

Learn to knit two socks on two circular needles

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It seems mysterious and unknowable, but I promise you can learn to do it. If I can do it, so can you. So, step by step, I thought I'd illustrate how I cast on and knit two socks on two circular needles, with a bit of commentary along the way.

What you'll need –

- Two circular needles of the same size in any size. Since this is only for practice, it'll help if they are two different lengths or two different materials so you can tell which is which until you become a 2s2c (2 socks/2 circs) expert
- Yarn suitable for the size needles you'll be using, wound into two balls. Red is Sock #1 and green is Sock #2.
- Clothes pins or other type of clip



Wrap your mind around it before you start –

Just to summarize what we'll be doing so it doesn't sneak up on you here's the quick and dirty . . . we're going to use one of the needles to cast on all the stitches for one sock, then move half those stitches to the 2nd needle and clip the ends together so nothing is twisting in the wind. Then we'll cast on all the stitches for the second sock to the first needle and move half those stitches to the 2nd needle. After all the stitches are in place, not twisted, and our working yarns are where they are supposed to be, we'll knit.

Sounds easy, doesn't it? Well, it is. Truly!

Let's take it slow and easy –

I'm using two different lengths of needle here . . . 16" and 26" Crystal Palace Bamboo circulars. I'll use the shorter needle as Needle 1, or my cast on needle. Let's pretend our sock has a cast on of 30 stitches. I'll be casting on 30 stitches to Needle 1 using the Twisted German Cast On. Step by step, do the following.



Cast on 30 stitches to Needle 1.



Begin with the last stitch you cast on (the end where the working yarn is coming from the last stitch) and move 15 stitches to Needle 2.



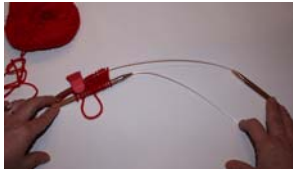
Put the needles side by side, held closely together by the stitches on them.



Slide the stitches to the opposite ends of the needles. Notice the stitches are arranged so that the working yarn is coming up from between the needle points, the loops are not twisted, and the bottom edge of the cast on is arranged to the inside of the space between the needles.

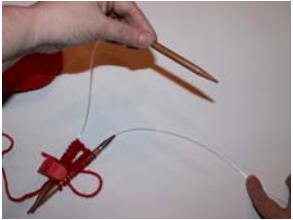


Clip the needle ends together to keep everything where you want it.



Needle 1 is shown above Needle 2.

Sock #1 is now cast on, and you could begin to knit just one sock right now if you wanted, but let's be more daring, shall we? Let's do two!!!



Pick up the stitch-less end of Needle 1. But in your right hand, of course. What was I thinking????



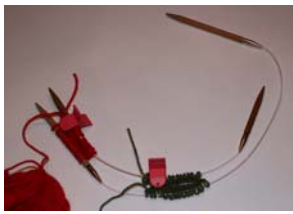
Cast on 30 stitches to the stitch-less end of Needle 1.



Begin with the last stitch you cast on (the end where the working yarn is coming from the last stitch) and move 15 stitches to the stitch-less end of Needle 2.



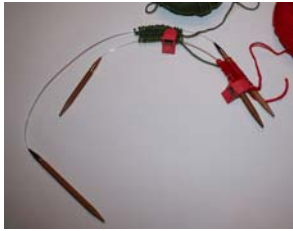
Put the needles side by side, held closely together by the stitches on them.



Slide the stitches toward the first group of cast on stitches, clipping them if necessary. Notice that both open ends of the stitch groups are on the left, the middle joint is at the right. Make sure the working yarn is coming up from between the needle points, the loops of the second cast on group are not twisted, and the bottom edge of the cast on is arranged to the inside of the space between the needles.

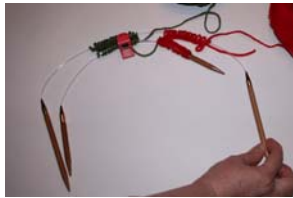
Needle 1 is shown above Needle 2, and both socks are cast on.

Let's knit –



Leave the needles on the table in front of you, but turn the whole thing clockwise so that the cast on stitches are now pointing to the right. Sock #1 is on the right end of the needles, and Sock #2 is behind it on the left.

Needle 2 is now on top, and Needle 1 is on the bottom. Unclip the points of the needle. Make sure the stitches are still untwisted and the working yarns are coming up from between the needle points. If they aren't, you'll get some unintentional yarn-overs.



Take the right tip of Needle 2 in your right fingers and pull it so that the two groups of stitches are held on the cable of the needle, between the points.



Pick up the left end of Needle 1 in your right hand, and the end with the cast on stitches for the first sock in your left hand.



Join the round by simply knitting the first stitch. The working yarn is coming off the last stitch on Needle 2 toward the first stitch you are knitting.



Continue knitting toward the end of the first half of the first group of stitches. I find it helpful to hold the needles in my right hand as shown in the photo to minimize the dangling of points, but you can do it however feels most comfortable to you.



At the end of the first half of the stitches for Sock #1, drop the working yarn, slide the completed stitches to the right a bit, and prepare to join and knit the first half of the Sock #2 stitches.



Join the stitches for Sock #2 as you did for the first one, making sure the working yarn is coming up between the needles and the stitches aren't twisted. Knit the first stitch and then continue to the end of that first half of Sock #2.



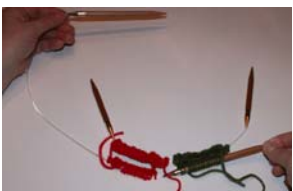
When you are ready to work the other side of the socks, you might find it helpful to once again just put down the needles. If you put them down just as you have completed the first half stitches, they'll probably look something like this.



Spin the whole thing clockwise just like you did at the beginning, with Needle #1 now on the top and Needle #2 on the bottom.



Pull the right end of the Needle #1 tip out so the stitches go onto its cable.



Pull the left end of Needle #2 to the left, so the stitches move to the right toward the tip of the right end of the needle and are ready to knit.



Pick up the left end of Needle #2 with your right hand and the stitches on the right end with your left hand. Make sure the working yarns are coming out and up from between the needles.

Knit the second half of the socks just as you did the first half, making sure to drop the Sock #2 working yarn at the end of the Sock #2 stitches, and then pick up the correct working yarn for Sock #1.



Congratulations! You've just knit one round of two socks on two circular needles!



Practice this method with larger yarns and needles until you feel comfortable with the technique. Then, when you are ready to tackle socks using smaller needles and sock-weight yarns, you'll feel much more confident. Of course, when you are working an actual sock pattern, the first round following the cast on is more than likely going to be a rib stitch pattern rather than the stockinette (all knit stitch) round we did here. Just follow your pattern's directions and you'll be wearing lovely warm handcrafted socks before you know it.

Enjoy!