

Let's Talk About Socks, Baby...

A Toe-Up Sock, Deconstructed

1. The Toe.
 - Judy's Magic Cast On
 - Work increases until the fit is right/it's time to work the foot.

2. The Foot.

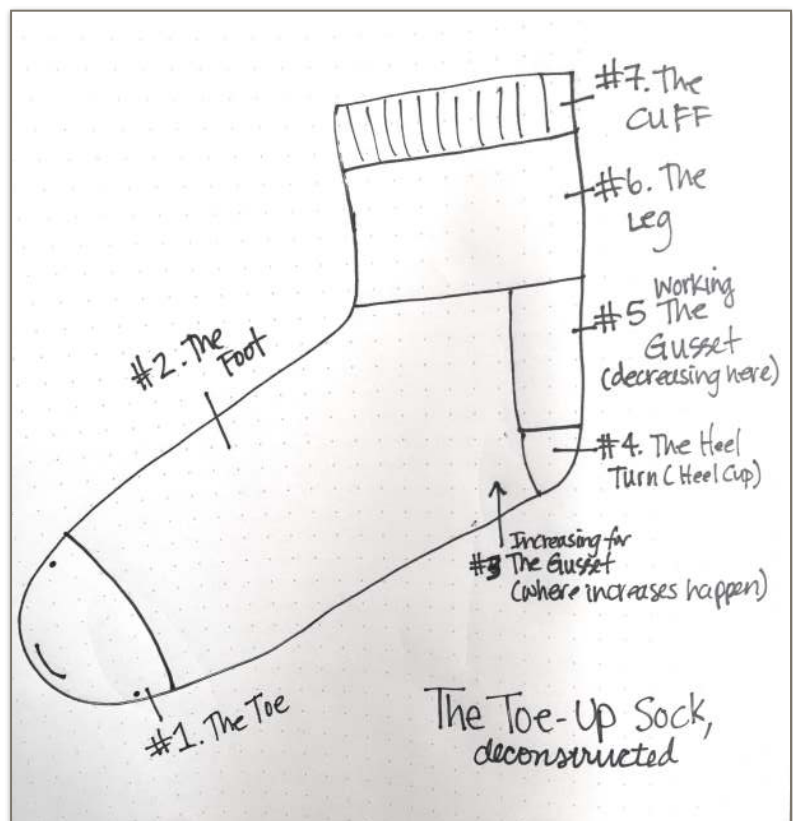
3. Increasing for the Gusset.
 - Row gauge a bit off? Refer to my helpful formula on page 4 to ensure your sock fits your foot!

4. The Heel Turn.
 - Use short rows to create a "cup" for the heel to sit in.

5. Working the Gusset.
 - Working in the round
 - Decreases to work away gusset increase stitches.

6. The Leg.

7. The Cuff.
 - Jeny's Surprisingly Stretchy Bind-Off is one of my favorites
 - <http://www.knitty.com/ISSUEfall09/FEATjssbo.php>.



Class Syllabus

CLASS #1: TACKLE THE TOE & TALK HEEL INCREASES

- Learn how to work Judy's Magic Cast On (JMCO)
- Work on m1r and m1l increases for toe
- Rapid increases at first, followed by gradual increases until toe width is reached
- Heel increases use the same increases as the toe

CLASS #2: TURN THAT HEEL

- Learn how to work short rows
- Make a heel cup
- Decrease heel stitches away

CLASS #3: BIND OFF STRETCHILY

- Using Jeny's Surprisingly Stretchy Bind Off, finish that sock!
- Bring any questions you have about sock knitting to class – this is all about trouble shooting
AND:
- Start your second sock!! Go over JMCO and toe increases again if need be.

HOMEWORK:

- Be a sock knitter! Make more socks, and you'll always have access to the YouTube videos for reference!
- I highly recommend making a few more wee socks, OR starting an actual pair!

Necessary Supplies & Tools for Sock Knitting

1. Needles.
 - Any method of small-circumference in-the-round knitting can be used:
 - Magic Loop (at least 32" cord)
 - Two circulars (two 24" work very well)
 - Double-pointed needles (either 4 or 5, depending on your preferred method)
 - DPNs are difficult to begin a toe-up sock with, and I do NOT recommend them for my toe-up sock patterns!
 - Teensy circulars (usually 8" or 9" circs)
 - these, too, would make starting a toe-up sock difficult
2. Stitch Markers.
 - You need 2 to mark gusset increases. I also use 1 to mark the top of my foot while working toe increases (the one I gave you works for this)
3. Tapestry Needle.
4. Measuring Tape.
5. Yarn - inarguably the most important component of a hand-knit sock.
 - A yarn with nylon content and/or super-tightly plied is best.
 - Superwash is helpful, too.
 - Loosely plied yarns will felt quickly with wear.

PRO TIP: I like to set up little sock project bags, with a few stitch markers pinned to the inside on a safety pin-type marker, a tape measure, wee snips or scissors, and, because I always need it, lip balm. I can also use the lip balm in a pinch if my hands are super dry.

1. the Magical Toe

Judy's Magic Cast On. It's truly magical. Basically, you are weaving your yarn between the tips of two needles until you have a row of "knit" stitches that have live edges on each the top and the bottom.

I made a slightly awkward video to help you along: <https://youtu.be/899g7XAY3Qs>

PRO TIP: I like to place a marker in the middle of my stitches on the top of my toe, both so I know where to begin my increase rounds, and so I only have to count half of a half of my stitches to know when my toe increases are almost done.

2. The Foot

Work the foot in whatever stitch pattern is called for. On the Winter Weekend AND Sundae Socks, a stockinette foot is all you're doing.

2.5. What if my row gauge is different from that of the pattern?

In case your row gauge differs from that in the pattern (it happens, and is nothing to sweat), here's a handy formula to estimate where you should begin your gusset increases:

Gusset Rows / Row Gauge over 1" = Gusset Length

Foot Length - Heel Turn Length - Length of Gusset = Where to begin Gusset Increases.

For Heel Turn Length: estimate about .25" for the Heel Turn.

SO, in practice, and using the numbers from the Sundae Socks (size Medium), here is what the formula looks like:

28 Gusset Rows / 8.75 sts to 1" = 3.2" Gusset Length + .25" for the Heel Turn = 3.5".

Subtract that number from the total length of your foot (in my case, an embarrassing 10"), so I start my heel increases at 6.5" every time I'm using fingering weight socks and 60 sts. Ta-Da!

3. Increasing for the Gusset

Things to remember as you increase for the Gusset:

- Gusset increases are marked by the placement of a marker on the outside of the existing stitches, and increases are made outside of those markers.
- They occur on each side of the back/bottom of the sock every other round, so two stitches are increased every other round.
- This gives your foot space to sit in the sock at its widest part.

4. Turning the Heel

- Use short-rows to get that little cup your heel will sit in as you wear your socks.
- Work stitches in the middle of your gusset markers only. The basic set-up is this:
 - Knit to 2 sts before the gusset marker
 - Work a wrap and turn
 - Purl to 2 sts before the gusset marker
 - Work a wrap and turn
 - Knit to 2 sts before the wrapped stitch
 - Work a wrap and turn
 - Continue like this until you have the stated number of stitches between your last wrapped stitches.

5. Decreasing the Gusset

- Get rid of all of those gusset stitches you created when increasing for the gusset, by decreasing them away.
- This will form the triangle of depth you can see on these socks.
- Start working your leg when all of the gusset stitches have been decreased away, and you're left with your initial number of stitches.

PRO TIP: If you're a stitch or two off, don't sweat it! You can either decrease or increase those away on your first leg round. The main thing to remember is that you have just executed the most difficult part of making a sock, and the rest is smooth sailing!

Now, let's get this sock finished!

6. The Leg

Now it's time to start working the leg pattern. For Sundae Socks, that's choosing a topping, and for Winter Weekend socks, it's mostly k2, p2 ribbing.

7. The Cuff

A loose bind off is tré important! There are a few options:

- Jeny's Surprisingly Stretchy Bind Off
 - <http://www.knitty.com/ISSUEfall09/FEATjsbo.php>
- A regular bind off with a larger needle and a loose hand.

The trick is to have a bind off that is both stretchy AND firm (so it holds up and doesn't look all floppy), and that, like many things in knitting, comes with practice.

NOW! CAST ON A SOCK.

I'm not kidding. The absolute best thing you can do to ensure this sock-knitting thing sticks is to practice, and by practice, that means knit a lot of socks. You'll become more comfortable with all of the bits and bobs that make up sock knitting, and one day, in the not-too-distant future, you will realize that you don't even need to look at your pattern - you will BE YOUR SOCK. Well, maybe that's a bit much, but you know what I'm saying, right?

Questions? Email me! hello@shannonsquire.com.

And please find me online - I love seeing what people make with my patterns, and love to connect with other crafty folk.

Ravelry: username is shannon

Ravelry group: [ravelry.com/groups/shannon-squire-designs](https://www.ravelry.com/groups/shannon-squire-designs)

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