

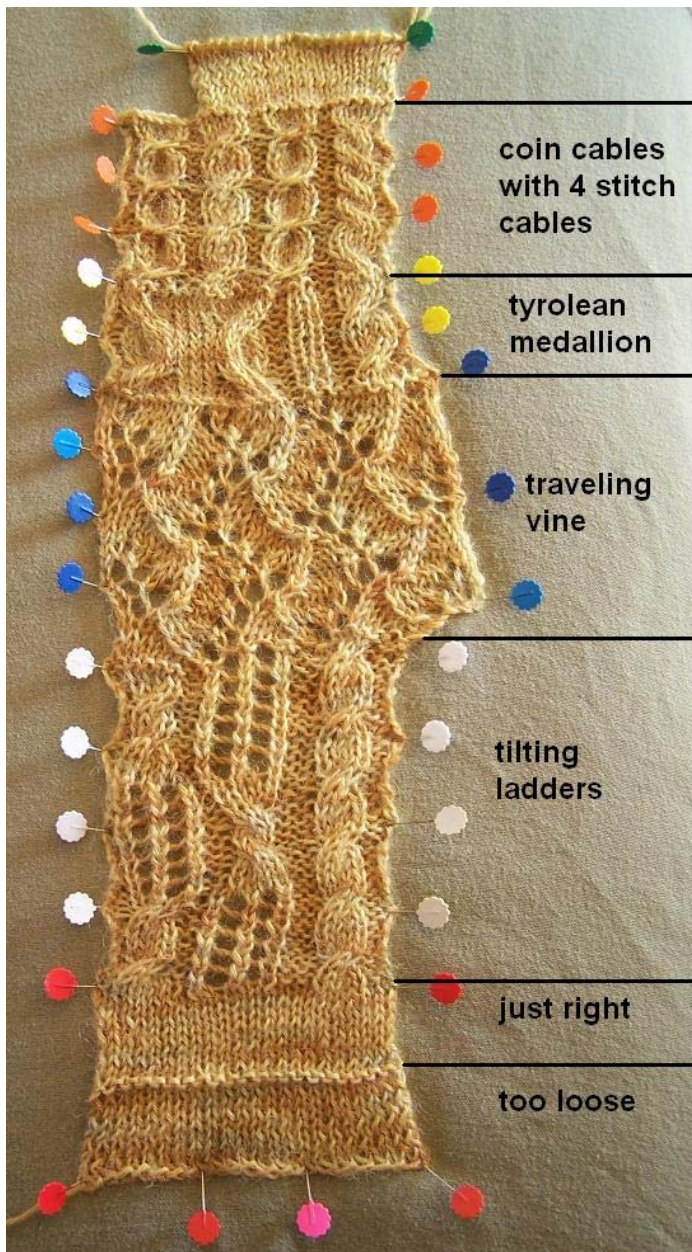
Design A Cable Sock

originally posted on October 20, 2006

Minor changes in [] have been made for the pdf version.

Underlined words are links. Access the links from the pdf document or from the original post.

In [part 1](#) I described my approach to designing a sock. Today I will jump right in with another swatch in (mostly) cable patterns. Again, I will talk about the pattern stitches starting from the bottom.



As always, click on any image [in the original post] to see it larger.

The yarn is a sport weight [Wensleydale](#) wool that I naturally dyed. To my knowledge it is not commercially available.

As always, I start with stockinette. The first needle size was too large. I moved down a size, separating them with a garter ridge. This gave a tension that I like.

The first pattern is tilting ladders. I really like this pattern and I have been looking for the right project to use it. I decided that the scale is too large for this sock. Maybe it would be perfect if I were using a finer weight yarn. There is also a 4-stitch cable crossed every 6th row.

Next I tried the traveling vine pattern stitch. This is another pattern that has been on my radar for a while. It is very cute. Honestly, it shows up much better in this photograph than it did in real life. I also think that a yellow yarn on a pale leg with not show the open work to its best. It works in the picture because of the contrast from the fabric behind it.

The Tyrolean medallion is a great pattern. Every knit stitch is twisted so it forms a very dense fabric with little give. It was clear that it would be too stiff and inflexible for a sock so I stopped half way through a repeat.

The last is a coin cable coupled with 2 different 4-stitch cables. The coin cable is a 5-stitch cable where the 1st and the 5th stitch are crossed. The result is a cute disk (coin) shape. I imagine this is how it got its name. I paired it with cables crossed on the 6th row and crossed on the 4th row. The cable crossed on the 6th row has a

massing to similar to the coin cable whereas the 4 row cable has a nice tightness that pairs well with the coin cable. I crossed the cables in different directions to see if one direction made more sense.

The coin cross with the 4 row cable is the pattern I will use for my socks. I decided on the right cross because I will cross them without a cable needle and a right cross is easier to do that way. The cables have a small scale that is appropriate for a sport weight sock. I named them Penny Socks because the coin cables reminder me of pennies. If I had penny loafers I would wear them with my Penny Socks.



I did not swatch my ribbing. Normally I would, but I knew exactly what I wanted to do. Here it is on the finished sock.

In the second row after a coin cross I worked the coin cable as k2, p1, k2. On the following row I increased at the purl stitch to k2, p2, k2. I like to lift the purl bar from the stitch below and purl that. It makes a nice clean purl increase.

Putting it all together:

Again I chose to make a toe-up sock. I had a limited amount of yarn so I wanted to work them both and squeeze as much sock out of the yarn as possible. This time I will make a gusseted sock. I am using a gusset for two reasons: they fit my feet well and cabled socks don't have much lateral stretch so it will benefit from the extra fabric at the ankle.



I like to start the center cables in the toe and add cables as the toe progresses. The sock has 4-stitch cables framing coin cables. I considered using coin cables to frame 4-stitch cables but that would have made a larger sock than I wanted.

If you scroll down to the two socks, you'll notice that they are a bit different. I learned things on the first one that I decided to change on the second. It is hard to foresee all the little details before you start knitting. I feel that it is important to continue the design process as you knit.

It is also important to take good notes. I have so many pieces of paper covered in cryptic notes. If you think that you are going to remember what project that unlabeled envelope full of scribbles is for, you are so very wrong. I'd like to tell you that I always take clear, legible, and well annotated

notes. I would be lying. Still, I try, and it really, really helps the second sock turn out right. So, why I am making such a big deal out of this? Well, I'll tell you. The first attempt at the second sock was 3/4 done when I realized that it had a fatal flaw in the toe portion. I was so disgusted that I didn't think to take a picture before ripping it out.

Anyway, now that I have that out of my system, I'll describe the two differences between the socks. The toes:



On the first sock I increased on the toes until I had 60 stitches. My cables require 34 stitches, more than half of the stitches. I shifted the stitches so that there were 17 Stitches on

each of the cable stitch needles and 13 stitches on each of the sole (stockinette stitch) needles. It is okay, it works. But, it isn't very graceful. I am using stitches from the sole for the pattern stitches and creating a lot of pucker where the cables start on the toe.

On the second sock I didn't shift any stitches around. Instead I increased in the purls framing the cables and used a M1 increase the row before the first coin cross to take it from 4 stitches to the 5 stitches required. The M1 is invisible; it ends up behind the coin cross. Both increase methods reduce the puckering. Much more graceful.



The other improvement is at the gusset: I started the coin cable as soon as I had enough stitches and it aligned with the other coin cable crossings. The second sock fits better and feels nicer. The ankle is snug and less inclined to shift on my foot. While the differences aren't large, they are definite improvements. I am designing to make myself happy. Finding a more graceful solution is part of the fun and challenge of designing.

I decided not to rip back the first sock. It is an interesting reminder of the design process and the socks are for me. If they were for someone else I would go back and fix the gusset at least.

I have written up this pattern as well. Click [here](#) or look for it in the side bar with the other patterns.

Next, in [Part 3](#):
Designing a lace pattern sock with a few embellishments and toe shaping.

Pattern Errata:

Be sure to check the [original post](#) for any errata that may have been found after this pdf version was made or downloaded.