

## Priscilla's Dream Socks

— PRISCILLA GIBSON-ROBERTS —

**Finished Size** To fit a woman's medium foot: 8" (20.5 cm) around and 9" (23 cm) long.

**Yarn** Dale of Norway Tiur (60% mohair, 40% wool; 126 yd [115 m]/50 g): Solid Socks: #4136 red, 3 skeins. Striped Socks: #7053 teal, 2 skeins; #5111 silver, 1 skein.

**Needles** Size 2.5 mm and 3.0 mm: set of 5 double-pointed (dpn). Adjust needle sizes if necessary to obtain the correct gauge.

**Notions** Tapestry needle.

**Gauge** 16 sts and 20 rows = 2" (5 cm) in St st worked in the round on smaller needles.

PRISCILLA GIBSON-ROBERTS has been studying handknitted socks from around the world for nearly a decade, ever since she began doing research for her book *Ethnic Socks & Stockings*, published in 1995. While studying hundreds of pairs of socks during this time, she has relished her discoveries about the ways that different cultures approach their sock-knitting. She has welcomed, even celebrated, their varying techniques and aesthetic principles, never judging one culture's ways "better" than another's. Still, Priscilla has always hoped to find the perfect structure: a sock that is durable, fits well, is flexible in terms of design, and is easy to knit and repair. Much to her surprise, she found the key in a pair of machine-made socks that she bought because she wanted to copy the lace around the leg. When she put these socks on, she realized they fit perfectly—not at all like the average manufactured sock. Upon close examination, she found that the construction of her dream socks was based upon a short-row technique for both heel and toe. Although short-row techniques for heels have been around since virtually the beginning of handknitting, short-row toes (a mainstay in the machine-knitting world), as far as Priscilla knows, have not been used in handknitting—until now.

Instructions are given in this pattern for the socks shown in the photograph. If you would like to knit these socks in a different size or gauge, refer to the chart on page 78. To see how Interweave staff members made Priscilla's socks their own, see this issue's staff project on page 98.



## Stitches

**ssp:** Slip 2 sts individually kwise, place these 2 sts back onto left needle, take right needle behind these 2 sts and purl them together through their back loops.

**sssp:** Slip 3 sts individually kwise, place these 3 sts back onto left needle, take right needle behind these 3 sts and purl them together through their back loops.

## PLAIN SOCKS

### Leg

With larger dpn and using the old Norwegian method on page 78, CO 64 sts. Divide sts evenly onto 4 dpn so that there are 16 sts on each needle. Join into a rnd, being careful not to twist sts. The rnd begins at the inside of the leg. **Set up ribbing:** K1, \*p2, k2; rep from \*, end k1. Cont as established, work k2, p2 ribbing until piece measures about 3½" (9 cm) from beg. Change to smaller dpn and cont as established until piece measures 7" (18 cm) from beg. Change to St st and work 12 rnds, ending last rnd at end of needle 4.

### Heel

The heel is worked back and forth in short rows on the 32 sts on needles 1 and 2 for left sock (needles 3 and 4 for right sock).

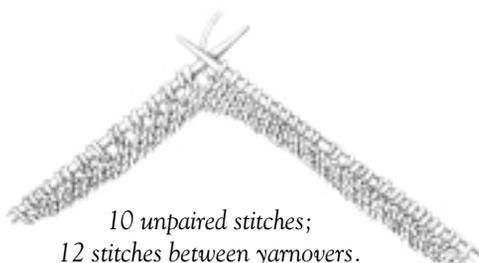
#### Heel back:

**Row 1:** (RS) K31, turn.

**Row 2:** Yo backwards (see box titled Heel and Toe Construction at right), p30 (do not work the last st), turn.

**Row 3:** Yo, knit to paired sts made by yo of previous row (the yo will form a loop out of the side of the adjacent st), leaving 3 sts on left needle (ie., do not knit the pair), turn.

**Row 4:** Yo backwards, purl to paired sts made by the yo of the previous row, turn. Rep these last 2 rows until there are 10 unpaired sts in the center of the heel, and 12 sts total bet yarnovers (10 sts between the paired sts plus 1 st from the first paired st on each side), ending with a RS row, but do not turn as shown below. This now becomes the first row of the heel base. Cont with the heel base as foll:



**Row 1:** K1 (the first st of the pair), correct the mount of the yo (sl the yo pwise, enter slipped yo with the left needle tip from front to back to correct stitch mount, place it on left needle), k2tog (the yo with the first st of the next pair, leaving a yo as the first st on the left needle), turn.

**Row 2:** (WS) Yo backwards, purl to paired st made by yo of previous row, purl the first st of the pair, ssp (the yo with the first st of the next pair, leaving a yo as the first st on the left needle), turn.

**Row 3:** Yo, knit to the paired st made by yo of previous row, knit the first st of the pair (the next 2 loops will be yos), correct the mount of each of these yos, k3tog (2 yos with the first st of the next pair), turn.

**Row 4:** Yo backwards, purl to next yo, (the next 2 loops are yos), sssp (2 yos with the first st of the next pair), turn.

**Row 5:** Yo, knit to next yo (the next 2 loops will be yos), correct the mount of each of these yos, k3tog (2 yos with the first st of the next pair), turn.

Rep the last 2 rows until all yos of the heel back have been consumed, ending with Row 4. The last turn will bring RS facing. Yo, knit to end of needle 1—17 sts each on needles 1 and 2 (16 regular sts plus 1 yo). Knit to the yo at the end of needle 2, place this yo onto needle 3 (instep needle), k2tog (the yo plus first st of needle 3), work to last st on needle 4, place last st on needle 4 onto needle 1 and ssk (last st of needle 4 plus yo at beg of needle 1)—64 sts rem. (Note: This final dec may appear to form a gap if the stitches loosened while the heel was worked. To minimize the gap, work the dec and several more sts on this row onto needle 4, then reposition the sts on the needles later. Or, close the gap by picking up 1 st in the gap onto the left needle, placing the last st on needle 4 onto needle 1, and ssk.)

### Foot

Cont even until piece measures 7" (18 cm) from back of heel.

### Toe

Work toe exactly as the heel. Beg with the bottom of the toe, then the top. After making the last turn, the toe is joined to the top of the sole with a zigzag bind-off (a technique borrowed from historic Greek knitting): Line stitches up on two needles,

one for the toe and one for the foot sts. Holding these two needles together, p1 from back needle, k1 from front needle, pass first st over. \*P1 from back, pass over. K1 from front, pass over. Rep from \* until 1 st rem on needle, working last st tog with its accompanying yo. Break yarn and draw tail through last st. (If you'd prefer an invisible join, work the top of the toe first, then the bottom, then use the Kitchener st (see Glossary, page 100) to graft the toe sts to the sole sts. This places the graft on the sole where tension difficulties will be less noticeable.)

## STRIPED SOCKS

With teal, CO 64 sts as for plain sock.

### Leg

Work leg as for plain version, alternating 4 rnds teal with 4 rnds silver 8 times total in k2, p2 rib, then change to St st and work 4 rnds teal, 4 rnds silver, then 4 rnds teal, 2 rnds silver.

### Heel

The heel on one sock is worked on needles 1 and 2, with the first stitch in silver,

## Heel and Toe Construction

The heel and toe are constructed with short rows that produce an hourglass shape. Each short row begins with a yarnover that is instrumental in preventing gaps. When the knit side is facing, work the yarnover in the standard manner, bringing yarn forward under needle then over the top to the back. When the purl side is facing, bring yarn to the back under needle, then over the top to the front as illustrated. This forms a "backward" yarnover—the leading side of the loop is on the back of the needle—but the distance traveled by the yarn will equal that of the standard yarnover on the knit side, an important distinction for truly even stitches (see "Beyond the Basics" on page 72). The stitch mount will be corrected later.



changing to teal for the rest of the heel. When the last turn has been made, change to silver, decreasing with k2tog on the first side, ssk at the other. Complete 4-row stripe in silver. To center the joins on the opposite side for the second sock, work the heel on needles 3 and 4. Knit across needles 1 and 2 in silver (3rd row of stripe). Knit 1 in silver on needle 3. Break off teal (or work from other end of ball to elimi-

nate extra ends to work in later) from beginning of round. Begin heel as before with teal on the second st. When the last turn has been made, change to silver, dec with an ssk on the first side, k2tog at the other. Complete 4 row stripe in silver. Cont stripes as established in St st to desired foot length (6 teal-silver stripe repeats), ending with 4 rnds silver.

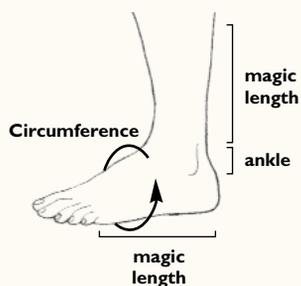
## Toe

Work in teal, beg with top of toe and working over to the bottom. With teal, use Kitchener st (see Glossary, page 100) to graft toe to bottom of foot, working the yotog with the last st. ∞

Priscilla Gibson-Roberts is putting the final touches on *Simple Socks: Plain and Fancy*, to be available this winter from Nomad Press.

## Transform Priscilla's Dream Socks into *Your* Dream Socks

To adapt the pattern for Priscilla's Dream Socks to a different gauge or size, plug in the numbers provided here. Follow the illustration to figure out your sock circumference measurement, then use that "magic number" to determine all of the other sock measurements and stitch counts.



### Proportions for an average foot:

Circumference (C) = 100%

Cast-on stitches: 100% of Circumference (adjusted if necessary to be divisible by 4)

Ankle rnds: 20% of Circumference

Heel/toe stitches: 50% of Circumference

Stitches between yarnovers: 20% of Circumference (adjust to closest even number)

Magic length: Circumference minus 1"

Gauge (sts per inch)	5	6	7	8	9
<b>C = 5½" (14 cm; child shoe size 3-7)</b>					
cast-on sts	28	32	40	44	48
ankle rnds	6	6	8	9	10
heel/toe sts	14	16	20	22	24
sts bet yos	6	6	8	8	10
magic length	4½"				

Gauge (sts per inch)	5	6	7	8	9
<b>C = 6½" (16.5 cm; child shoe size 8-13)</b>					
cast-on sts	32	40	44	52	60
ankle rnds	6	8	9	10	12
heel/toe sts	16	20	22	26	30
sts bet yos	6	8	8	10	12
magic length	5½"				

Gauge (sts per inch)	5	6	7	8	9
<b>C = 7½" (19 cm; woman's small)</b>					
cast-on sts	36	44	52	60	68
ankle rnds	7	9	10	12	14
heel/toe sts	18	22	26	30	34
sts bet yos	8	8	10	12	14
magic length	6½"				

Gauge (sts per inch)	5	6	7	8	9
<b>C = 8" (20.5 cm; woman's medium)</b>					
cast-on sts	40	48	56	64	72
ankle rnds	8	10	11	12	14
heel/toe sts	20	24	28	32	36
sts bet yos	8	10	12	12	14
magic length	7"				

Gauge (sts per inch)	5	6	7	8	9
<b>C = 8½" (21.5 cm; woman's large)</b>					
cast-on sts	44	52	60	68	76
ankle rnds	9	10	12	14	15
heel/toe sts	22	26	30	34	38
sts bet yos	8	10	12	14	16
magic length	7½"				

Gauge (sts per inch)	5	6	7	8	9
<b>C = 9" (23 cm; man's small)</b>					
cast-on sts	48	56	64	72	80
ankle rnds	10	11	13	14	16
heel/toe sts	24	28	32	36	40
sts bet yos	10	12	14	14	16
magic length	8"				

Gauge (sts per inch)	5	6	7	8	9
<b>C = 9½" (24 cm; man's medium)</b>					
cast-on sts	48	56	68	76	84
ankle rnds	10	12	14	15	17
heel/toe sts	24	28	34	38	42
sts bet yos	10	12	14	14	16
magic length	8½"				

Gauge (sts per inch)	5	6	7	8	9
<b>C = 10" (25.5 cm; man's large)</b>					
cast-on sts	56	60	72	80	88
ankle rnds	12	12	14	16	18
heel/toe sts	28	30	36	40	44
sts bet yos	12	12	14	16	18
magic length	9"				

## Old Norwegian Cast-On

Leaving a long tail, place a slip knot on needle. Place thumb and index finger of your left hand between the two yarn ends and close other fingers around them, twist wrist so that palm faces upward, and spread thumb and index finger to make a V of yarn between them (Figure 1). Bring needle in front of yarn around thumb, under both yarns around thumb, down into center of loop around thumb, and forward (Figure 2). Bring needle over top of yarn around index finger, catch this yarn, and bring needle back down into loop around thumb (Figure 3), turning thumb slightly to make room for needle to pass through. Drop loop off thumb (Figure 4) and place thumb back in V configuration while tightening up resulting stitch on needle (Figure 5).

