

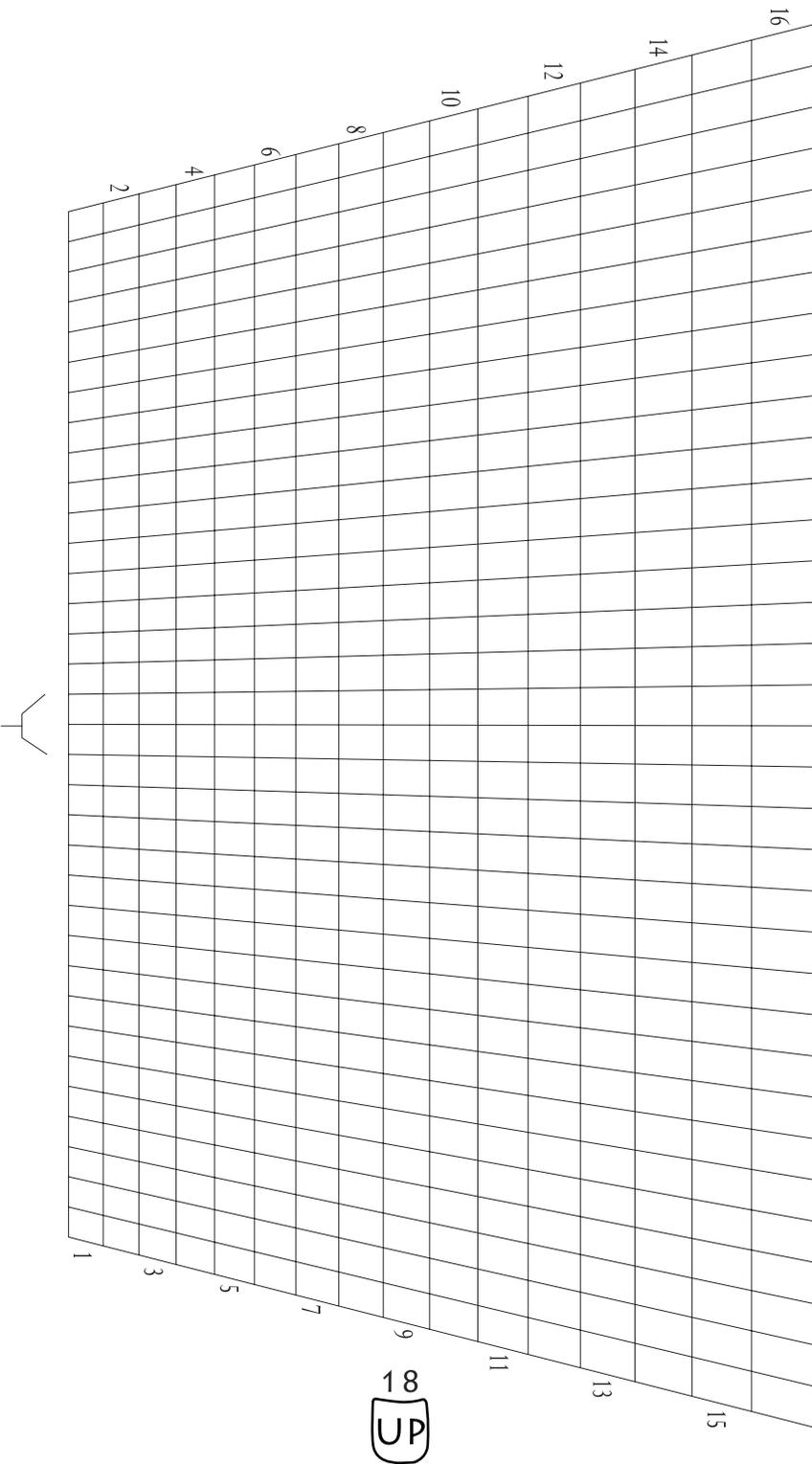
# DESIGN YOUR OWN TOE UP



# SOCKS

A KNITTING TUTORIAL BY CHARLES VOTH  
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2 Center Stitches



18  
UP

So you want to design your own socks? That's a great goal, but where should you start? There are so many different weights of yarn, types of needles to knit in the round. Techniques for heels and toes are so varied and different, it's hard to know which one to choose. What you'll find here is a tutorial that brings together some of the most straight-forward techniques to building a sock, from the toe up. "Why do it this way?" some may ask. There are several advantages.

- It's easier to determine how much yarn you can use in each sock.
- You don't have to graft (kitchener stitch) the toe.
- The cuff doesn't cut off your circulation at the cast on edge.
- Little holes at your ankles are less likely to form.

## FIRST THINGS FIRST.

Before you can begin to design these socks, you need to select the right equipment, knit a swatch, and do a few calculations.

You can knit these socks with 4 or 5 double-pointed needles, or you can use two circular needles, or if you like the 'magic-loop' technique, you can also use that method. The instructions and diagrams in this tutorial will be for double-pointed needles, but with side- or foot-notes for two circulars included.

To knit a swatch, you should use the needle size recommended on the ball band of the yarn you are using and cast on the number of stitches the ball band predicts will equal 10 cm (4 in) plus 10 more. Knit in stockinette until you have a square. It is often recommended that you knit a swatch in the round if your purl tension is different than your knit tension on straight needles. In this case you would need to cast on twice the recommended number of stitches, join and knit in the round. Perfectionists in the field recommend washing the swatch as you would be washing the socks and blocking it; I rarely do this step, but it's up to you. Taking your swatch square in your hands, squeeze it, roll it and pull on it in both directions. Do you like how it handles? Is it too drapey or limp for socks or does it have some body? Does it stretch horizontally so easily and so much that you can see through it like netting? If so, you may want to reduce your needle size and try again. A good sock fabric should be stretchy and light, but still with some firmness.



## THE HEEL FLAP - CONTINUED

As you work on the heel flap, give an extra little tug on the first 3 stitches of each row of the heel flap...

Heel Flap Row 1: Knit the first set of JS stitches; on the heel flap K1, \*sl1 as if to purl, K1\* repeat until one stitch remains on heel flap; Sl1, K1 from JS group, PSSO. Turn without wrapping.

Row 2: Purl across all heel flap stitches except for the last one. Purl the last stitch together with the first stitch from the JS group. Turn without wrapping.

Row 3: K1, \*sl1, K1\* repeat between \* until one st. remains on heel flap; Sl1, K1 from JS group, PSSO. Turn without wrapping.

Row 4: Purl across all heel flap stitches except for the last one. Purl the last stitch together with the first stitch from the JS group. Turn without wrapping.

Continue in this manner until you have BC stitches on the needles again.

Knit stockinette stitch for 2 cm or ¾inch.

## THE CUFF

To make a cuff which hugs the leg well, a ribbed stitch is the most successful. Some people prefer a 1x1 rib, a favourite amongst many is a 2x2 rib, but I like the 3x1 rib for the cuff. It's up to you.

On my socks, I knit a 3x1 rib until I've reached half of the yarn I have by weight. If I have endless amounts of yarn, I go as long as I like them to be. The beauty of toe-up socks is that you can try them on as you go, although it's easier to do this with two circulars than with the double-pointed needles.

Work on the cuff with 3x1 (knit 3, purl1) ribbing until just shy 4 cm or 1½ inches from the desired length. Change one needle size down and continue for 1x1 (knit1, purl1) ribbing for 4 cm (1½ in).

