

Baby Life Ring Socks



This toe-up design, knit on two circular needles, begins with a Boxy Toe. A baby's feet need room to wiggle, and are rather boxy-shaped, after all. The spandex or lycra-rich yarns are a pleasure to knit with, and the stretchy socks will stay on baby's little feet. I call these Life Ring Socks because the rolls resemble the life preserver rings that hang beside swimming pools. The sock's "Life Rings" can be bunched down to fit around the ankle, or pulled up like a knee sock, if baby is chilly. The elastic yarns also let the sock stretch to fit growing feet a little longer.

Yarn: Cascade Fixation (98.3% cotton, 1.7% spandex, 50 g/ 100 yds), or Heirloom Breeze (30% wool, 69.6% cotton, 0.4% lycra, 50 gms/ 95 meters), one ball.

Photo above shows the socks knit in Heirloom Breeze.

Needles: Two 24" circular needles in the size that gives you the correct gauge, probably size 3 or 4.

Gauge: 25 stitches = 4" (10 cm)

Sizes: Newborn, (3 months, 6 months)

See second page for abbreviations and techniques.

Start with the toe

Using two circular needles, provisionally cast on (*see next page for instructions*) 11 (13, 13) stitches, using the cable of the second needle in place of the usual waste yarn. Let one needle rest while you knit the next 5 rows with the other one: Row 1: Knit 11 (13, 13) stitches, turn. Row 2: Slip 1 stitch as if to purl, purl 9 (11, 11), knit 1, turn. Row 3: Slip 1 stitch as if to purl, knit 10 (12, 12), turn. Repeat rows 2 and 3 once. You have a

small rectangle spread between the needles, which are holding the stitches of each long side. Pick up and knit 1 stitch in the short side next to the working needle. Now let this needle rest. Push the other needle so that it is ready to begin knitting its stitches, but first pick up and knit 1 additional stitch in the short side of the rectangle between the needles. Knit the 11 (13, 13) stitches on the needle, then pick up and knit 1 stitch in the short side of the rectangle at the end of the needle. Now let this needle rest. Push the other needle into position to knit, and pick up and knit 1 last stitch in the short side of the rectangle between the needles. (13, (15, 15) stitches are on each needle. *Six months only:* *Knit 1, make 1 left, knit 13, make 1 right, knit 1, repeat from * on second needle. (17 stitches on each needle)

First half of foot

Knit 12 (18, 24) rounds.

Gusset increases

Round 1: On first needle, knit 1, make 1 left, knit until 2 stitches remain on this needle, make 1 right, knit to end of second needle. Round 2: Knit all stitches. Repeat rounds 1 and 2 until first needle holds 25 (29, 33) stitches.

For both the heel turn and heel, work back and forth in rows on the first needle while the second needle rests.

Heel turn

Row 1: Knit 18, (21, 24) wrap 1 stitch and turn.

Row 2: Slip 1, purl 10 (12, 14), wrap 1 stitch and turn.

Row 3: Slip 1, knit 9 (11, 13), wrap 1 stitch and turn.

Row 4: Slip 1, purl 8 (10, 12), wrap 1 stitch and turn.

Row 5: Slip 1, knit 7 (9, 11), wrap 1 stitch and turn.

Row 6: Slip 1, purl 6, (8, 10) wrap 1 stitch and turn.

Heel

Row 7: Slip 1, knit 6, (8, 10), knit next stitch together with wrap, knit next stitch together with wrap, knit next 2 stitches together with wrap, turn.

Row 8: Slip 1, purl 9 (11, 13), purl next stitch together with wrap, purl next stitch together with wrap, purl next 2 stitches together with wrap, turn.

Row 9: Slip 1, knit 11 (13, 15), knit next 2 stitches together from right to left through their back loops, turn.

Row 10: Slip 1, purl 11 (13, 15), purl 2 together, turn. Repeat last 2 rows until 13 (15, 17) stitches remain on this needle. Last row completed is a purl row.

Leg

Resume working in rounds with both needles. Slip 1, *knit to end of needle, pick up and knit 1 in intersection between needles, repeat from * once. Knit 1 round. *Purl 8 rounds. Knit 6 rounds, repeat from * twice. Purl 12 rounds. Bind off loosely. The top will curl under, to the inside of the sock.

Abbreviations

WRAP 1 STITCH AND TURN: Bring the yarn to the front if knitting and the back if purling. Slip the next stitch to the right needle, and move the yarn back to the side it came from. Replace the slipped stitch back on the left needle, and turn work. You have now wrapped the yarn around the throat of the slipped stitch. When you come to the stitch later, you will lift the wrap up onto the left needle and knit or purl it together with the stitch it wrapped.

MAKE 1 LEFT: Lift the strand between the stitches and place it on your needle with the leading leg in front. Knit it through the back leg, which will twist it to the left.

MAKE 1 RIGHT: Lift the strand between the stitches and place it on your needle with the leading leg in back. Knit it through the front leg, which will twist it to the right.



Socks in Cascade Fixation

Provisional cast-on



This cast-on uses two circular needles. Perhaps you have done a provisional cast-on before, using waste yarn. In this more efficient version, the cable of a second circular needle neatly replaces the waste yarn.

One needle will be referred to as the *needle*, and the other needle as the *cable*, because these are the only parts you will pay attention to during the cast-on.

With your right hand, hold the tail of yarn and the needle beside the middle of the cable. Tension the yarn in your left hand. Scoop a loop of yarn from under the cable with the needle. Now scoop a loop of yarn from above the cable with the needle. Repeat these two motions, scooping a loop from under and then from above the cable, until you have the required number or a few more on the needle. Once you begin knitting, you can let the extras fall away.

This method sets you up to knit from both sides without having to pick up stitches from waste yarn.

The photo above shows the stitches as they look after being cast on. *Note that the stitches on the cable are alternately mounted, leaning right, then left, etc. You will knit these stitches through the front leg, then the next through the back leg, just the first time you meet them.*

If you wish to use other yarns . . .

The Spandex or Lycra content of the two yarns suggested makes these socks light and springy, easy to get on and off those little wiggling feet, and helps them stay put, but you may use any yarn that will give similar gauge. If you wish to use a yarn which gives a larger gauge, you will have a larger sock - one which will fit a larger baby. Since babies grow, this shouldn't be a problem. You can also work the "Life Rings" in different colors for a different look, or use a self-patterning yarn for another look altogether.