



# An HJS Studio Pattern: World War One Socks



## Introduction

During the First World War, the American Red Cross provided yarn and instructions to knitters all over the US, to encourage them to knit gloves, hats, vests, socks, etc, for the men in the military. These patterns are courtesy of Diane McHose, [owlomen@mindspring.com](mailto:owlomen@mindspring.com), who sent me a scanned copy of the centerfold of the July 1917 Modern Priscilla Needlework magazine. The first pattern, next to each picture, is as originally printed. Below that, I've updated the instructions to modern terminology and knitting in rounds where possible. I haven't had time to test all these patterns, so they are merely my interpretation.



## Men's Socks

One and one-half hanks Scotch yarn, 2 pair No. 13 or 14 needles.

Cast on 80 stitches, 26 on 1 needles and 27 on each of 2 needles.

Knit in ribs of knit (k) 2 and purl (p) 2 for 4 inches.

Knit plain, making 1 stitch the seam stitch until the sock measures 6 inches, including the ribbed part.

Now narrow on each side of the seam stitch for the ankle as follows: Knit to within the last 3 stitches of the seam; slip (sl) 1, k 1, pass the slipped stitch over the knitted one, k 1, p the same stitch, k 1, narrow, k the rest plain. Knit 7 rounds plain.

Repeat this narrowing every 8th row until there are 70 stitches in the round. Knit plain until the leg measures 9 1/2 inches.

**HEEL.** -- Divide the stitches, having 17 on each side of seam; k and p these stitches until the heel measures 2 1/4 inches, slipping the first st of every row.

To turn the heel, sl 1, k 25, sl 1, k 1, pass the single stitch over. Turn.

**2d row**--Slip 1, p 15, p 2 together. Turn.

**3d row**--Slip 1, k 15, sl 1, k 1, pass the slip stitch over. Turn.



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Repeat second and third rows alternately until there are 17 stitches on the needle. Knit these 17 stitches, and on the same needle, pick up 16 loops along the left side of the heel, knitting each loop as you pick it up.

On a second needle, knit the 35 instep stitches, and on a third needle pick up 16 loops on the other side of the heel and knit 8 stitches off the first needle or top of the heel.

**GUSSETS.**--\* On first or foot needle knit plain to within 2 stitches of the end, narrow, knit along the instep needle.

On third of foot needle sl 1, k 1, pass the slip stitch over and knit plain to end of needle. Knit 1 round plain.

Repeat from \* until there are 35 stitches on the 2 foot needles or 70 stitches in the round. Continue to knit plain for 4 3/4 inches, or until foot measures 8 inches.

**TOE.**--Begin on the first foot needle for first round, \* knit 5, narrow. Repeat from \*, knit 5 rounds plain.

7th round-- \* Knit 4, narrow. Repeat from \*, k 4 rounds plain.

12th round-- \* Knit 3, narrow. Repeat from \*, k 3 rounds plain.

16th round-- \* Knit 2, narrow. Repeat from \*, k 2 rounds plain.

19th round-- \* Knit 1, narrow. Repeat from \*.

20th round-- Narrow 10 times. Draw the wool through these 10 stitches, draw together, break off wool, and fasten on wrong side. The foot should measure 11 inches.

### **Modern Instructions for Men's Socks**

**Materials:** About 200 grams sport weight yarn.

**Equipment:** One set of 4 or 5 double pointed size 3 (US) or 3 mm needles, tapestry needle, scissors.

**Gauge:** I'm guessing a gauge of around 7 stitches to the inch or 28 stitches to 10 cm, as that fits the number of stitches cast on, for this type of sock. If you want a larger sock, use thicker yarn, thicker needles, or increase the number of stitches you work the sock on.

**Sock Ribbing:** Cast on 80 stitches, join in a circle with 27 stitches on first needle, 27 on second needle, 26 on last needle, and knit in k2 p2 ribbing for 4 inches / 10 cm.

**Sock Leg:** Knit in stockinette stitch (knit each row) until sock is 6 inches / 15 cm long from beginning. If you wish 'seam stitch' to be visible, purl the first stitch on the first needle every round until heel flap.

**Decrease Round:** Keeping one stitch at beginning of round in purl for 'seam stitch', knit to within the last three stitches on the last needle. Slip one stitch, knit one, pass slipped stitch



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over knitted one, knit one (finish last needle), purl one (seam stitch at beginning of first needle), knit one, knit two together. Knit seven rounds stockinette without decreasing.

Repeat decrease round, then knit seven rounds plain. Continue until there are 70 stitches on your needles. Continue knitting straight until leg measures 9 1/2 inches or 24 cm from beginning.

**Heel Flap:** Rearrange stitches on needle so one needle holds the 17 stitches on each side of the seam stitch for a total of 35 stitches. The remaining 35 stitches should be divided on two other needles. Work heel stitches back and forth in stockinette stitch: knit right side rows, purl wrong side rows, slipping every first stitch of each row (or knit each first stitch every row, creating a small garter stitch edge), until the heel measures 2 1/4 inches/6 cm from beginning of heel. Or, substitute your favorite heel stitch pattern for heel flap. Note: A depth of 3 inches / 8 cm might better fit modern feet.

**Turn Heel:** 1st Row: Slip 1, knit 25, slip 1, k 1, pass slipped stitch over knit stitch, turn.

**2nd Row:** Slip 1, p 15, p 2 together, turn.

**3rd Row:** Slip 1, k 15, slip 1, k 1, pass slipped stitch over, turn.

Repeat second and third rows alternately until there are 17 stitches on the needle. Knit these 17 stitches, then using the same needle, pick up and knit 16 stitches (more if you knit a deeper heel) along the next side of the heel.

Knit across the 35 instep stitches, then using a fourth needle (or place all instep stitches on one needle, and use the third needle for the heel), pick up and knit 16 stitches (more if you knit a deeper heel) on the other side of the heel. With same needle, knit 8 stitches off the needle holding the heel stitches.

At this point, you should have 35 stitches on one or two needles for the instep, and 24 stitches (plus any additional stitches picked up along heel sides) on each of two other needles for the sides and bottom of the heel. First needle of rounds is now the one with stitches from the center of heel to beginning of instep, while last needle of rounds is the one with the remaining heel stitches.

**Decrease for Gussets:** Knit plain to within 3 stitches of end of first needle. Knit two together, knit one. Continue even across instep needles. At beginning of last needle, knit one, slip one, knit one, pass slipped stitch over second knit stitch. Continue even to end. Knit one round plain. Repeat decrease row, followed by plain row, until there are 70 stitches left on needles.

**Foot:** Continue to knit until foot measures 8 inches / 20 cm from sides of heel. For best fit, measure foot the sock is planned for, and knit to about 3 inches / 8 cm from toes.

**Toe:** At beginning of next round, knit 5, knit two together. Repeat to end of round. Knit 5 rounds even.



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**Next round:** Knit 4, knit two together, repeat to end of round, knit 4 rounds plain.

**Next round:** Knit 3, knit two together, repeat to end of round, knit 3 rounds plain.

**Next round:** Knit 2, knit two together, repeat to end of round, knit 2 rounds plain.

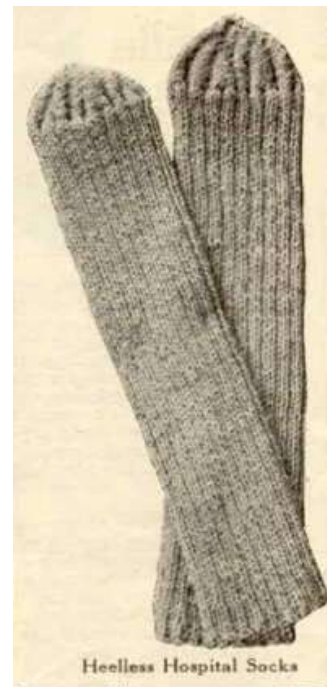
**Next round:** Knit 1, knit two together, repeat to end of round.

**Next round:** Knit two together to end of round. Draw yarn through remaining stitches, draw together, and fasten off. Or weave stitches together for a flat finish.

### Heeless Hospital Socks

One and one-half hanks knitting worsted, 2 steel needles No. 12.

Cast on 60 stitches. Knit 2, purl 2, all across row. Repeat for 17 inches. Then knit 1 row, purl 1 row twice. Knit 1 row, narrow (by knitting 2 stitches together) every 5th stitch, p 1 row, knit 1 row, p 1 row. Knit 1 row, narrow every 4th stitch, p 1 row, knit 1 row, p 1 row. Knit 1 row, narrow every 3d stitch, p 1 row. Knit 1 row, narrow every 2d stitch, p 1 row. Knit 1 row, narrow every 2d stitch. Then bind off and sew up with worsted.



### Modern Instructions for Hospital Socks

**Materials:** About 150 grams knitting worsted yarn.

**Equipment:** One set double pointed size 5 or 6 (US) or 4 mm needles, tapestry needle, scissors.

**Gauge:** Gauge is flexible for this project. Approximately 5 stitches to one inch, or 20 stitches to 10 cm should work, measured over stockinette or garter stitch.

**Leg:** Cast on 60 stitches, arrange in circle, and knit 2, purl 2 ribbing around, for 17 inches / 43 cm.

**Toe:** Change to stockinette stitch (knit every round) and knit two rows plain.

**Decrease Round:** Knit two together, knit 4, to end of row. Knit three rows plain.

**Next round:** Knit two together, knit 3, to end of row; knit three rows plain.

**Next round:** Knit two together, knit 2, to end of row; knit one row plain.

**Next round:** Knit two together, knit 1, to end of row; knit one row plain. Repeat these two rows. Weave remaining stitches together for a flat finish, or draw yarn through loops, pull tight, and fasten ends.



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