

A GUIDE TO MONSTER SOCKS

By Terry Liann Morris - SailingKnitter

Monster Socks are knit using many different colors and brands of sock yarn. Usually we knit these from our stashes of odd single skeins and/or leftover small balls. Here are some tricks for artfully combining yarns to make one-of-a-kind sock masterpieces. Some folks even let the socks not match each other for that mis-matched look.

General Tips

- You may want to select yarns of all the same color (hue) such as a group of blues, browns, etc. for a more uniform, sophisticated appearance.
- Combine bright/light colors with darker yarns for greater effect.
- Self-stripping, jacquard, or hand-painted yarns all can be used. If you dearly want to have perfectly matching socks in your pair you'll need to make sure that you start knitting both socks at the same place in the striping or patterning sequence of your yarn.
- Knit both socks at the same time so that you can make them match. You can do this by either dividing each color of yarn in half before knitting, or knit from both ends of the same ball (inside strand, outside strand). Alternatively knit on each sock a few rounds watching the amount of remaining yarn until you get to the end or want to add a different color. Of course you can use the 2-at-a-time magic loop method too!

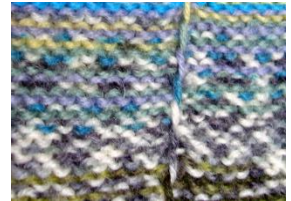
The Two Rounds of Each of Two Colors Stripes

This is a monster sock method where you change yarns every other round. The yarn isn't cut between use, but instead is simply carried *loosely* down over the 2 rounds until you pick it up again. This creates uniform stripes and results in only a few loose yarn ends to darn in later.

Start with one yarn and work your cuff (or toe if working toe-up) Next, join in the second yarn but *do not break off* the first color, just let it drop. Knit 2 rounds of the second color. Drop the second color, and pick up the first color from *underneath* the dropped second color. The working yarn just used will lie on top of the yarn that was used 2 rows down. It is important to overlap the two yarns like this so that you do not get a hole at the color change spot. Do not pull tightly at this point because you want the unused strands of yarn to be able to



stretch just like the rest of the sock. Give this tiny strand of yarn a tad more length than the length of the two rounds it is coming up over. There will be a twisted rope of yarn on the inside (wrong side) of the back of the sock leg and center bottom of the foot (see photo).



The first sample shown above uses different self-patterning yarns carried over large areas. To make the colors blend, you stop knitting with just one of the two colors making the stripes and pick up a new yarn. Then after an inch or two of blending, drop the second old color and add another color.

The second sample (navy blue and green/blue stripes) uses one solid colored yarn and one self-striping yarn. Combining a dark solid with a self-striping yarn gives a fun stained glass effect. Also, with solid colors you can use any textured stitch pattern to spice up an area.



Adding Pizazz when changing colors

Instead of just making stripes when changing yarns, you can work a round of knit one stitch of the old color then one stitch of the new color letting the unused yarn strand behind loosely. You can even repeat this for a second round either matching the colors worked in the first round for vertical columns, or alternating the colors for a jacquard effect.

Or you can make mini-stripes by knitting one round of the new color without breaking the old color, then change yarns as instructed for the "Two Rounds of Two Colors Stripes" above. Repeat as many times as you want.



Over-dyeing Yarn

Take all those small loose skeins of sock yarn and dunk them a weak, diluted dye bath of a single color. What will happen is that they will all take on a bit of the hue you dyed over them but still have the jacquard, striping, or any other type of patterning on the original yarns. Even a few packets of Kool-Aid and 2 tablespoons of white vinegar will give your wool blend yarns this effect.

Chunky Changes – My Favorite

A quick and easy way to make monster socks is to work many rows of each color before changing yarns. Try working 5 to 12 rows of a yarn before changing to a new yarn.



A fun method is to work large areas of two different self striping yarns. These grey and red socks use only 2 yarns. The grey stripes are one yarn and the speckled grey and red stripes are the second yarn.

Go for the Gusto!

Combine yarns, knit/purl stitch patterns and a touch of stranded colorwork for a fun sock!

For a raised garter stitch border start by knitting one round with the new color, then purl the next round (or two).

Add some small touches of Fair Isle stranded knitting. Remember to keep your stranded unused yarn loose so that the sock will maintain its elasticity. A simple checkerboard motif adds a lot of interest (make sure your total stitch count is a divisible by 4 such as 56, 60, 64, etc.).



CHECKERS

		●	●
		●	●
●	●		
●	●		
		●	●
		●	●

LEGEND

□	Color A
●	Color B

