

Six Sox Knitalong

POTLUCK FAIR ISLE SOCKS

By Terry Liann Morris – *SailingKnitter*

Just like potluck supper and covered dish parties where each person brings a piece of the meal, your leftover sock yarns will come together to create a delicious feast! Combine light colors, dark colors, self-striping, hand-dyed yarns or whatever you have to make your own artistic and unique socks. This sock is worked from the ribbed cuff down to the toe. Heel construction is the traditional flap & gusset method. Patterning is both charted and given in line-by-line written instructions. You choose whichever method you prefer.



Sizes (4)

Child's Large/Women's Small (Women's Medium, Women's Large/Men's Medium, Men's Large)

Materials

325, (350, 400, 425) yards assorted fingering or sock weight yarns.

Set US Size 1 (2.25) double point needles *or size needed to obtain gauge*

Gauge

8.5 sts = 1" over stockinette and stranded colorwork

Notes

1. For socks such as these where you are working with limited quantities of several yarns work both socks at the same time. Either use 2 sets of double point needles or another method of your choice.
2. You may choose to divide each yarn used into 2 equal portions so that you can use the same amount on each sock of the pair. Or simply use your best judgment. Of course some knitters are perfectly happy for "fraternal twin" socks which don't exactly match!
3. The idea is to use up whatever the knitter has on hand as leftovers or in stash and to mix up the colors. It should be a fun and liberating experience. Working two socks at the same time gives the knitter the freedom to simply grab the next yarn and use it up split between the pair. By the time you've combined so many different yarn colors, base yarns, and patterns the result is almost always fascinating.
4. Colors in chart and written instructions are simply called A or B or "new" or "old" because you are assigning your own leftovers to each section of patterning.
5. Self-striping or jacquard print sock yarns are good choices especially for the last few rounds of the leg, the heel, and the first few rounds of the foot gusset.
6. The plain knit rounds on the ribbed cuffs make for crisper color changes for the stripes yet still allow the benefits of the elasticity of the ribbed fabric.

Tips and Tricks for working Stranded Color Work / Fair Isle patterns on Socks

Fair Isle (stranded color work) socks are beautiful and fun to knit, but do present some problems with the fit. Stranded color work does not have the same elasticity (stretch capacity) as plain stockinette knitting. This can make the sock too narrow/tight especially on the upper leg portion, and can even get a sock that can't be pulled up over your heel area which is the widest part! Here are some suggestions you may want to try.

1. Use needles that are at least one size, if not two sizes larger than you would normally use for the leg portion of the sock. For this pattern, I recommend trying a US 1 ½ size (2.50mm) if you find your stranded fabric to be too tight and inelastic.
2. Avoid a lot of stranded color work over the instep area. This pattern has taken this tip into account.
3. Add more stitches on the leg portion of the sock, increasing if working toe-up, or decreasing if working cuff-down along the back of the leg. This will provide a more generous fit over a large calf.
4. Work stranded color work by turning your sock inside out. You will still see the right-side of the work inside, but will have the floats on the outside. This will make your floats circle a wider circumference and make it so that they can't "cheat" and jaywalk across the corner between needles.
5. When combining colors try to use a lighter colored yarn with a darker colored to make the patterning stand out more.
6. Gently stretch out the stitches on your right-hand needle as you strand the unused yarn across the back. This will give you longer floats and greater flexibility in your fabric.
7. For socks, overly loose stranding and gauge is preferable to too short floats and tight knitting.
8. "Catch" your floats if working more than 6 stitches straight of a single color (at 6 to 8 sts=1") to prevent snarling your toes in the floats. This pattern never strands over more than 3 sts but this is a good trick to remember if you encounter long floats on a future project.
9. Work with a wool or wool blend yarn which can be effectively wet-blocked.
10. Stretch your wet sock in several directions to even out the stitches and floats.

Although all these tips may sound intimidating, remember that stranded colorwork is really fun and so rewarding. Even just adding a simple Fair Isle peerie (small 3 to 5 round patterns) can turn a ho-hum pair of socks into sockbusters!

CUFF

Loosely cast on 56, (64, 72, 80) sts each on needles for both socks. Recommended is the German Twisted long-tail cast on method. Join into the round, being careful that the stitches are not twisted. Work striped 2x2 ribbing as follows.

Rnds 1 thru 4: *k2, p2, repeat from * to end of rnd

Rnd 5: Drop this first color yarn but do not break, join in new color of yarn, knit all around

Rnds 6 & 7: Continuing with new color *k2, p2, repeat from * to end of rnd

Rnd 8: Drop the new color yarn and pick up first yarn color used again, knit all around

Rnds 9 & 10: Continuing with first color yarn *k2, p2, repeat from * to end of rnd

Rnd 11: Break first color yarn, pick up the new (second) color yarn, knit all around
Continue working 2x2 ribbing in one color until cuff measures 2" (5cm).

LEG

Work from POTLUCK chart, or line-by-line instructions either to the end of the chart (rnd 56) or until the leg is your desired length. Repeat the 4 sts of the chart to the end of each round.

HEEL

The heel is centered below the back leg seam.

Set up for heel: Continuing in the same yarn color, knit around until there are 14, (15, 17, 18) sts remaining before the end of the round. Join in new heel color yarn, and k1 new color, k1 old color to the end of the round. Continuing to knit every other stitch in a different color work 14 (15, 17, 18) sts more.

Rearrange the sts so that you have the last 28 (30, 34, 36) sts worked all on one needle for your heel flap. Evenly divide the remaining 28 (34, 38, 44) sts which are your future instep on to 2 needles.

Turn work. Drop old color yarn but do not break. Using only the new heel color yarn, work the heel stitch pattern below.

Heel Stitch Pattern

Row 1 (Wrong Side): slip 1 as if to purl, purl to the end of the row

Row 2 (Right Side): slip 1 as if to knit, *k1, slip 1 as if to purl, repeat from * to last st, k1

Repeat these 2 rows until your heel flap is 2 (2, 2 ½, 2 ½) inches / 5 (5, 6.5, 6.5) cm long ending after working a wrong side row.

TURN HEEL

All slipped stitches at the beginning of each row are slipped purlwise when turning the heel.

ALL Sizes:

Row 1 (Right Side): Slip 1, k15, (16, 18, 19), SSK, k1, turn. You will leave 9 (10, 12, 13) sts un-worked

Row 2: Slip 1, p5, p2tog, p1, turn

Row 3: Slip 1, k6, SSK, k1, turn

Row 4: Slip 1, p7, p2tog, p1, turn

Row 5: Slip 1, k8, SSK, k1, turn

Row 6: Slip 1, p9, p2tog, p1, turn

Row 7: Slip 1, k10, SSK, k1, turn

Row 8: Slip 1, p11, p2tog, p1, turn

Row 9: Slip 1, k12, SSK, k1, turn

Row 10: Slip 1, p13, p2tog, p1, turn

Continue turning heel by following the instructions for your selected size.

Child's Large/Women's Small Size only

Row 11: Slip 1, k14, SSK, turn

Row 12: Slip 1, p15, p2tog, turn

Women's Medium Size only

Row 11: Slip 1, k14, SSK, k1, turn

Row 12: Slip 1, p15, p2tog, p1, turn

Women's Large / Men's Medium Size only

Row 11: Slip 1, k14, SSK, k1, turn

Row 12: Slip 1, p15, p2tog, p1, turn

Row 13: Slip 1, k16, SSK, k1, turn

Row 14: Slip 1, p17, p2tog, p1 turn

Men's Large Size only

Row 11: Slip 1, k14, SSK, k1, turn

Row 12: Slip 1, p15, p2tog, p1, turn

Row 13: Slip 1, k16, SSK, k1, turn

Row 14: Slip 1, p17, p2tog, p1, turn

Row 15: Slip 1, k18, SSK, turn

Row 16: Slip 1, p19, p2tog, turn

ALL sizes: Knit across remaining 16 (18, 20, 20) sts

GUSSETS

Note: If your heel flap has more of the slipped-stitch chains available to pick up than the recommended amount, then pick up one stitch for each chain and the twisted corner stitch and then decrease as instructed (below) to the final stitch count for your size. If your heel flap has less of the slipped-stitch chains available to pick up than the recommended amount, then try to pick up the **recommended amount** by lifting additional stitches where you can. It is important not to skimp on the number of stitches in this instep/gusset area.

Break heel color yarn. Join in a new color of yarn. With right side facing and the same needle, pick up and knit 15 (15, 17, 18) stitches along one edge of heel flap, plus make one stitch by lifting a strand at the "corner" between the heel flap and the instep stitches and knitting in the back to twist the stitch.

Next needle (instep): Pick up the waiting old color last used before working the heel and k1 this color, k1 the other color across the instep stitches all onto one needle. Break old leg color yarn.

Continuing in a single color, with free needles, make one stitch by lifting a strand at the "corner", and continue to pick up and knit 15 (15, 17, 18) stitches along the other side of the heel flap. With these same needles, knit across 8, (9, 10, 10) sts on the heel flap. This is the center bottom of the foot and is the point where each future round begins and ends. Thus all color changes will take place at the bottom of the foot. You should now have 24, (25, 28, 29) sts on the first needle, 28 (34, 38, 44) sts on the instep needle and 24, (25, 28, 29) sts on the last needle.

Rnd 1: knit all around

Rnd 2 (decreases): knit to the last 3 stitches of the first needle, knit 2 together, knit 1. On Instep needle, knit all sts. On last needle, knit 1, SSK, knit to end.

Repeat these 2 rounds two more times for a total of 6 rounds.

Next round: Join in a new color and work a round of alternating k1 new color and k1 old color.

Next round (decreases): *k3 new color k1 old color, repeat from * **and at the same time** make decreases as instructed in Rnd 2 above. The decreases will interrupt the pattern on this and future decrease rounds in the gusset areas. Keep patterning consistent on the instep needle.

Break old color yarn and using only the new color repeat Rnds 1 and 2 above three more times for a total of 6 rounds.

Join in a new color and begin working again from POTLUCK CHART or line-by-line instructions while **at the same time** working the gusset Rnds 1 and 2 above until you have 14 (15, 17, 18) stitches on the first and last needle (Instep needle will remain at 28 (34, 38, 44)). You will now have 56 (64, 72, 80) sts.

Rearrange the stitches so that you have 14 (16, 18, 20) on the first and last needles and 28 (32, 36, 40) on the instep needle.

FOOT

Continue working from the POTLUCK CHART or line-by-line instructions until foot measures 6 ½" (7", 8", 8 ½") *or to about 1 ½" (1 ¾", 2", 2 ¼") less than total desired length*. For smaller foot sizes omit patterning when visually pleasing, and for big feet add a few more rounds of plain knitting or even another repeat of one of the pattern areas.

TOE

The wedge style toe is worked in all stockinette stitch (no patterning unless you want it).

Rnd 1: knit to the last 3 sts of the first needle, k2tog, k1. Next needle, k1, SSK, knit to last 3 sts, k2tog, k1. On last needle, knit 1, SSK, knit to end

Rnd 2: Knit

Repeat **Rnds 1 and 2** until you have 32 sts remaining. Then work Rnd 1 only until there are 24 sts remaining. Continuing with the last needle, knit across the 6 sts remaining on the first needle. This will give you 12 sts each on 2 parallel needles. Graft (Kitchener) toe closed.

POTLUCK

●	●	●	●	56
●	●	●	●	55
●	●	●	●	54
●	●	●	●	53
●	●	●	●	52
●	●	●	●	51
●	●	●	●	50
●	●	●	●	49
●	●	●	●	48
●	●	●	●	47
●	●	●	●	46
●	●	●	●	45
●	●	●	●	44
●	●	●	●	43
●	●	●	●	42
●	●	●	●	41
●	●	●	●	40
●	●	●	●	39
●	●	●	●	38
●	●	●	●	37
●	●	●	●	36
●	●	●	●	35
●	●	●	●	34
●	●	●	●	33
●	●	●	●	32
●	●	●	●	31
●	●	●	●	30
●	●	●	●	29
●	●	●	●	28
●	●	●	●	27
●	●	●	●	26
●	●	●	●	25
●	●	●	●	24
●	●	●	●	23
●	●	●	●	22
●	●	●	●	21
●	●	●	●	20
●	●	●	●	19
●	●	●	●	18
●	●	●	●	17
●	●	●	●	16
●	●	●	●	15
●	●	●	●	14
●	●	●	●	13
●	●	●	●	12
●	●	●	●	11
●	●	●	●	10
●	●	●	●	9
●	●	●	●	8
●	●	●	●	7
●	●	●	●	6
●	●	●	●	5
●	●	●	●	4
●	●	●	●	3
●	●	●	●	2
●	●	●	●	1
4	3	2	1	

LEGEND

□	Color A
●	Color B

POTLUCK Line-by-line Instructions

- Rnd 1: *k1B, k1A, repeat from * to end of rnd
- Rnd 2: *k1B, k1A, k2B, repeat from * to end of rnd
- Rnds 3 & 4: knit all B
- Rnd 5: *k1A, k3B, repeat from * to end of rnd
- Rnds 6 & 7: *k1B, k1A, repeat from * to end of rnd
- Rnds 8, 9 & 10: knit all A
- Rnd 11: *k1B, k1A, repeat from * to end of rnd
- Rnd 12: *k1B, k1A, k2B, repeat from * to end of rnd
- Rnds 13, 14 & 15: knit all B
- Rnds 16 & 17: *k2A, k2B, repeat from * to end of rnd
- Rnds 18 & 19: *k2B, k2A, repeat from * to end of rnd
- Rnds 20 & 21: * k2A, k2B, repeat from * to end of rnd
- Rnds 22, 23 & 24: knit all B
- Rnd 25: *k1A, k1B, repeat from * to end of rnd
- Rnd 26: *k1A, k1B, k2A, repeat from * to end of rnd
- Rnds 27 thru 31: knit all A
- Rnd 32: *k1B, k1A, repeat from * to end of rnd
- Rnd 33: *k1B, k1A, k2B, repeat from * to end of rnd
- Rnds 34, 35 & 36: knit all B
- Rnd 37: *k2A, k2B, repeat from * to end of rnd
- Rnd 38: *k1B, k2A, k1B, repeat from * to end of rnd
- Rnd 39: *k1A, k2B, k1A, repeat from * to end of rnd
- Rnd 40: *k2B, k2A, repeat from * to end of rnd
- Rnds 41, 42 & 43: knit all B
- Rnd 44: *k1A, k1B, repeat from * to end of rnd
- Rnd 45: *k3A, k1B, repeat from * to end of rnd
- Rnds 46 & 47: knit all A
- Rnds 48 & 49: *k1A, k1B, repeat from * to end of rnd
- Rnds 50 thru 56: *knit all B