

Kick Up Your Heels - Options for Nalbinding Socks

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Heel 1. Assuming you have started at the toe, stitch the sock until it reaches the top of your instep (you can't add more rows without running into your leg). With the sock on your foot, mark the locations for where the cuff will join. Generally, this is about one-third the circumference of the sock. When you reach the right-hand marker, create your stitches detached from the body of the sock. Continue making a "caterpillar" until it is long enough to reach around your ankle without stretching. Join to the body of the sock at the left-hand marker. Continue stitching around until you run out of yarn. Start a new piece of yarn at the point where the foot of the sock and the cuff join. Stitch across the bottom of the sock. As you reach the corner, decrease 2-3 stitches, then continue around the bottom of the cuff until you come back to your starting place. Each time you reach a corner, decrease sharply to make the 90-degree turn. Each row becomes smaller until all the space is filled. Try the sock on several times during the process and adjust the fit if needed. You may want to decrease a stitch at the back of the heel to make the heel curve. This heel style works equally well if you have started your sock from the cuff rather than the toe. Then, after reaching your foot, make the caterpillar long enough to go comfortably around your instep. I have found this method to work with all nalbinding stitches.



Heel 1b. Stitch the sock until it almost reaches the top of your instep. Mark off the locations where it is flat on the bottom of your foot. Begin the caterpillar at the first marker. Make it long enough to reach all the way around the bottom of your foot, and reconnect at the second marker, and continue around the tube. (This is shorter than the length needed to reach around your ankle.) Attach new yarn inside the caterpillar and work around the inside, decreasing as needed to keep the stitches flat, until you reach the center of the spiral. This method is similar to making the top of a hat. Make the sides and cuff of the sock the same way as heel 2.



Heel 2. Stitch the sock until it almost reaches the top of your instep. Put the sock on your foot and mark the locations where the sock is flat on the bottom of your foot. Continue stitching until you reach the center between the markers. Make a caterpillar that is about two-thirds the remaining length of your foot. Turn the piece and continue stitching along the “bottom” side of the caterpillar until you reach the body of the sock. Connect into the body, turn and stitch around to the other side, decreasing as needed to make the turn and keep the piece flat. Continue adding rows until the flap is the width of the area between the markers, and the total sock is as long as your foot. The number of rows needed will depend on the weight of your yarn.

To make the sides of the foot, continue going around, however, do not add stitches at the curve. This will make the rows vertical. You will need to decrease as you reach the body of the sock, just like in heel 1. When the sides are about 2.5 – 3 inches, you will need to add stitches at the “corners” or center, so that the cuff will stand up and have enough room to fit around your foot.





completing heel 2

Heel 3: Stitch the sock until it reaches the instep. Put the sock on your foot and mark the locations where the sock is flat on the bottom of your foot. Instead of making a caterpillar, stitch back and forth across the width between the markers. This method works particularly well with the Coptic stitch, or the Danish stitch, but can be used with any simple stitch. In all cases you will need to add a stitch at the end of each row to maintain a straight line. When the foot flap is almost the length of your foot, stop adding that stitch. It will make the end of the sock rounded. To make the sides, join the yarn at the point where the heel flap and body of the sock meet. Stitch around the heel flap until you reach the other side. Connect to the sock body, turn and work in the opposite direction. (The more complex your stitch, the fussier this is to do.) Continue in this way until the sides are about 2 ½ to 3 inches (try it on!). At that point you will be able to stitch completely around the circle and complete the cuff.

