

Basic Toe Up Crochet Socks



Designed By Nicole Cormier

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[Ravelry: NicoleCormier](#)

[IG: @_NicoleCormier_](#)

[Twitter: @_NicoleCormier_](#)

Socks made from the toe up are very popular because of their convenience. You can try it on as you go, so that there is no second-guessing its fit. You do not need to worry about running out of yarn before you get to the toe. This can happen with top-down patterns, but with a toe-up pattern just keep going until you run out. The worst that will happen is that your leg or cuff will be a bit shorter than intended, but you will still have complete sock feet.

After reading many knitting books, and being frustrated with the quality and feel of many crocheted sock patterns, I have formulated my own basic sock patterns. Up until the last few years many crocheted sock patterns were written using worsted and sport weight yarns. These fibres produce too big of a gauge for most feet. The stitches used in crochet are too bumpy and often uncomfortable. They are downright painful for those with sensitive feet, when worked in large gauge. I've got some pretty tough feet, spending most of my time barefoot, and even I find crocheted socks worked in anything greater than a #2 weight yarn to be really hard on my feet. It's also hard to wear shoes with a sock made from thick yarn. One of the chief complaints from my non-yarn using friends (who are often the guinea pigs for my creations) is that homemade socks make their shoes feel tight.

These days, most of us are busy making sock patterns out of actual sock yarn, now that it is available everywhere. Socks are cool projects, and yarn companies are jumping over themselves to produce sock yarns in every colour imaginable. I prefer to use #0 and #1 weight yarns. My favourite sock yarns are:

- [Malabrigo Lace](#)
- [Paton's Stretch Socks](#)
- [Sandnes Garn Sisu](#)
- [Tanis Fibre Arts Fingering and Sock yarns](#)
- [Nova Sock Yarn](#)
- [Noro Taiyo Sock Yarn](#)

These yarns range from budget friendly to splurge-o-licious!!!

This pattern is very basic. I use it as a template for starting new designs because it is very user-friendly. The toe is somewhat wide compared to other toe-up patterns that I've written, because I have discovered that as I become old and crotchety my feet like to be really, really comfortable. The heel is a reverse-engineered gusset and heel flap. I generally use short row or afterthought heels in my work, but the traditional heel provides a bit more room than the other ones. After studying what the knitters are putting out there into the universe, I have taken the bits and pieces that I liked and figured out how to make it all work with a hook.

The following are measurements that I achieved with this pattern.

Small = Finished size 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (for a foot that measures 7-7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " around the ball)

Medium = Finished size 8" (for a foot that measures 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ -9" around the ball)

Large = Finished size 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (for a foot that measures 9-9 $\frac{1}{2}$ " around the ball)

X Large = Finished size 10" (for a foot that measures 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ -11" around the ball)

These were achieved with a **3.25mm hook**. Other useful hooks for sock making are 2.25mm, 2.75mm, and 3.50mm. I find the 3.25mm hook gives me a good gauge that fits most people when the pattern is sc in rounds. Other hooks, such as the 2.25mm and 2.75mm are useful for working with elasticized yarns or with shell patterns because the shells will stretch. The 3.50mm hook is good for making men's sizes and for working mosaic patterns so that they won't be too tight. Now all of this is my own opinion. I encourage you to make swatches and decide for yourself just how fine of a gauge you want in a sock. Some of my favourite crocheted socks were made in solid sc with a 2.25mm hook because I like the fine gauge that it produces.

Notions:

(2, 2, 3, 3) skeins of Paton's Kroy, Sienna Stripes, or any colour at all.

3.25mm hook

Gauge: 5.25 sts/1"

split ring stitch markers

darning needle

measuring tape

If you read articles in magazines and yarn books about socks, you will see that there are many measurements you could take to ensure the perfect fit. I've managed to get by all these years with only two: the ball of my foot and length of my foot. Quite often, the measurement around the ball of your foot is the same as the length of your foot – or quite close. Take both measures, though, because this is not always the case.

The other thing that you should do is make a gauge swatch. The sock featured here is worked in the round, without joining or turning, to produce a spiral. Your swatch should be the same. The easiest way to make a swatch is to make the toe. Work the toe as given in the instructions and then measure it. Fasten off and flatten your swatch widthwise. Measure how many stitches are in an inch and write this number down. Multiply it by the measurement of the ball of your foot minus $\frac{1}{2}$ inch. This is the widest point of your foot. When you make the foundation chain to begin the toe, you are going to work increases to get to this number. You subtract $\frac{1}{2}$ - 1 inch for negative ease, so that your sock will stretch to fit your foot properly. We'll use my numbers as an example:

Length of foot: 9"

Ball of foot: 9"

subtract ½ - 1" for negative ease: 8 - 8 ½"

Therefore, I am going to increase from the toe up, to get something that measures 8 - 8 ½" around. Since it is easier to flatten your sock widthwise to do the measuring, I am going to work up to something that measures 4 ¼" wide, give or take.

Your gauge may be different. This is why you need to take the time to make a gauge swatch. Swatching seems like a big waste of time until you sweat and grunt for what seems like ages to create something that doesn't fit. Then swatching doesn't seem like such a bad idea.

Now I'm going to contradict myself!!

The nice thing about making a sock from the toe up is that you don't absolutely have to fiddle with gauge if you don't absolutely want to. I've made several pairs of gauge-less socks simply by making a foundation chain that was a couple of inches long, and crocheting increase and work-even rounds until my toe cap was the width that I required. An extra round or two, to make sure that my resulting number was evenly divisible by two for the heel shaping later was the only adjustment required. If you are going to make a lace pattern, though, or do any sort of fancy stitching, you'll definitely want to make a gauge swatch because your gauge will change once you stop working the solid single crochet in the toe and switch to a different stitch pattern. The following pattern lists instructions for different sizes, but feel free to customize as desired. Think of this as a guideline only, it is my hope that you will use this pattern as a jumping off point to make your own fabulous creations.

So let's get started.....

Ch (13, 14, 15, 15) flip the chain and working into the bottom bumps of the foundation chain, sc in 2nd ch from hook and work across. Mark the last stitch (12, 13, 14, 14)sc.

Pivot chain and work (12, 13, 14, 14) sc across top. Mark the last stitch. The marked stitches are side sts. You will readjust the markers after each two round sequence so that they are always on the side, not shifting over. (24, 26, 28, 28) sc.

Increase Round One:

Leave your markers where they are on this round. Work the marked st with a sc. In the next st, work 2 sc. Work even to one st before the next marked st. Place 2 sc in this st. Sc in marked st, replacing the marker, 2 sc in next st, work even to last st before marked st. 2 sc in this st. You have just completed your first round and increased by 4 sts. (28, 30, 32, 32)sc.

Increase Round Two:

Work even, placing sc in sc all around. Remember to keep putting the markers back.

For Size Small: Repeat these two rounds until you have 36 sts.

For Size Medium: Repeat these two rounds until you have 42sts.

For Size Large: Repeat these two rounds until you have 48sts.

For Size X Large: Repeat these two rounds until you have 52sts.

Create the foot:

Keep the beginning marker to mark the start of your rounds. Work around and around in a spiral until your sock is about 2 ½" shorter than the total length of your foot. Remember, unless your foot is excessively wide or narrow, this measurement will probably be the same as the ball of your foot.

Heel Flap:

Continue to the end of your round, ensuring that the marker has been readjusted to reflect the side edge of your sock. Do not continue. Instead, chain 1 and turn. Work back across half your stitches. Chain 1 and turn.

Next row: (RS) sc across (18, 21, 24, 26) sts. Repeat this row until heel flap is just shy of 2" tall. End on a Right Side Row.

Turn Heel:

Wrong side is facing, sc across to last (7, 9, 9, 9) sts. Sc2tog, sc 1, ch 1 and turn. Leave remaining sts unworked. Work back across this row, again, to last (7, 9, 9, 9) sts, sc2tog, sc 1, ch 1 and turn, leave remaining sts unworked. You have created a small short row across the centre of your heel flap and should have an equal amount of unworked sts on either side. Count the stitches in this short row. You will now begin to pick up stitches, but your stitch count will not change. Don't panic, it's all good.

Begin picking up stitches:

Sc across short row, working sc3tog over last sc in row, side edge of st, and unworked sc below. Ch 1 and turn. Repeat this row until all the sts are picked up again. Your heel will have a nice cup shape when you are done and your Right Side will be facing. Do not turn. Get your markers out and be ready to pick up gusset stitches. Isn't this fun?

Gusset Stitches:

Continuing without turning, pick up 14 sts along the edge of the flap, working your way back toward the instep of your sock. If it helps, use markers beforehand to mark off where you will work these sts. If you look at the edge of your heel flap, it looks a bit like a jagged sawtooth. Use the "points" and "valleys" as places to work single crochet stitches as evenly as possible.

If you have to, because you find you have some nice gobbledeygook as you get closer to the instep (gobbledeygook is a very technical term for that bit of space that is too big for one sc....but

that's all you need when you get to that spot) work a sc2tog or even sc3tog over that no-man's land to close off gaps. Mark the 14th st that you place before continuing on in sc across your instep sts. When you get to the other side of your heel flap, mark the 1st st and repeat as before, placing 14 sc as evenly as possible into the side edge. If you wish, you can mark this spot as your new beginning/end spot of your round.

You will now work a decrease sequence to return to your original number of stitches, using the marked sts on either side of your instep sts as guides.

Gusset Decrease Round One: work even in sc around, making sure to work sc2tog before 1st marked st and after 2nd marked st.

Gusset Decreases Round Two: work even all sts.

Repeat these two rounds until you have your original amount of sts again (36, 42, 48, 52) sc.

Shape the leg:

This part is easy. Work in sc around and around until the sock is the desired length. I took my yarn right to the bitter end and worked a final round in reverse single crochet for a nice corded edge and had about 14" left over between the two skeins. My leg cuffs were about five inches tall. Weave in all your loose ends and enjoy your socks!!!!

Other heels to ponder:

The Short Row Heel:

This heel is worked across half your sts and is shaped like a triangle. Sts are then picked up as you work your way back down to the foot, forming a nice fitted cup for the heel. It is more snug than the heel I gave above.

General Instructions:

Work the foot until work from beginning measures 2" less than the length of your foot. Ensure that both halves of your sock (instep/top and sole/bottom) are marked by flattening your sock widthwise and marking the sides. Work back and forth across the sole sts in sc, leaving the last st at the end of each row unworked. Work like this until you have a stitch count that is equivalent to your half original foundation round. So, if you chained 11 to start the toe and worked 20 sc on on that chain, then work the short row heel until you have 10 stitches left. You should have just ended your Right Side, ready to chain and turn.

With the Wrong Side facing, work back across those sts, work a sc2tog in the side edge of this row and the unworked sc below. Work a ss in the next side edge and turn (do not make a turning chain). One stitch picked up. Turn, skip the ss, and sc across, repeating the same pick-up procedure at the other end of the row. Work back and forth like this until all sts are picked up. Your Right Side should be facing, so just carry on across the instep and keep working in rounds

until the cows come home or you run out of yarn.

The Afterthought Heel:

This heel is easy and quick. Crochet in your chosen pattern until the work from the beginning measures 2" less than length of foot. Work across the first half (instep) of your sts, and make a foundation chain equivalent to the second half (sole) of your sts. Skip the sole sts, and continue in your chosen pattern across the instep again, treating the newly made chains as sts when you get to them. You've made a big gaping hole in your sock and will add the heel when you are done. To add the heel after finishing the leg, attach yarn to the Right Side with a ss in the side "corner" of the heel opening. Work around in sc, mark the side sts as you did with the toe shaping, and on the first round, work a sc2tog before and after each marked stitch. Work the second round even. Continue like this until your heel sts equal your beginning foundation round. Cut a long yarn tail, turn the sock inside out, and ss the opening closed.



In closing:

Everything takes time. I can generally make a pair of socks in a few hours but I've been making them for years. When I first started, I used to throw my work across the room. There were tiny heaps of partly finished socks mocking me in my living room. If you have never done a sock before, you may go over and over the pattern and just not get it. If that happens, put it down and come back to it in a few days. You may find that you suddenly "get it" and all is well. If that is not the case, please send me a note: gefjion@gmail.com Be sure to let me know in the subject line that you are writing about socks.

