

'THE QUEEN'S GAMBIT' SOCKS

By Knitting Ponchik #knittingponchik



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INTRODUCTION

As you might have guessed, these socks were inspired by a recent TV show of the same name. I wasn't planning to knit chess related socks but it sort of happened and I even gave chess a go (unsuccessfully I might add) but at least I have these socks to brag about!

'The Queen's Gambit' Socks are knitted in the round using 'Stranded Colourwork' technique with two DK yarn colours for the main chart pattern and a third yarn colour for the rib, heel and foot - using a circular needle (switching to DPNs when circumference is too small to work comfortably). There is an option to use only DPNs for the whole project.

Each sock is knitted from sock leg cuff to toe in four parts: sock leg, sock heel, sock foot and sock toe. We start with an Italian Cast-On in the round and then a Rib Stitch, gently proceeding to 'Chess Board Chart Pattern'. We continue with a 'Boomerang Heel' and foot, finishing with toe decreases.

The pattern reflects an average sized adult foot but I have included thorough recommendations on size adjustments.

The pattern also includes a long section of Techniques, Pattern Notes & Schematics to help you in your knitting journey but if you want to dive straight into knitting then go to 'Method' section on page 20.

All the terms used in this pattern are in British English. For extra help I have created a special tutorial for these socks called 'The Queen's Gambit Socks' Tutorial and it's available on my YouTube channel 'Knitting Ponchik' here https://youtu.be/OVWsneOJa_Y

I hope you enjoy this project!



DIFFICULTY LEVEL

Advanced Beginner/Intermediate

SKILLS REQUIRED

Knit & purl

Decreasing

Specialty CO: Italian 1x1 Cast-On

Working in the round on circular needles

Working from charts

Stranded colourwork

Boomerang Heel/Short-rows

Kitchener stitch/grafting

MATERIALS

YARN

Marriner Double Knit - (100% Acrylic, 300m per 100g/ball):

MC colour Black; 1 ball

CC1 colour White; 1 ball

CC2 colour Poppy; 1 ball

NEEDLES

3 mm length 65cm (26in) circular needle

3 mm DPNs needles for working small circumference in the round

OTHER

Stitch markers - 2 removable and 1 of different colour or style for marking start of round

Yarn needle

Scissors

Tape Measure

GAUGE

20sts/24 rounds = 10cm (4in) square in 'Chess Board Chart Pattern' using 3mm circular needles

*make sure to knit your gauge swatch in the colour pattern rather than in one solid colour yarn St St; floats in Stranded Knitting change the tension of the fabric and require more stitches per cm/in

SIZE INFORMATION

SIZES

Sized for Adult Medium and shown in Size Adult Medium (UK shoe size 6-7)

FINISHED MEASUREMENTS

*note that the finished measurement reflect negative ease as socks will stretch over the foot; read more in 'Pattern Notes' section

Foot measurement (taken around the ball of the foot) - 21cm/8in

Calf circumference - 26cm/10in

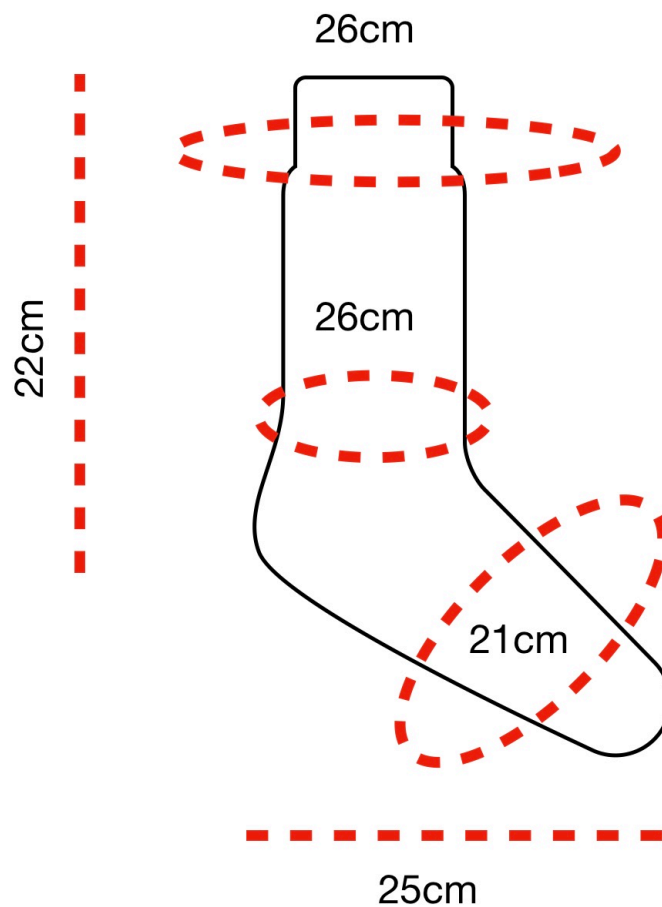
Ankle circumference - 26cm/10in

Leg length (top of cuff to top of heel; adjustable to fit) - 22cm/9in

Foot length (top of heel to top of toe; adjustable to fit) - 25cm/10in

SCHEMATIC

*for more measurements and guidance on size adjustments check 'Pattern Notes' section below



TECHNIQUES & GLOSSARY

*Note: check my Youtube channel 'Knitting Ponchik' for extra help:

<https://youtube.com/channel/UCeHatMXsvKb-vOCUAFQUaqw>

Gauge Swatch - make a tension swatch to make sure your knitting has the same measurements as the pattern. To make a swatch: knit a sample of more than 10cm/4" length and 10cm/4" width. Measure the swatch against the gauge given in the pattern by counting the stitches & rows in your 10cm x10cm sample

<https://youtu.be/ULjgjzs2J6g>

How to measure yarn tail for a cast-on - wrap yarn over the knitting needle the same amount of times as the number of stitches you are planning to cast-on; then add extra 10-15cm of yarn

<https://youtu.be/EaEGuK86mRs>

Italian Cast-On for a 1x1 Rib Stitch in the Round:

Round 1 - make a slip knot; measure a long yarn tail (see above) and make a 'slingshot' position with your thumb & forefinger: for a knit stitch, with your needle go under the strand on your thumb and over the strand on your forefinger; for a purl stitch go under the strand on your forefinger and over the strand on your thumb; to join the round slide the last cast-on stitch over the slip stitch, turn the work as if to knit in rows

Round 2 - knit all knit stitches through the back loop; with yarn to the front, slip all purl stitches purlwise

Round 3 - with yarn to the back, slip all knit stitches purlwise; with yarn to the front purl all purl stitches.

<https://youtu.be/gDyzKh1OiCo>

1x1 Rib Stitch in the Round - Round 1 - *k1, p1*, repeat every round

Stocking Stitch (Stockinette) - (RS) Round 1 - *k*, repeat every round

How to hold yarn in Stranded Knitting (Continental Method) -

when holding two yarn strands with your left index finger, make sure to always keep MC yarn above CC yarn (MC yarn will be closer to the fingernail)



<https://youtu.be/OTmYfKbgFcA>

'Floats' in Stranded Knitting - make floats by twisting two yarn strands on the WS of the knitted fabric every 2cm of knitting

<https://youtu.be/0BpXs8Xqr0Q>

BOOMERANG HEEL - how to knit a boomerang heel is explained in the knitting instructions in the 'Method' section to make it easier to follow the pattern as you knit

<https://youtu.be/pQYV4eH-1cs>

Double Stitches - for a knit stitch: slip the stitch knitwise, pull the yarn up & over so the stitch is pulled down; for a purl stitch: slip purlwise, pull the yarn up & over so the stitch is pulled down

<https://youtu.be/kYdFvhCQnH0>

Adding/joining new yarn ball - insert the knitting needle as if to knit and wrap the new yarn around the needle & pull through the stitch (make sure you have a long yarn tail for weaving in)

<https://youtu.be/TSNvHG12heo>

DECREASE STITCHES:

ssk - slip twice knitwise, knit two stitches together

<https://youtu.be/regNol22Vac>

k2tog - knit two stitches together through front loops

<https://youtu.be/QztMuhnyU1Y>

k2tbl - knit two stitches together through back loops

<https://youtu.be/57dl7VFppt0>

p2tbl - purl two stitches together though back loop

<https://youtu.be/-ueNtEL9s8A>

(Mitten Decreases but the same technique is used for toe decreases) -

<https://youtu.be/O8eE3pi35Jg>

Hiding the Jog - to hide the colour shift, slip the stitch in the new colour purlwise on the second round of knitting

<https://youtu.be/4eQ3-l-WJl8>

Weaving Ends - weave in your ends on WS by going through side loops of stitches vertically at least 5 times; if you are weaving in on WS of 'St St' then tutorial below might be of use

<https://youtu.be/ieUJN-z7JTY>

Right & Wrong Side - Right Side of the knitted fabric in this pattern means the side which is knitted (in St St); Wrong Side is the side which is purled in St St

<https://youtu.be/-S7xFXsx2T8>

Kitchener Stitch - spread stitches evenly on the two needles:

1. insert yarn needle through the front stitch purlwise keeping the stitch still on the needle; insert yarn needle purlwise through the stitch at the back and slip it off the needle

2. insert yarn needle knitwise through the back stitch keeping the stitch on the needle; insert yarn needle knitwise through the front stitch and slip it off the needle.



Repeat steps 1 & 2 until two last stitches. Last two stitches: insert yarn needle purlwise through the front stitch keeping the stitch on the needle; insert yarn needle purlwise through the back stitch and remove both stitches from the needles; finally, insert yarn needle knitwise through the last stitch and fasten off

<https://youtu.be/kAJB-bJ2-xw>

Extra Comments:

You can use an ordinary long-tail cast-on (or any other cast-on you see fit) instead of Italian 1x1 but I really liked Italian 1x1 particularly for this design as it looks beautiful with a Rib Stitch.

You have an option of using DPNs for the whole project instead of circular needle. Spread stitches evenly (or as even as possible) on 3 or 4 needles. The whole pattern remains the same for DPNs as we are still knitting in the round.

ABBREVIATIONS

*Note: This Pattern is written in British English

k - knit

p - purl

MC - Main Colour

CC1 - Contrasting Colour 1

CC2 - Contrasting Colour 2

sts - stitches

Rnd - Round

St St - Stocking Stitch

CO - Cast On

RS - Right Side

WS - Wrong Side

k2tog - knit two stitches together

k2tbl - knit two stitches together through back loops

p2tbl - purl two stitches together through back loops

ssk - slip twice knitwise, knit two stitches together

rpt - repeat

* - work instructions following * as many times as indicated

PATTERN NOTES

Tips for working the pattern

The pattern is knitted in four parts: sock leg, sock heel, sock foot and sock toe. Sock leg is knitted top to bottom and (along with the sock foot) includes 'Chess Board Chart Pattern'. Sock heel is knitted using a Boomerang Heel technique (also sometimes called 'German Short Rows Heel'). Sock toe is an ordinary decrease technique used on both sides of the foot until we join the whole concoction using Kitchener Stitch.

Tips for knitting in Stranded Colourwork

To avoid puckering and tightness in the knitted fabric that often happens when knitting in 'Stranded Colourwork' try some tips below:

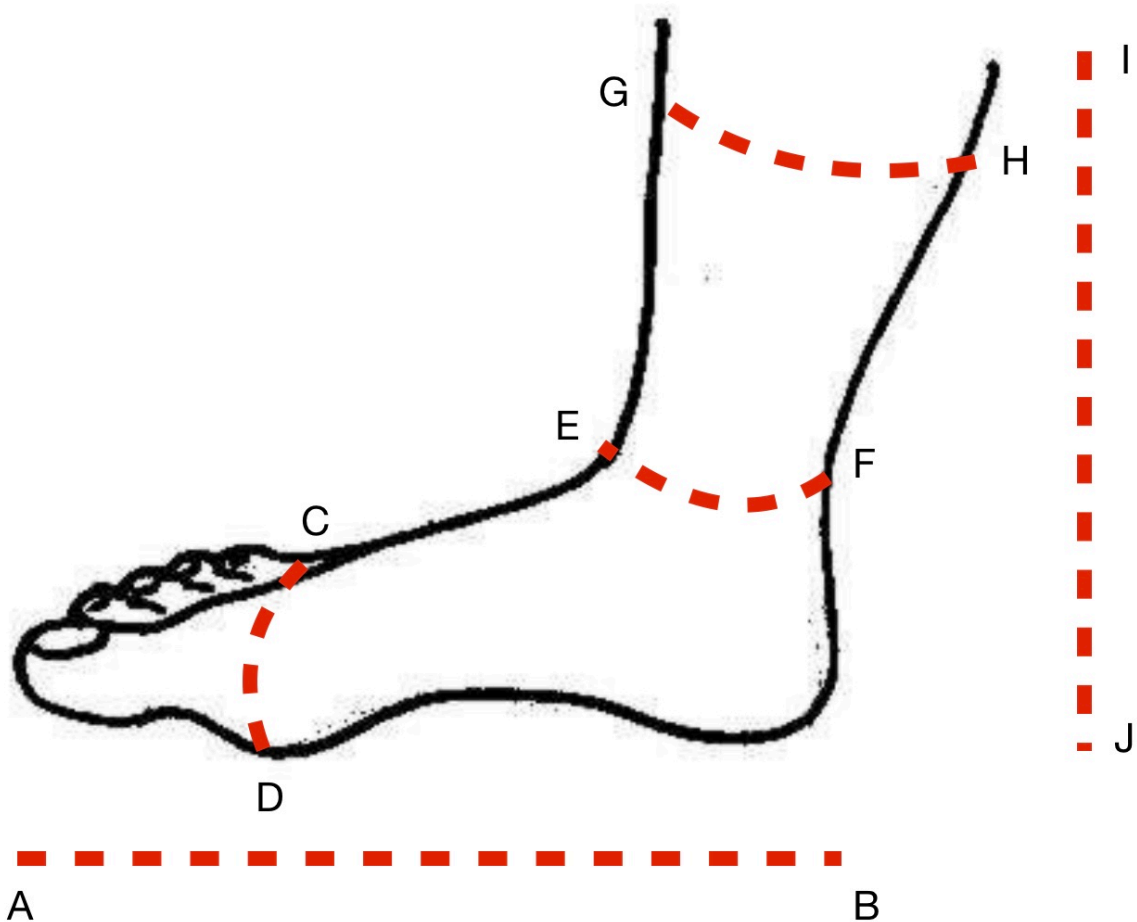
- Make sure to carry 'floats' loosely and give stitches some space by spreading them every round after knitting.

- To avoid ‘floats’ catching on your fingernails, twist two yarn strands every 2cm.
- Steaming can help release stitches if they are too tight but make sure your yarn fibre is suitable for steam blocking.
- When creating ‘floats’: MC yarn goes under CC yarn during twisting if the section is knitted in MC yarn but goes over CC yarn when twisted if the section is knitted in CC yarn.

Measurements & Size Adjustments

Take measurements of yourself for each of the A to J measurements shown below. Don’t forget about negative ease (more on negative ease below).

After taking all the measurements, compare them to the Gauge you have made earlier. Once you have Gauge Calculations you can easily calculate how many stitches you need per each measurement (if in doubt check my ‘Gauge Swatch’ Tutorial link in ‘Techniques & Glossary’ section above where I show how to do all of these calculations).



AB (foot length) = 25cm/10in
 CD (circumference of foot around the arch) = 23cm/9in (-2cm)
 EF (ankle circumference at narrowest part) = 25cm/10in (-1cm)
 GH (calf circumference 15cm/6in up from floor) = 36cm/14in (-10cm)
 IJ (leg length) = 22cm/9in

*figures in brackets represent negative ease

	ACTUAL LEG MEASUREMENTS	FINISHED SOCK MEASUREMENTS
AB (foot length)	25cm ("10)	25cm ("10)
CD (circumference of foot around the arch)	23cm ("9)	21cm ("8)
EF (ankle circumference at narrowest part)	25cm ("10)	26cm ("10)
GH (calf circumference 15cm/6in up from floor)	36cm ("14)	26cm ("10)
IJ (leg length)	22cm ("9)	22cm ("9)

*notice that the actual leg measurement is in many cases larger than finished sock measurement due to negative ease.

Negative Ease Calculations

For some measurements we need to include a calculation for negative ease. Negative ease means that the finished sock measurement is smaller than the actual leg measurement because the sock stretches out over the foot. In the table above you can see a comparison between my actual leg measurements and finished sock measurements. It's important to also take into account that yarn fibre plays a significant role in how your sock will stretch over your foot so a gauge swatch is really important!

Most important negative ease that you should consider is the CD (circumference of foot around the arch) and GH (calf circumference).

We need 2cm of negative ease for CD measurement. This means that after taking your measurements you need to take away 2cm before calculating the gauge. For example, my foot circumference is 23cm:

$$23 - 2 = 21$$

thus creating a new measurement with negative ease - 21cm. I then calculate my gauge using 21cm not 23cm. We do this for GH measurement too.

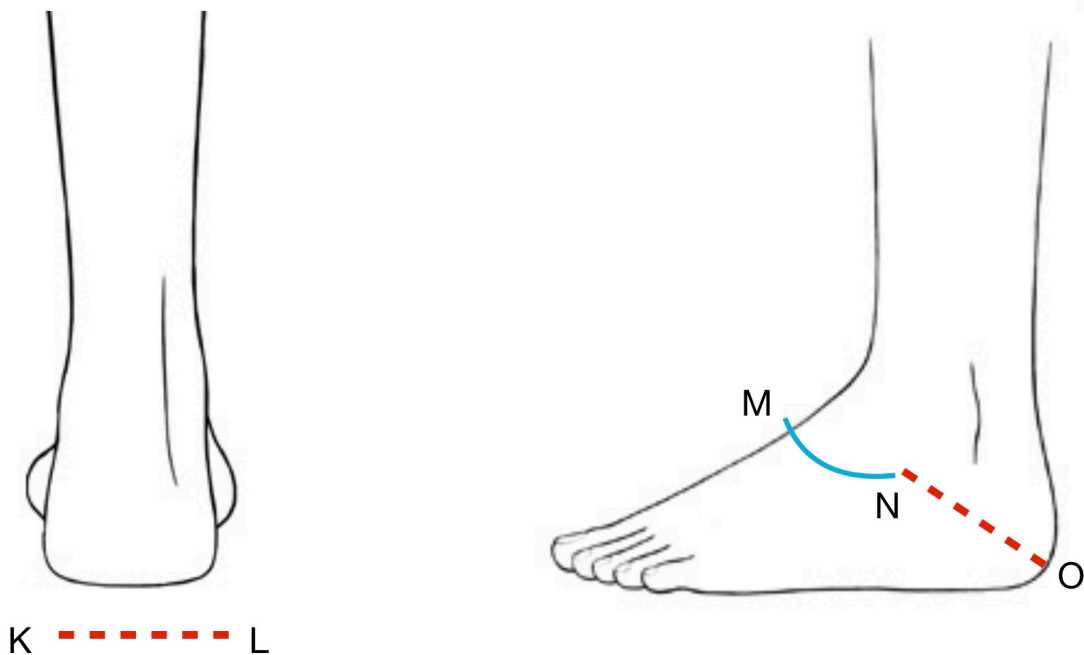
CO (cast-on) calculation

If you have a different sock measurement to me and need to increase/decrease the amount of cast-on stitches then make sure that you do this in groups of 4 so that the 'Chess Board Chart Pattern' is knitted correctly. This means for a Larger sock you CO 56 sts (52+4), for a Smaller sock you CO 48 sts (52-4).

Leg Length and 'Chess Board Chart Pattern'

Leg length (IJ measurement) is adjustable to fit, meaning you knit in 'Chess Board Chart Pattern' for as long as you want until measurement F (which is where we knit a 'Boomerang Heel'.

Boomerang Heel Measurement



The 'Boomerang Heel' is divided into three sections and is knitted in rows in 2 parts. Section 1 and 3 is the NO measurement shown above (we will need

each side of the foot). Each side measures around 6-7cm and will be knitted using 'German Short Rows' (creating double stitches). KL measurement represents your heel and is around 5cm. Heel section stitches won't change in number throughout and will be knitted in a normal way every row. MN represents the rest of the stitches which will be left untouched for the duration of the 'Boomerang Heel' (except 2 rounds that separate 'Boomerang Heel' Part 1 and 2). The whole heel is knitted in CC2 yarn colour.

Key:

•	purl
∧	k2tog
+	p2tbl/k2tbl
□	knit
■ (orange)	knitted/purled normally
■ (blue)	double stitch

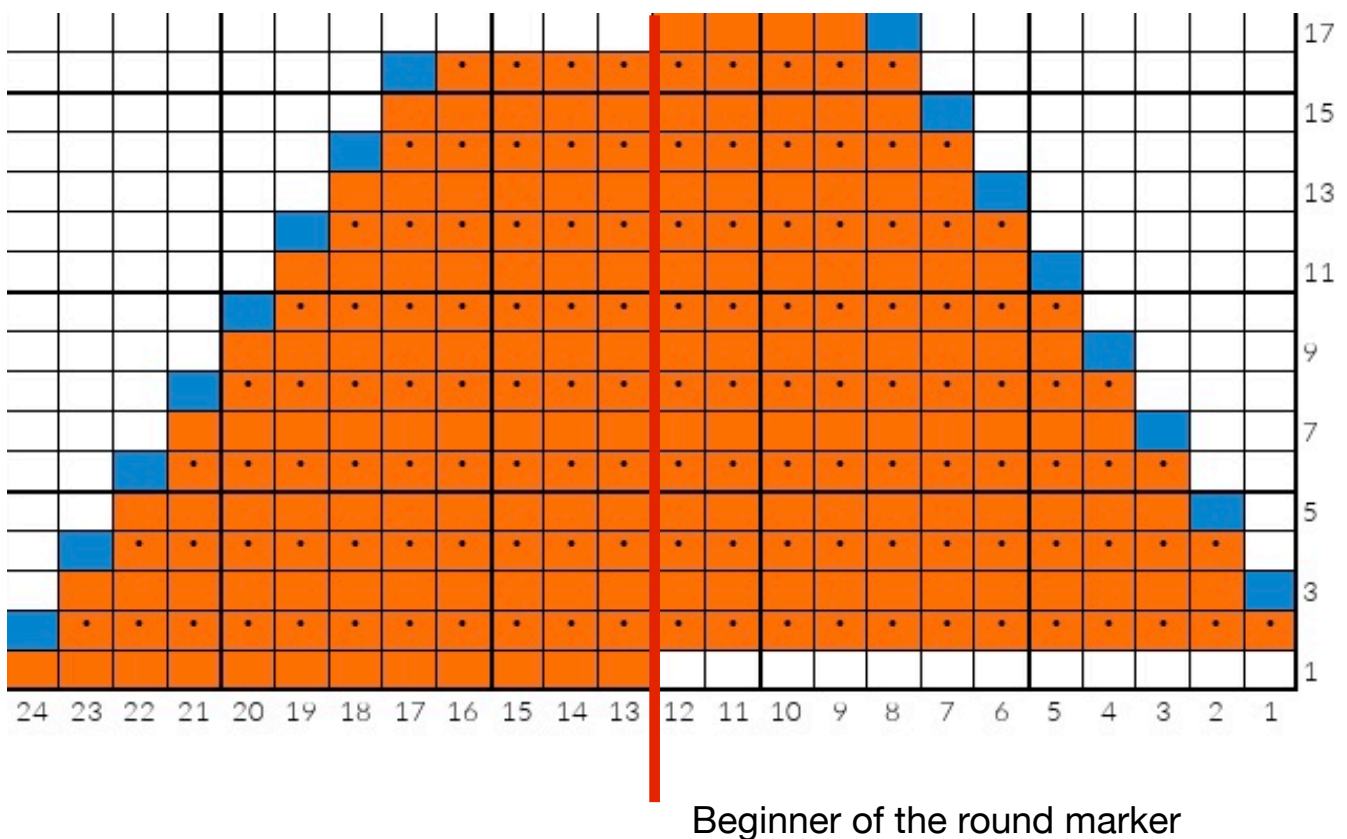


Table 1. Boomerang Heel Part 1.

Boomerang Heel Part 1

After taking KL and NO measurements you can calculate the amount of stitches you need for each of the three sections using your gauge calculations. Based on my gauge calculations and measurements I have 8 stitches for each side and 8 stitches for the heel. The beginning of the round marker will split my heel stitches, meaning that I have 4 stitches at each side of the marker for the heel plus 8 at each side. Therefore, on each side of the marker we have 12 stitches or 24 stitches for the whole 'Boomerang Heel'. The rest of the 28 stitches should be left alone for the time being.

We are knitting in rows as opposed to rounds (meaning we turn our work). Look at table 1 above for the first part of 'Boomerang Heel' as it might help you to understand the logistics behind the technique in a better way. Below is a written description of table 1.

Starting from the beginning of the round marker, k12 and turn your work:

1. create a double stitch (you can find how to do this in 'Techniques & Glossary' section above), p11, marker, p12, turn
2. create a double stitch, k11, marker, k11, turn

repeat steps 1 and 2 until you doubled every side stitch and 8 stitches are left (4 at each side of the beginning of the round marker) which are our heel stitches and should not be doubled. You may notice that we are knitting less and less stitches each row creating a triangle as shown in Table 1.

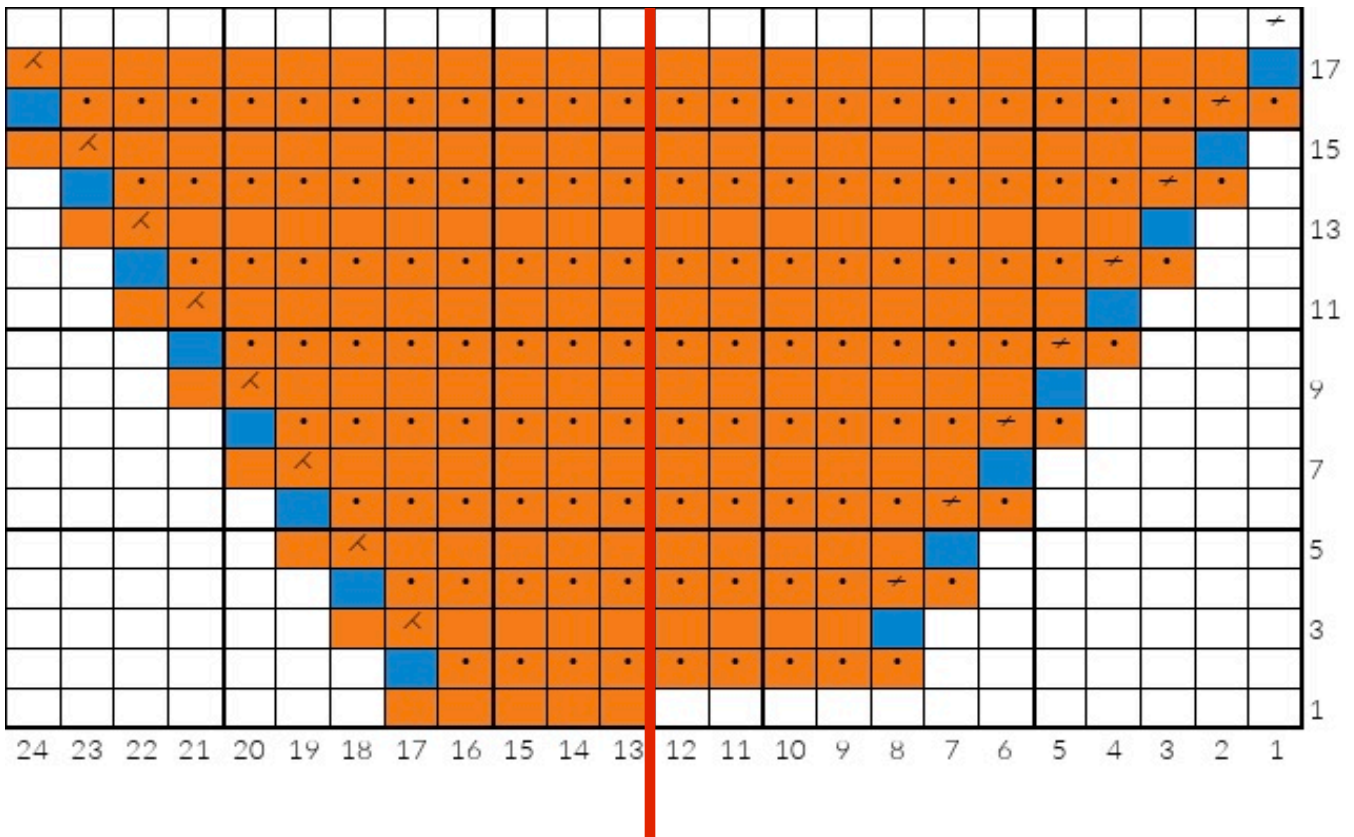
On your last double stitch row (row 17 on Table 1), stop at the beginning of the round marker. Knit in the round twice:

Rnd 1 - k4, k2tog x 8 (all of the 8 double side stitches), k28, k2tbl x 8 (all of the 8 double side stitches), k4

Rnd 2 - k52

Boomerang Heel Part 2

This time we are also knitting in rows using the same heel section and it will look like a triangle again only every row we will knit more stitches, expanding the triangle.



Beginner of the round marker

Table 2. Boomerang Heel Part 2.

Starting from beginning of the round marker, k5 and turn your work, create a double stitch, p9, turn. Then proceed as follows:

1. create a double stitch, k8, k2tog the double stitch, k1, turn
2. create a double stitch, p9, p2tbl the double stitch, p1, turn

repeat steps 1 and 2 until all of the 8 side stitches have been doubled.

On row 17 (which is our last row and actually turned into a round) proceed as follows:

create a double stitch, k11, marker, k11, k2tog the double stitch, k28, k2tbl the double stitch, k11

knit 3 more rounds in CC2 yarn before proceeding to PART 3: SOCK FOOT in the 'Method' section below.



Foot length and 'Chess Board Chart Pattern'

Foot length (AB measurement) is adjustable to fit, meaning you knit in 'Chess Board Chart Pattern' for as long as you want until 6cm are left to the tips of the toes.

Sock Toe Decreases

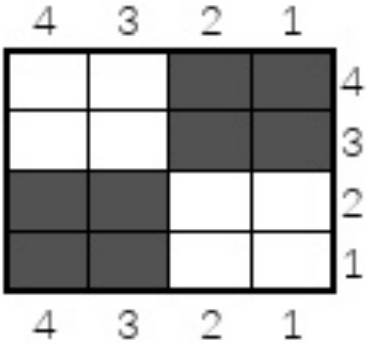
For sock toe we decrease every other round by 4 sts (2 sts at each side). The whole decrease section measures 6cm.

Colourwork Chart Pattern 'Chess Board'

*knitted in the round in St St

Chess Board Chart Pattern

Key:



METHOD

PART 1: SOCK LEG

1). Using size 3mm circular needle and CC2 yarn, using Italian Cast-On for a 1x1 Rib Stitch in the Round, CO 52 sts; place marker and join for working in the round, being careful not to twist

2). 1x1 Rib Stitch in the Round:

Rnd 1 - *k1, p1*

repeat Round 1 for 5cm

3). Work from charted instructions 'Chess Board Chart Pattern' until sock measures 15cm (or 20cm from top of cuff to top of heel).

PART 2: BOOMERANG HEEL

* note that the heel is knitted only in CC2 yarn (without carrying MC & CC1 yarns on the WS)

* more info on the technique behind 'Boomerang Heel' can be found in 'Pattern Notes'

Starting from the beginning of the round marker, k12 and turn your work:

1. create a double stitch (you can find how to do this in 'Techniques & Glossary' section above), p11, marker, p12, turn
2. create a double stitch, k11, marker, k11, turn

repeat steps 1 and 2 until you doubled every side stitch and 8 stitches are left (4 at each side of the beginning of the round marker) which are our heel stitches and should not be doubled.

On your last double stitch row stop at the beginning of the round marker. Knit in the round for two rounds:

Rnd 1 - k4, k2tog x 8 (all of the 8 double side stitches), k28, k2tbl x 8 (all of the 8 double side stitches), k4

Rnd 2 - k52

Starting from beginning of the round marker, k5 and turn your work, create a double stitch, p9, turn. Then proceed as follows:

1. create a double stitch, k8, k2tog the double stitch, k1, turn
2. create a double stitch, p9, p2tbl the double stitch, p1, turn

repeat steps 1 and 2 until all of the 8 side stitches have been doubled.

On row 17 (which is our last row and actually is turned into a round) proceed as follows:

create a double stitch, k11, marker, k11, k2tog the double stitch, k28, k2tbl the double stitch, k11

knit 3 more rounds in CC2 yarn colour

PART 3: SOCK FOOT

Switching back to knitting only in MC and CC1 yarn, work from charted instructions 'Chess Board Chart Pattern' until 'Sock Foot' section measures 11cm

PART 4: SOCK TOE

11). Decrease at the sides of the sock, set up markers for decrease:

Rnd 1 - k8, ssk, k1, (place a removable marker below the knitted stitch), k2tog, k21, ssk, k1, (place a removable marker below the knitted stitch), k2tog, k13
= 48 sts (-4 sts)

Rnd 2 - k48

repeat Rnd 1 and 2 9 more times until 16 sts remaining

12). Split remaining 16 sts into two even groups for 'Kitchener Stitch'

Knit second sock the same way.

Don't forget to weave in the ends!



Thank you for
downloading this
pattern!

I would love to see your
finished socks so please
share a picture with me by
tagging me
@knitting_ponchik and using
the hashtags
#knittingponchik and
#thequeensgambitsocks on
Instagram.

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