

ANOTHER **BROKEN RIB** SOCK PATTERN

A cuff-down, heel-flap-and-gusset sock with a centered 2 × 6 broken rib.



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About This Pattern

These are very basic cuff-down socks with a heel flap & gusset construction, textured with a 2x6 broken rib stitch pattern. This pattern was inspired by Virginia Rose-Jeanes's much-loved pattern *Vanilla Latte Socks*, which I have knitted and modified many times. Virginia's original PDF is no longer available, but you can still access her [series of YouTube tutorials](#) demonstrating it.

Although I certainly didn't invent the idea of knitting broken rib socks, my instructions here are written from scratch, and this is not a reproduction of *Vanilla Latte*. These instructions reflect my favorite sock construction techniques, and I incorporate a version of the broken rib stitch pattern designed to center the ribbing across the instep.

YARN SELECTION

When you have a beautiful hand-dyed sock yarn, like this peach & cream artisanal tonal by [Global Backyard](#), you need a simple pattern that lets the yarn do the talking. When that's the order of the day, you can never go wrong with a broken rib!

I have a love-hate relationship with high-contrast tonal or variegated yarns. I love how they look on the skein, but it can be hard to find a stitch pattern that complements the yarn vs. competing with it.

One other reason I am wary of knitting socks with variegated yarn is that I despise it when the colors pool at the gusset. I explain what that means and how to avoid it at the end. I've also built a little optional "insurance policy" against pooling into my pattern instructions below for paranoid knitters like me.



SIZE	Adult Medium, 7.5 in leg circumference
YARN	Global Backyard Fingering Weight Sock Yarn in Peach Orchard 100 g / 437 yd, 85% extra fine superwash merino / 15% nylon
NEEDLES	Set of five US 1.5 (2.5 mm) DPNs, or size needed for gauge
GAUGE	34.5 sts and 46 rows = 4 in / 10 cm in stockinette

Broken Rib Stitch Pattern

You will knit the broken rib stitch pattern on the leg of the sock and across the instep.

Round 1: Knit all sts.

Round 2: K3, [p2, k6] to last 3 sts, k3.

Repeat Rounds 1–2 for pattern.

Sock Pattern

Cast on 64 sts.

Divide sts evenly across 4 DPNs, with 16 sts on each needle. Join to work in the round, being careful not to twist.

CUFF

Round 1: P1, [k2, p2] to last 3 sts, k2, p1.

Repeat this round 11 more times, or until cuff measures approximately 1".

LEG

Work the Broken Rib Stitch Pattern until leg measures approximately 6.5" from cast-on edge, or to your desired length.

IMPORTANT: End after working Round 2 of the Broken Rib Stitch Pattern.

Yarn Pooling Insurance Policy: If you worry that your yarn may pool around the gusset, now is the time to hedge your bet! Just take a minute to insert a lifeline a few rows before you end your leg. If you are unhappy with the look of your gusset, you can easily unravel back to this point and swap in a short row heel.

HEEL FLAP

The heel flap is worked back and forth over the 32 sts on Needles 3 and 4 only. The 32 instep sts on Needles 1 and 2 will remain where they are until we reach the gusset.

Turn work so the wrong side is facing.



Row 1, WS: Sl 1, p3l. Turn.

Row 2, RS: [Sl 1, k1] to end. Turn.

Repeat Rows 1–2 fourteen more times, for a total of 30 heel flap rows. \

Work Row 1 once more.

This creates a 2" heel flap at the pattern gauge. Feel free to adjust that length as needed for a comfortable fit.

TURN HEEL

Row 1, RS: Sl 1, k18, ssk, k1, turn.

Row 2, WS: Sl 1, p7, p2tog, p1, turn.

Row 3: Sl 1, knit to 1 st before the gap, ssk, k1, turn.

Row 4: Sl 1, purl to 1 st before the gap, p2tog, p1, turn.

Repeat Rows 3–4 until all heel sts have been worked.

20 heel sts remain.

GUSSET SETUP

You are now going to resume working in the round and you are going to shift the BOR to the center of the sole. The needle numbers will change accordingly.

Knit 10 sts. This is your new BOR.

Using an empty DPN, knit the remaining 10 heel sts. This is now Needle 1.

Continuing with Needle 1, pick up and knit 1 st in each slipped stitch along the first side of the heel flap. Pick up 1 extra st in the corner if desired to help prevent a gap.

Knit all your instep stitches that have been resting since you started the heel flap. These are now referred to as needles 2 and 3.

Using an empty DPN (needle 4), pick up and knit 1 extra st in the corner if desired, then pick up and knit 1 st in each slipped stitch along the second side of the heel flap. Continuing with this needle, knit the remaining 10 heel sts.

You should now have exactly 16 sts each on Needles 2 and 3. Needles 1 and 4 will have around 26 stitches each. *(The exact number will vary if you modified the length of your heel flap or if you skipped picking up extra stitches in the corners.)*

GUSSET DECREASES

Continue working in the round. (Remember, the BOR is now at the center of the sole.) Your sole and gusset sts on needles 1 and 4 are worked in stockinette. Your 32 instep stitches will be worked in the Broken Rib Stitch Pattern as established.

Gusset Decrease Round:

Needle 1: Knit to last 2 sts, k2tog.

Needle 2: Knit Round 2 of the Broken Rib Stitch Pattern.

Needle 3: Knit Round 2 of Broken Rib Stitch Pattern.

Needle 4: Ssk, knit to end.

Non-Decrease Round:

Knit all stitches.

Repeat these 2 rounds until 16 sts remain on each needle.

64 sts remain in total (32 instep sts and 32 sole sts.)

FOOT

Continue in the round, working the 32 instep sts in Broken Rib Stitch Pattern as established and the 32 sole sts in stockinette.

Work until the foot measures approximately 1.5" shorter than the desired finished sock length.

End at your BOR, in the center of the sole.

TIP! I have created a free calculator that uses your exact row gauge to tell you how long to knit the foot before you start your toe decreases. It's pre-programmed with recommended sock lengths for a range of U.S. men's and women's shoe sizes, or it will help you calculate a custom length based on a foot or shoe measurement.

[You can access the calculator here](#), and I've written a post with an instructional video [here](#).

TOE

From this point on, work all sts in stockinette.

Decrease Round:

Needle 1: Knit to last 3 sts, k2tog, k1.

Needle 2: K1, ssk, knit to end.

Needle 3: Knit to last 3 sts, k2tog, k1.

Needle 4: K1, ssk, knit to end.

Plain Round:

Knit all sts.

Repeat the Decrease Round followed by a plain round until 40 sts remain.

Then work the Decrease Round *every round* until 20 sts remain.

You are now at the BOR, at the center of the sole. Knit 5 more sts to reach the side of the sock.

Arrange the remaining sts so there are 10 instep sts on one needle and 10 sole sts on another needle. Graft the toe closed using Kitchener stitch.

Weave in ends and make the second sock the same way.

ABBREVIATIONS

BOR: beginning of round

DPN: double-pointed needle

k: knit

k2tog: knit 2 stitches together

p: purl

p2tog: purl 2 stitches together

RS: right side

sl: slip 1 stitch purlwise unless otherwise stated

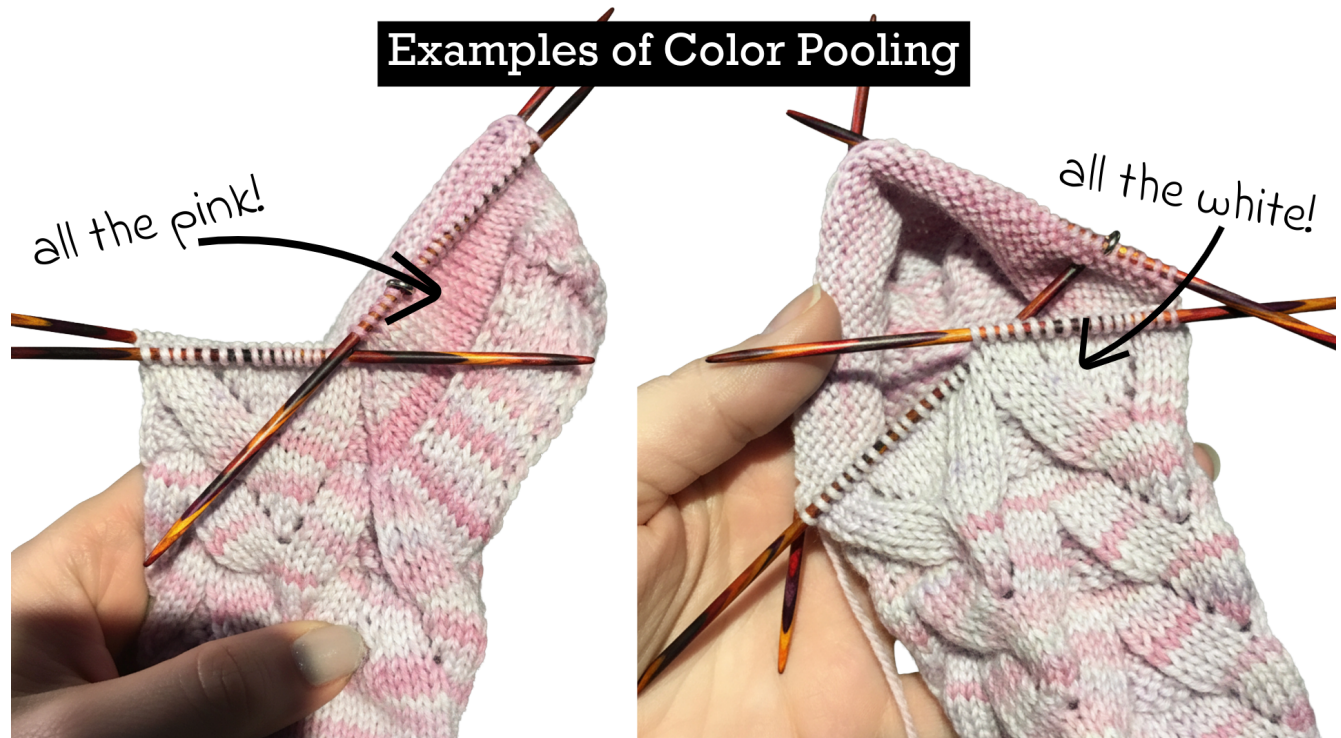
ssk: slip 1 stitch knitwise, slip 1 stitch knitwise, knit the 2 slipped stitches together through the back loops

st/sts: stitch/stitches

WS: wrong side

Addendum on Yarn Color Pooling

What is pooling? Color pooling happens when colors in a tonal or variegated yarn stack in the same place instead of scattering evenly. In socks, this often appears as large patches or stripes of one color.



Pooling around a heel flap and gusset.

Why does it happen when you knit a heel flap and gusset?

A heel flap and gusset construction changes the stitch count a lot: first you work back and forth over only half the sock, then you pick up lots of gusset stitches and slowly decrease back down. Those changing row lengths can line up with the yarn's color repeats in a way that makes one color gather at the instep, heel, or gusset in a way that is inconsistent with how the colors patterned with a uniform stitch count on the sock leg and foot.

How can a short row heel help?

A short row heel, like the [Fish Lips Kiss Heel](#), keeps the sock's overall stitch count much more consistent and doesn't add a gusset. Because there are fewer dramatic changes in row length, the colors are less likely to stack in obvious patches, so pooling is often minimized or hidden.



The same yarn with a Fish Lips Kiss short-row heel.

Can you tell in advance whether a yarn will pool?

You can make an educated guess, but it's hard to know for sure because pooling depends on how the yarn's color repeats line up with the pattern, stitch count, gauge, and heel construction.

Be wary of yarns with long, clear, repeating sections of color. If the yarn has a predictable repeat, those colors may start landing in the same places over and over to create a pattern. Then, when the stitch counts change, the pattern will change. It's very hard to assess this in the skein, but once you start knitting the leg, you will have a better sense of how predictable the repeat is. On my pink and white socks above, there is a pretty regular striping going on, which is a good clue.

Speckled, softly tonal, blended, or irregularly dyed yarns usually behave better because the colors are more scattered. Shorter or less predictable color changes are less likely to stack into big patches.

I've found that trial and error is really the only way to go. That's why I always insert a lifeline before the heel flap so if I spot any unwanted pools of color, I can unravel back to that point and use a different heel.