knitting techniques. Make sure to try adding your own embellishments and stitch patterns to the cuff and foot of the sock to create your own personal style sock. Wishing you much joy (and addiction) in your sock knitting life! Gina :)