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Serpentine Valentine Socks

by Katie Weston



A pair of socks for the love in your life, or maybe you're a Harry Potter fan who secretly thinks they belong in Slytherin.

Either way these snakes will curl around your ankles gently reminding you of your true love.

Materials

Total quantity of fingering weight yarn used for a pair of small female socks was 68g, 30g total of the main colour was used. For the other colours (2 if you do contrasting heels and toes) you can just use leftovers.

1 set of 2.75mm circular or double pointed needles

1 set of 2.25mm circular or double pointed needles

4 stitch markers

tapestry needle

As they're fair isle socks you need to use a larger size needle to produce appropriate size socks. I knit loosely so tend to use 2.75mm, if you think the top of the sock will be too small try going up to 3mm needles. If it still looks like being too small you can add extra stitches to the edges of the chart but will have longer floats to deal with.

Gauge- 8 stitches per inch on chart A

These socks do have quite long floats, I recommend catching the float every 3 or 4 stitches or getting them on could be interesting! This will also help keep the floats loose so avoid puckering, and the sock being too tight.

A guide for doing this can be found here

<http://www.philosopherswool.com/Pages/Twohandedvideo.html>, I don't actually use the 2 handed technique myself but some swear by it.

Cuff

Cast on 68 stitches (in a 2-2.5mm needle, whatever you normally knit socks on) and work in your preferred method of ribbing for about 1 inch, if you're using a different colour for heels and toes then do the ribbing in this colour as well, if not just pick a colour from your 2 fair isle colours.

Then start knitting using your larger needle (2.75mm) following chart A, you will work 2 chart repeats for each round. After completing one repeat of the chart A you are going to start knitting chart B.

Heel

Switch to your 3rd colour, and do not break the main colour, break yarn of the colour you did the snakes in.

The heel flap is worked over half the stitches. You need to go back to using your smaller needle to make the fabric more hard wearing.

The next 34 stitches are going to form your heel flap. You can just construct a regular heel by knitting across and purling back, slipping the first stitch of each row but I prefer to knit an eye of the partridge heel. To knit this you work the following rows until you have 16 slipped stitches on each side of the flap.

Row 1- [slip 1, knit 1] repeat to end

Row 2- slip 1, Purl across

Row 3- slip 1, knit 2 [slip 1, knit 1] repeat until one stitch left, knit 1.

Row 4- slip 1, Purl across

This gives a slightly more textured heel, that is a little thicker and more hard wearing.

Now you need to knit 19 stitches, ssk, knit 1 and turn your work around. Slip the first stitch, purl 6, p2tog, purl 1, turn your work again, slip the first stitch and knit to 1 stitch before the gap, ssk over the gap, knit 1. Turn again, slip the first stitch, purl across to 1 stitch before the gap, p2tog across the gap and purl 1. Repeat until you have incorporated all the stitches at the bottom of the flap.

Pick up the main colour, and your 2.75mm needle. Knit across the top of the foot, and then continue in the round picking up stitches that were slipped along the edge of the heel flap as you go. When you get back to the top of the foot start working chart A across the 34 stitches that form the top of the foot. Place a marker, next work out how many stitches you have on the bottom of your foot.

However many you have you are only going to end up keeping the middle 33 stitches. Count how many you have, take 33 off that number, and divide the number you have left by 2, half will form the gusset on one side, the other half the gusset on the other.

Gusset

Work the gusset stitches using alternate stitches of your 2 main colours, place another marker and work chart C across the bottom 33 stitches. Place a marker and knit the next block of gusset stitches alternating between your 2 main colours. You carry on working chart A across the top of the foot, when you get to the end of chart A, move on to chart B.

Every alternate round you are going to decrease the stitches from the groups of stitches marked at the side of the heel flap to form the gusset. For the first set of stitches you k1 and ssk, work the set of marked stitches as stripes of colour, then work chart C, knit across the group of marked stitches as stripes until you get to the last 3 stitches, k2tog k1.

Continue in this manner until all the stitches in the marked groups have been decreased, and you have 33 stitches on the sole. Keep your markers in place to mark where the top and bottom of the foot meet.

Then continue in pattern until your sock is approximately 2 inches shorter than the length of your foot, for a ladies size 5 (UK) this is 1 repeat of chart A and 1 of chart B. You may have to work a few rounds plain before starting to decrease for the toe.

Toe

Switch back to your smaller needle, and your 3rd colour, either side of the markers placed to mark the top and bottom of the foot you are going to decrease stitches. k2tog, k1, slip marker, k1 ssk knit across the top of the foot, k2tog, k1, slip marker, k1, ssk, knit across the bottom of the foot, knit 1 round plain, then work your decrease round again.

Keep going in this manner until you have approximately 20 stitches on the top and 20 on the bottom of the foot. You then start decreasing every round until you have only 3 or 4 stitches left on the top and 3 or 4 on the bottom of the foot. Break yarn, thread a tapestry needle and pull the yarn through the remaining stitches on the needles.

Weave in ends, wash and block, repeat for your second sock and wear with pride.



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Chart A

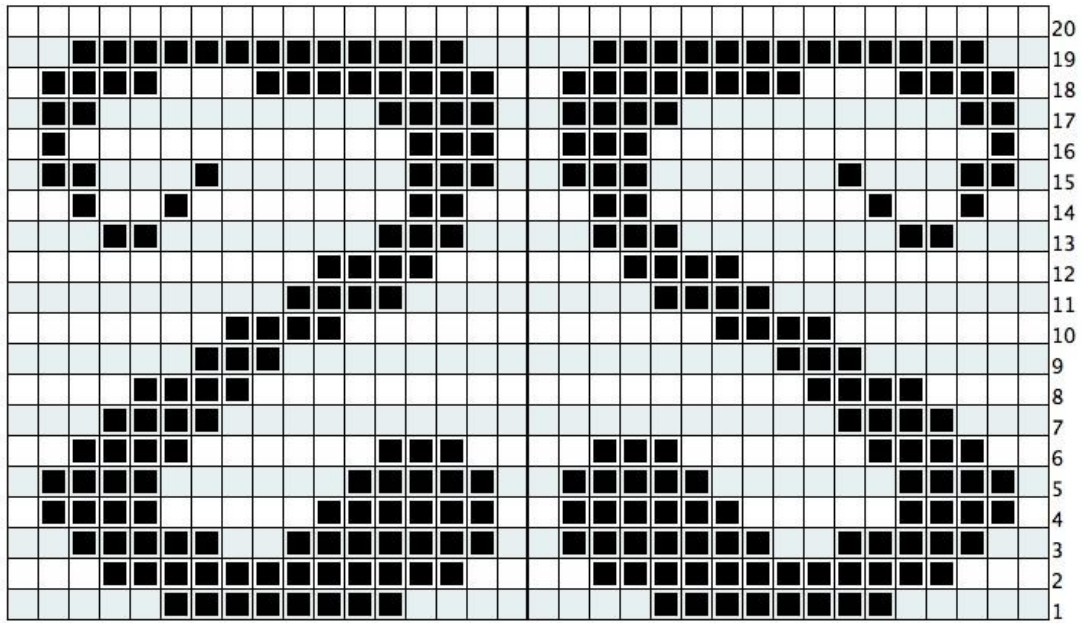


Chart B

