

Dunharrow Socks

by Tracy Seamster



The Dimholt Road leads from Dunharrow to the Paths of the Dead....

Peter Jackson's Return of the King happened to be TV the night I received my skein of Middle Earth yarn, and I noticed that the colors in this skein were very similar to the scenes near the Rohirrim's encampment.

These socks feature a simple four-stitch repeat over eight rows that's a journey from cuff toward the toe: easy to memorize, quick to knit, and with a pebbly diagonal texture that's reminiscent of an ancient road.

Gauge = 9 stitches per inch in stockinette

Ingredients:

- Sample knit in Cherry Tree Hill Fingerpaints Supersock Self Stripes (shown in 1001 - Middle Earth), 420 yards. Substitute any fingering weight yarn, at least 400 yards.
- Needles = Sample was knit using Kollage square 40-inch circulars in US size 3, which works up for me in an equivalent of US Size 2, 2.75 mm. I knit two-at-a-time Magic Loop, but the pattern is easily knit on DPNs, two circulars, or one-at-a-time Magic Loop.
- Stitch marker, to mark the start of the rounds (if desired).
- Tapestry needle, for tucking in ends.

Abbreviations:

- K—Knit
- P—Purl
- SSK—Slip 1 stitch as if to knit, slip another stitch as if to purl, knit both stitches together through their back loops
- k2tog—Knit 2 stitches together

Size = Sample is US Women's 8.5. Sizes are easily adjusted by adding or removing 4-stitches as needed.

Cuff:

Cast on 64 stitches using your favorite cast-on method to provide a stretchy edging. I prefer a knit-on cast-on method as it leaves me with very little excess tail.

Join to knit in the round, making sure not to twist the stitches. Mark the beginning of the round with a stitch marker, if desired. I usually leave the cast-on tail dangling as my marker.

K2, P2 ribbing for 1 inch, then start Dunharrow's diagonal rib pattern.

Stitch Pattern:

Round 1 – K2, P2
Round 2 – K2, P2
Round 3 – P1, K2, P1
Round 4 – P1, K2, P1
Round 5 – P2, K2
Round 6 – P2, K2
Round 7 – K1, P2, K1
Round 8 – K1, P2, K1

Note--You can easily mirror the diagonals across the socks if you prefer by reversing the rows in the pattern, creating a left and a right sock. The sample pair is knit in one direction of diagonal so that I can wear each sock on either foot.

Leg:

Work rounds 1 – 8 *eight times*, or to your desired length. Eight repeats gave me a 6-inch leg before beginning the heel. I had enough leftover yarn upon completing the socks to have done another two repeats of the pattern.

Make a note of which round you stop with if you do not do the complete eight rounds of the pattern, as you'll continue from that point after you create the heel.

Heel:

The heel is knit over half the total number of stitches, or 32 stitches.

Row 1 (Right side row) - (Slip 1, K1) Repeat across, ending with K1
Row 2 (wrong side row) – Slip 1, purl across
Row 3 (RS) – Slip 1, (K1, Slip 1) Repeat across, ending with K2
Row 4 (wrong side row) – Slip 1, purl across

Repeat these rows until the heel is at least 2-1/4 inches in length. As I have a high instep, I generally knit until 2-1/2 inches.

Turning the heel:

Start the heel turn on a right side row.

Row 1 – Slip 1, K18k, SSK, K1, turn
Row 2 – Slip 1, P7, P2tog, P1, turn
Row 3 – Slip 1, K to within 1 stitch of the gap (you'll notice the gap from the prior row), SSK using one stitch from either side of that gap, K1, turn
Row 4 – Slip 1, P to within 1 stitch of the gap on the prior row, P2tog using one stitch from either side of that gap, P1, turn

Repeat rows 3 and 4 until you've gone back and forth across all the stitches, reducing to 20 stitches total on the needle holding your heel stitches.

End on a right side row.

Gusset:

Pick up stitches along the slipped stitch edges of the heel flap toward the instep stitches. The number of stitches you pick up will depend upon how long your heel flap is. I picked up 17 stitches total on the sample sock, but on some socks have picked up as many as 21 stitches. When you've picked up stitches along the heel edge, you will be back at the instep needle. Knit across the 32 stitches on that needle in Dunharrow's diagonal stitch pattern.

If you had stopped on any round other than the 8th round prior to starting the heel, continue the pattern from wherever you'd left off.

Once you've knit across the 32-stitches of the instep in pattern, pick up the same number of stitches along this side of the heel flap as you had down the first side of the heel flap (anywhere from 17 – 21 stitches).

Now that you've got a circle of stitches again, prepare for the gusset decreases. These decreases will take you back down to the original 64 stitches cast on. Consider these rounds as beginning in the middle of the heel, since that will easily divide the decreases equally on both sides of the heel.

**Gusset decrease:**

Round 1 – Knit to the last three stitches before the instep. K2tog, K1. Knit in pattern across the instep. K1, SSK, K to end of round

Round 2 – Knit all stitches along the heel and gusset. Knit in pattern across the instep.

Repeat these two rounds until you have decreased back down to 32 stitches on the heel; you will keep 32 stitches on the instep throughout this process.

Foot:

Knit in pattern across the instep. Knit across the bottom of the foot. Keep knitting until you are 1-3/4 to 2-inches from the tip of your toe. Generally, I've found that the leg portion of the sock is roughly the same length as the foot portion of my socks for a US women's size 8.5. You'll want to measure your length to fit your own foot.

Toe Decreases:

Knitting in Magic Loop, I usually start my decreases at the beginning of the instep. Using DPNs, I tend to start at the end of the row on the stockinette/foot side. The main thing is that the decreases are equal on both sides so that you end up with the same number of stitches for grafting.

Round 1: At start of instep needle, K1, SSK. Three stitches before the end of the instep needle, K2tog, K1. On foot stitches needle, K1, SSK. Three stitches before the end of the foot stitches needle, K2tog, K1

Round 2: Knit all stitches

Repeat rounds 1 and 2 until you've decreased to 16 total stitches: 8 for the instep side, and 8 from the sole side. For a more rounded toe, repeat only round 1 for the last three rounds to hit the final stitch count.

When there are 8 stitches left on both the instep and the foot stitches needles, graft the toes using the kitchener stitch.

Weave in your ends as you re-watch The Lord of the Rings.