

Design A Lace 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 discussed my approach to designing a sock. In [Part 2](#), I designed a cable sock. In Part 3, I will show you the process one more time with a lace sock. Click any picture [in the original post] to see it larger.

As you will recall from Parts 1 & 2, it all starts with a swatch.



The yarn is [ArtYarns](#) UltraMerino4, color 127.

I will start at the bottom with stockinette to get gauge and set the needle size. I always start with the recommended needle size and go down if necessary.

I didn't have any ideas of what kind of sock this yarn wanted to be. I started with texture patterns, but they seemed to be overwhelmed by the color pattern.

Hearts of oak - completely lost, it clearly needs a plain yarn.

Flame Wave - cute pattern, but too subtle for such a loud yarn.

Unnamed Lace - I like it. It stands up to the yarn and it is simple enough to memorize. I decided to name the lace (and socks) Banana Blossom Lace.

At the top I played with a possible idea for moving from the pattern stitch into the ribbing. More on the ribbing below.

You'll notice that the lace pattern is a bit asymmetrical. It is enough to make the socks look different from each

other. So, why not make it a feature of the sock? Why not take it a step further and design a start to the lace pattern for the toe? Why not indeed.

Starting with the toe will allow me to play with this added patterning. And, I knew that I would be using all of the 191 yards in each skein. Both reasons, I confess, are justifications for the fact that I prefer toe-up socks.



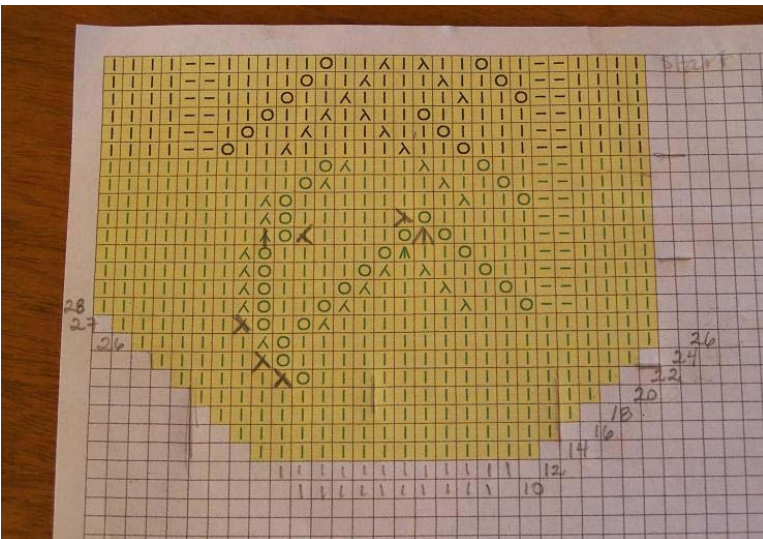
My first lace start was a dud. Here it is knit up. It seemed reasonable on graph paper. What was I thinking? It is chunky and looks truncated. There is no grace and it does not say banana blossom at all.



This time I tried to make it look plant like. It is much better. I'm not sure it is perfect, but I am satisfied.

I played with the toe shaping too. The increases on the right stop before the increases on the left. That makes this the right sock (no pun intended?). I did this for fun. This is the why not sock after all. I started with half of the total stitches. This makes a squarish toe.

Here is the chart for the revised lace start.



The yellow just indicates the extent of the sock. (I made this chart in Excel with the [Aire River Knit Font](#).)

As I worked the toe, I made changes. The first was a quick trip to the frog pond to restart with 10 stitches per needle (using the fabulous method: [Judy's Magic Cast-On](#)). It didn't look right starting with 14 stitches (the numbers indicate the number of stitches per row). A highly subjective decision, but hey, it is my design. I am queen of this tiny kingdom (queendom?). The other changes have to do with where the decreases are placed to get the desired effect. It is crucial that legible notes are taken at this point so the sock can be replicated.

Notice that the purl stitches help to define the pattern stitch. They form the side of the leaves. Therefore the purl stitches start when the leaves start. I extended the first leaf (on the right) down and added the swirly bit on the left. The repeating pattern stitch is in black. The added lace pattern is in green (you may need to click on the image to see that). The other toe will be knit in reverse, including the toe shaping.



This sock is knit with a gusset. It is the first sock I knit with my version of a toe-up gusset. When the foot is about 65 - 70% of the total foot length I start the gusset increases, continue until the foot measures about 90%, turn a French heel, and start decreasing until I get my required number of stitches.



Then it is just knitting the leg in pattern. I chose to add 2 more lace panels and start them with the added swirl too.

One of my goals when designing any knit garment, is to make an integrated whole. A big part of this is to have the ribbing grow out of the body of the work. At the transition to ribbing for this sock I decreased the leaf stitches down to a stem of three stitches and let the 2x2 ribs evolve. I like that the stem is wider than the rest of the 2x2 ribbing. It would have worked with 4 stitches too. Ribbing does not need to be uniform. To my eye that little difference sells the integration of the lace pattern into the ribbing.



Here is the final sock. The other one is a mirror image of this one. The free pattern for this sock is posted [here](#) and in the side bar [of my blog].

I will have [one more post](#) in this series. It will be a few more swatches. No socks, just more talk about matching pattern stitches and yarn.

ETA: link to pattern on April 11, 2007

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.