

Panda Sky Cat Socks



These socks grew out of my experiments with the Master Sky pattern from Cat Bordhi's book, *New Pathways for Sock Knitters Book One* (<http://www.catbordhi.com/NP1.html>). They were designed to look good with Panda Cotton, which has a sort of nubby texture.

I call this my **Panda** (Cotton) **Sky** (Architecture) **Cat** (Bordhi) **Sock** (duh!) pattern.

To understand many of the terms and techniques in this pattern, please refer to Ms. Bordhi's book or check out her website, <http://www.catbordhi.org>.

Directions are given for 5 dpns. Experienced 2-circ knitters can probably figure out how to adjust for 2 circular needles.

SIZE

Women's Medium (Large? See Master Numbers, below).

MATERIALS

- Crystal Palace Panda Cotton, or other sock yarn with good stitch definition.
- 1 set of 5 US #1/2.25mm double-pointed needles.
- Tapestry needle for happy Kitchener goodness

Important safety tip: Use needles with *very sharp points* for working with Panda Cotton, which splits like the dickens but looks mahvellous. I recommend the nickle-plated dpns from KnitPicks.

GAUGE

30 sts = 4" in stockinette stitch (7.5 sts per inch)

ABBREVIATIONS

Special Cat Bordhi terms are marked with (CB).

sl = slip purlwise

ssk = slip, slip, knit

EOR = end of round

RS = right side

WS = wrong side

[A], [B], etc. mean you've reached marker A or B; just slide it over to the right-hand ndl.

LLinc = left-leaning increase (CB)

LRinc = right-leaning increase (CB)

cw = conceal wrap (CB)

w&t = wrap and turn (CB)

cw/ssk = conceal wrap and ssk over 2 sts plus wrap (CB)

cw/p3tog = conceal wrap and purl 3 tog (CB)

Master Numbers

Here are the values used in this pattern. Refer to *New Pathways for Sock Knitters* for a fuller explanation of these numbers.

A = 7.5 (sts/inch)

C = 9 (inches around midfoot)

D = 58 (sts around foot)

F = 88 (total sts after arch expansion)

G = 31 (arch and sole sts)

H = 15 (wing sts)

I = 8 (wrapped stitches)

DIRECTIONS

Spare Rib Pattern

R1: Knit.

R2: *K1, p1; repeat from *.

I stumbled across this textured pattern by accident. The k1,p1 ribbing looked terrific in Panda Cotton, but it was just too tedious to do that for the entire sock leg, so I tried knitting every other round to make it go faster. I made the ribbing flow into the semi-ribbing, and made the heel stitch flow from that in subtle columns. Is this a foolish consistency, the hobgoblin of petty minds, or a brilliant design feature? You decide.

Update: While browsing Barbara Walker's *A Treasury of Knitting Patterns* I came across this pattern, which she calls "Broken Rib Pattern". It's so simple it was probably discovered centuries ago!

Cuff

Cast on 60 sts loosely using the Old Norwegian (German Twisted) method. See this web page for instructions: <http://www.knittingonthenet.com/learn/tgcaston.htm>

Divide sts on 3 or 4 dpns; join in the round without twisting.
Do [k1,p1] ribbing for an inch or two, as you like it.

Leg

Work in Spare Rib pattern until leg comes to top of ankle bone. End with R2.

Sky Arch

Here's where the fun starts! The sock must get bigger around to make room for the heel and arch of the foot, and this expansion happens in the arch on the *top* of the foot. All hail Cat! All hail Cat!

Arrange sts on 4 dpns so that N1 and N2 contain 29 sts for the instep, and N3 and N4 contain 31 sts for the heel/sole-to-be.

R1: Starting on N1, k13, place marker A, k3, place marker B, knit to EOR.
The stitches between [A] and [B] are the arch stitches, and the middle stitch is in the center of the instep.

R2: *K1, p1* to [A], k3, [B], *k1,p1* to EOR.

R3: Knit around.

Arch Expansion

How it works: the arch stitches in the center of the instep expand outwards until there are 31 of them; increases are done every 3rd round. The arch is done in stockinette stitch. The 13 wing stitches on either side of the arch continue to be worked in the Spare Rib pattern. The heel stitches are worked in heel stitch with a border of 3 stitches.

R4: Instep: *k1, p1* to [A], k1, LLinc, knit to one st before B, LRinc, [B], *k1, p1* to end of instep.

Heel stitches: p1, k29, p1.

R5: Instep: knit.

Heel stitches: k3, *sl 1, k1* until 4 sts remain before EOR, sl1, k3.

R6: Instep: *k1, p1* to [A], knit arch sts, [B], *k1, p1* to end of instep, ending with k1.

Heel stitches: p1, k29, p1.

R7: Instep: knit to [A], k1, LLinc, knit to one st before B, LRinc, [B], knit to end of instep.

Heel stitches: k3, *sl 1, k1* to last 4 sts, sl1, k3.

R8: Same as R6.

R9: Same as R5.

Repeat R4 through R9 until the number of arch sts reaches 31 (= 42 rnds plus half of R43). On R43, stop after the instep.

Yarn is at start of heel sts.

Put all 31 heel sts on one needle.

Heel Turn

The heel is worked back and forth in short rows over the 31 heel stitches.

R1: [RS] K3, *sl1, k1* until last 2 sts, w&t. (Leaves one wrapped and one unwrapped st on ndl)

R2: [WS] Purl to last 2 sts, w&t.

R3: *k1, sl1* to last 3 sts, w&t.

R4: Purl to last 3 sts, w&t.

R5: *sl1, k1* to last 4 sts, w&t.

R6: Purl to last 4 sts, w&t.

Repeat rows 3-6 as above, stopping short to wrap the last unwrapped stitch on each row, until there are 9 sts on each side, 8 of which are wrapped. (= 16 rows)

R17: *sl1, k1* to first wrapped st, do cw on 7 of the 8 wrapped sts, cw/ssk, turn.

R18: Sl1, purl to first wrapped st, do cw on 7 wrapped sts, cw/p2tog.

Turn so RS is facing.

There are now 29 heel sts on the needle, which has magically turned (*pun intended*) into the sole.

Divide the sole sts onto 2 dpns (N3 and N4), and place markers C and D at either end to mark the start and end of the heel sts. Working yarn is at [C] on N3, ready to go across the heel.

Prepare to attach the heel to the wing sts. There are currently 31 arch sts with 13 wing sts on either side. We're going to steal 2 sts from each side of the arch and move them into the wings. Remove markers A and B, if you haven't already.

Slide 15 wing sts from N1 onto N4, after [D].

Bottom of Heel

Start at [C] with RS facing, and work across heel sts.

R1: [RS] *sl1, k1* until one st before [D], ssk removing D, turn.

R2: [WS] Sl1, purl to one st before [C], p2tog removing C, turn.

R3: *Sl1, k1* until one st before gap, ssk, turn.

R4: Sl1, purl to one st before gap, p2tog, turn.

Repeat R3 and R4 until there are 2 sts left in the wings outside the gaps (= 26 rows).

R27: *Sl1, k1* until one st before gap, ssk, k1.

We're now ready to resume knitting in the round.

Knit across instep (27 sts).

At end of instep, k1, k2tog across gap, then knit to middle of sole.

Total stitches = 58.

Foot

Knit around (and around and around) until foot is 1-1/2 inches shorter than desired foot length.

Toe

This is a standard wedge-shaped toe. Feel free to substitute your own favorite toe method.

Re-arrange sts so that round starts in the middle of the sole (bottom of foot).

N1 has 14 sts (sole)
N2 and N3 have 15 sts each (top of foot)
N4 has 14 sts (sole)

Before getting into the toe shaping, do this round to make the numbers come out:

R0: N1: Knit.
N2: K1, ssk, k12.
N3: K12, k2tog, k1.
N4: Knit to EOR.

Total stitches = 56, 14 on each needle.

Knit one rnd.

Toe shaping

R1: N1: Knit to last 3 sts, k2tog, k1.
N2: K1, ssk, knit to end of ndl.
N3: Knit to last 3 sts, k2tog, k1.
N4: K1, ssk, knit to EOR.
R2: Knit around.

Repeat these 2 rnds until there are 16 stitches left, 4 on each dpn.
Combine sts from N4 and N1 onto one dpn, and from N2 and N3. Cut yarn, leaving a 12-inch tail.
Graft sts using Kitchener Stitch.

FINISHING

Weave in ends.

Don sock(s) and admire heel.

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