

Shell Lace Socks

Top down socks using shell lace pattern which is carried down the instep.

Please be familiar with knitting lace *in the round* before attempting this pattern!

Check out the photos on Ravelry or on my blog at <http://www.nancyknit.wordpress.com>

Difficulty: Medium

Size: Ladies Medium (I wear size 6½ shoe). This yarn is stretchy and forgiving, so just make the foot longer to accommodate a larger foot.

Materials:

- 1 Ball Plymouth Bungee (95% Superwash Wool, 5% Elite Spandex, 403 yards per ball), Color 24 Teal
- Size 4 Double Pointed Needles, set of 4 (or 5 if preferred)
- Notions: tapestry needle, scissors

Gauge: 13 stitches = 2" (Row measurement is not vital. Just make the sock leg and foot to your size requirements.)

Pattern Notes: I'm a tight knitter, so if you *know* that you knit rather loosely, you'll want to try these socks on smaller needles.

My Sock Philosophy: I have strong opinions about how to knit socks so they fit. First of all, socks should have a slight "negative ease". Negative ease means the socks will stretch to fit the feet, and that the socks look smaller than the feet when they're not being worn. If socks are larger than the feet they're intended for (called "positive ease"), they'll be floppy and your shoes will "eat" your socks. In my experience, socks with negative ease wear longer (or else my family is not hard on socks). About heels, the heel encompasses 50% of the leg stitches, and the heel flap should be square before turning. If the heel is not long enough (flattishly rectangular, if you will) the leg will begin to sag, and you'll forever be pulling your socks up, and that's a pain. Also, when I turn a heel, I try to get as many short rows in as possible. I'll explain that in the **Heel** section below.

Stitch Pattern: Shell Lace Pattern (This pattern is from Barbara Breiter's Stitches, Eyelets and Lace <http://www.knittingonthenet.com/stitches/shelllace.htm> but I converted it to be knit in the round. **ALSO**, when beginning each even row you need to "borrow" the last stitch of the odd row. That means that the S1 1 stitch of the even row is really the last stitch of the row you just finished.

Row 1 and all odd numbered rows: K

Row 2: S1 1, K2tog, pssso, K5, yo, K1, yo K2 (repeat 5x per round/row)

Row 4: S1 1, K2tog, pssso, K4, yo, K3, yo K1 (repeat 5x per round/row)

Row 6: S1 1, K2tog, pssso, K3, yo, K5, yo (repeat 5x per round/row)

Row 8: S1 1, K2tog, pssso, K2, yo, K1, yo, K5 (repeat 5x per round/row)

Row 10: S1 1, K2tog, pssso, K1, yo, K3, yo, K4 (repeat 5x per round/row)

Row 12: S1 1, K2tog, pssso, yo, K5, yo, K3 (repeat 5x per round/row)

SOCK PATTERN:

Cast on 54 stitches using your favorite stretchy cast-on method. Work in k1, p1 ribbing for 1½".

Begin Shell Lace Pattern Row 1 increasing 1 stitch on this row (55 stitches)
Continue in pattern until leg measures 9” (or desired leg length) ending with an even row (you’re ready for an odd or knit row).

BEGIN HEEL: K 14 stitches at the beginning of row, turn and P28 (slightly more than half of the leg stitches). Work in stockinette stitch until the heel flap is square, ending with a K row (my heel is 20 rows long).

TURN HEEL: (I begin turning the heel right after purling half the heel stitches, resulting in a sharper turn for the heel...it seems to look more like a foot). Purl across 15 stitches, P2tog, p1, leaving 10 stitches on left needle. Turn work (you’ll be knitting now), slide 1 stitch, K3, **S2K**, K1. Turn work (you’ll be purling now), P4, P2tog, P1. Turn work (to begin knitting), Sl 1, K5, **S2K**, K1. Turn work (to begin purling...I think you’ve got it!), Sl 1 P6, P2tog, P1. Turn work, Sl 1, K7, **S2K**, K1. Turn work, Sl 1, P8, P2tog, P1. Turn, Sl 1, K9, K2tog, K1. Turn, Sl 1, P10, P2tog, P1. Turn, Sl 1, K11, S2K, K1. Turn, Sl 1, P 12, P2tog, P1. Turn (last time!), Sl 1, K 13, S2K, K1. Sixteen Heel Stitches remain.

PICK UP STITCHES: Pick up 11 stitches from the right side of heel, work across 27 instep (top of foot) stitches keeping to pattern, pick up 11 more stitches along left heel flap.

Note on Dividing Stitches on Needles: I divide stitches on my double pointed (set of 4—one working needle, three holding stitches) needles like this: I keep all instep (top of foot) stitches (50%) on one needle so I can see the pattern. I put the eleven picked up stitches from the side of one heel flap onto a needle along with the nearest 8 stitches left from turning the heel (25% of stitches). The other eleven stitches from the heel flap and last 8 stitches from turning heel go on the other needle (25% of stitches).

Note on “Keeping to Pattern”: I used the “Sl 1, K2tog, pss0” of the pattern to decrease insole (sometimes called “gusset”) stitches (the extra stitches you need to decrease from the side heel flap). Because the “Sl 1, K2tog, pss0” decreases 2 stitches, you can only do this when decreasing the insole stitches. *After the decreases are finished, you must use Sl 1, K1, pss0 at the beginning and ending of the instep stitches.*

DECREASE INSOLE OR GUSSET STITCHES: Consider the middle of the heel as the beginning of the row. Decrease Row 1: Knit until the pattern calls for doing the “Sl 1, K2tog, pss0,” continue in pattern across instep. Complete the last “Sl 1, K2tog, pss0”, and knit to the end of round. Decrease Row 2: Knit. Repeat these two rows until 55 stitches are left. Continue foot until 1½” before desired length.

DECREASE FOR TOES: Knit one row, decreasing 1 stitch across row.

Decrease Row 1: Knit to three stitches before end of 1st needle, K2tog, K1. On Needle 2 (holding instep stitches) K1, S2K, knit to three stitches before end of needle, K2tog, K1. On Needle 3, K1, S2K, Knit to end of needle.

Decrease Row 2: Knit

Repeat these two rows until 20 stitches are left. Knit to end of 1st needle and combine stitches onto one needle with stitches on needle 3. Cut a 10” yarn tail, line up needles, and graft remaining stitches using Kitchener Stitch. (Check out youtube for a video on this...I think there are several.)