



Knitted Boots

Written By: Tina Marrin

TOOLS:

- [Crochet hook \(1\)](#)
U.S. size 10 or "J".
- [Double-pointed needles \(19\)](#)
U.S. size 13.
- [Drill bit \(3\)](#)
3/32", 7/32", 1/4".
- [Flexible measuring tape \(1\)](#)
- [Permanent marking pen \(1\)](#)
or tack or push pin.
- [Power Drill \(1\)](#)
- [Scissors \(1\)](#)
- [Tapestry needle \(1\)](#)
size 13.

PARTS:

- [Merino roving \(8 oz\)](#)
(yarn) in "Autumn Forest" or color of choice.
- [Pair of shoes \(1\)](#)
- [Tape \(1\)](#)
3/8" wide post-it brand cover-up tape (or other low-tack tape).

SUMMARY



The first time I saw a knitted boot in a magazine, I was inspired to try my hand at replicating it. The plan was to transform a pair of existing high-heel pumps (that I bought and rarely wore) into a pair of knitted, knee-high mukluks that I would always wear. I knew I needed to make evenly spaced holes around the base of the existing shoes to anchor the “cast-on”

stitches, and that I would use a power drill to do it.

The bulky, rugged wool I chose provided an appealing contrast to the slender spiked heel. And as I rotated the shoe around, engulfing it in knitting, the process felt curiously sculptural – and more like what a potter would feel like at his spinning wheel as a wet lump of clay is being transformed into a fine vessel.

Step 1 — Prep the yarn.



- Take the 8 oz. ball of merino roving in the color of your choice and split the entire yardage into 2 strands by pulling apart, starting at one end, to make 2 balls.
- Note: the roving naturally splits apart in 2 fairly equal parts, but you may need to coax evenness a little. Don't worry if it's not perfect — that's part of what gives the boot its texture and unique beauty. Roving is unspun wool and may seem fragile, but once knitted, it's quite strong. 
- Split both balls of the roving apart again to make a total of 4 balls, and then again to make 8 balls. If the roving breaks apart, you can simply moisten it with saliva or water and vigorously rub the 2 overlapped ends together between your palms (creating heat) — this will permanently “felt” the roving together.
- Note: At this point, I like to arrange the balls of roving according to thickness. I use the thinner roving for the beginning part of the project to avoid “fat feet.” 
- As long as you stick to a fiber that knits up at about the same gauge — 1 stitch (st) per inch, you can drill your holes the way the pattern describes. For thinner yarn, you will have to drill your holes a little

closer together, and adjust the pattern for the new stitch count.


Step 2 — Mark the shoes.



- Run Post-It tape along the outside bottom part of each shoe upper, making a 2" tall "line" around the bottom of the shoe. Tear 1/2"–1" pieces of tape to conform to the curves of the shoe.
- On each shoe, mark the center of the toe box (eyeball it) just above the tapeline.
- While holding the measuring tape up to the tapeline, make a mark 3/4" to the left of the center toe mark, just above the tapeline.
- Continue marking every 3/4" up to the center back seam. Don't mark on the back (or any) shoe seam. You now have 16 marks on one side of the shoe (not including the center mark).
- Repeat the last two steps on the right side. You should have 33 total marks (including the center toe mark) on each shoe. Remove the tape.

Step 3 — Drill the shoes.



- Drill a 3/32" hole into each mark, beginning at the back of each shoe.
- Drill straight through the upper. These holes will be the “pilot holes.” As you get to the toe area, be careful not to drill into the toe insole.
- Drill all marks on both shoes. Then replace the 3/32" drill bit with a 7/32" bit and re-drill all holes with the larger bit. Again, never drill into any seams.
- With a 1/4" drill bit, re-drill all holes on both shoes. Dust off shoes.
- Note: Take care not to drill into any insole or midsole materials. By creating the marks 2" above the bottom of the shoe upper, we have most likely avoided this possibility. 
- Also, be more careful with depressing the drill trigger when drilling with the larger bits, which “grab” more forcefully and quickly than the smaller bit.

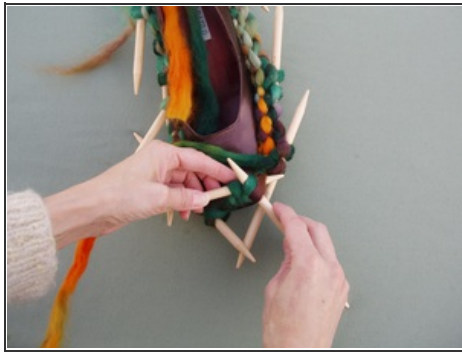
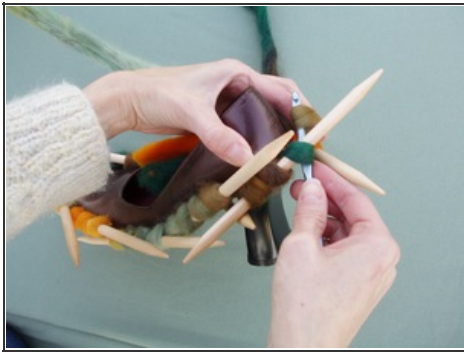
Step 4 — Cast on.






- For each shoe, take a ball of roving and cast on (more like picking up stitches), beginning at the first hole to the left of the center back seam.
- Insert the crochet hook from the outside to the inside of the shoe. The yarn is waiting, on the inside of the shoe, to be grabbed by the crochet hook and pulled through (forming your first loop on the outside of the shoe).
- Slide the loop onto a size 13 DPN (double-pointed needle). Pick up (pull through) the next loop (left of the first loop) with the hook and place it on the same DPN. Don't pull too tight and put only 3-5 loops on each needle.
- Keep picking up, as before, until all holes have a loop coming out of them.
- Cut yarn. When cast-on is complete you'll have 2 tails (approximately 4 1/2" each) inside of each shoe. We'll tie these tails in later.
- Note: I use 9 dpns per shoe at cast-on stage.

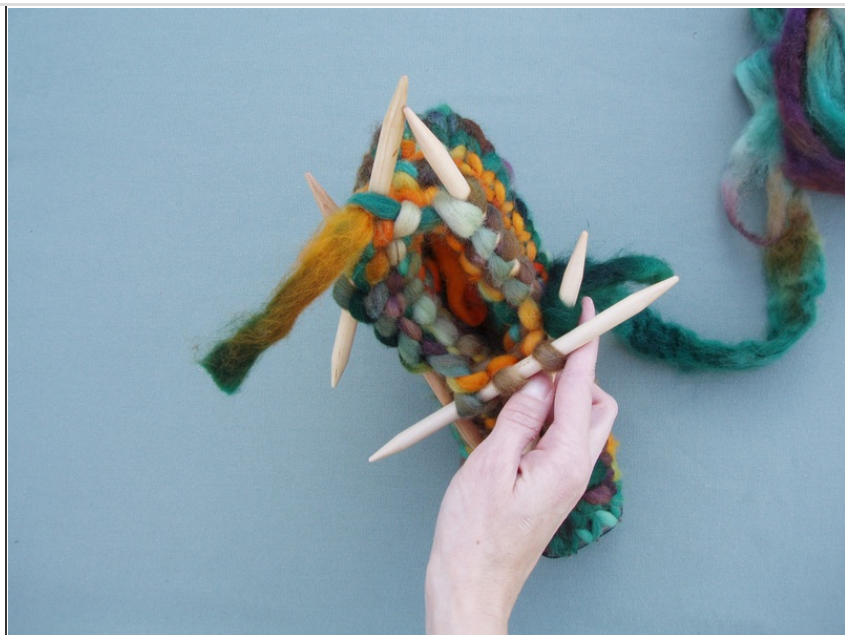




Step 5 — Knit the shoes.



- **Row 1.** Using a size 10 or “J” crochet hook and a ball of roving, “knit” the first row of stitches by pulling one stitch through with the crochet hook and place it (transfer) to a DPN. After the last stitch of the very first row is knit, cast on one stitch by making a firm backwards loop onto the right-hand needle. This is your center back stitch.
- Note: the reason we are using a crochet hook for knitting the first few rows is because the stitches are very tight, since they are lodged between hard dpns and a fairly non-pliable shoe. The stitches will eventually loosen up around row 2 or 3. 
- **Row 2.** k14, ssk, k1 (center toe stitch, or c.t.s.), k2tog, k15.
- **Row 3.** k13, ssk, k1 (c.t.s.), k2tog, k14.
- **Row 4.** k12, ssk, k1 (c.t.s.), k2tog, k13.
- Note: ssk means slip, slip, knit and is a famous left-slanting decrease. K2tog is a common right-slanting decrease. The different decreases make the boot more symmetrical-looking, neat, and attractive. 
- **Row 5.** k11, ssk, k1 (c.t.s.), k2tog, k12.
- **Row 6.** k10, ssk, k1 (c.t.s.), k2tog, k11.
- **Row 7.** k9, ssk, k1 (c.t.s.), k2tog, k10.
- **Row 8.** k8, ssk, k1 (c.t.s.), k2tog, k9.
- **Row 9.** k7, ssk, k1 (c.t.s.), k2tog, k8.
- **Row 10.** k6, ssk, k1 (c.t.s.), k2tog, k7.
- **Row 11.** Increase 1, k5, ssk, k1 (c.t.s.), k2tog, k5, increase 1, k1.
- **Row 12.** k5, ssk, k1 (c.t.s.), k2tog, k6. The shoe is now completely covered, and the body of the boot has begun to take shape.
- Note: now is a good time to tie in the cast-on ends, by weaving them in and out of the drilled holes. The other two ends can be weaved into the purl side of the fabric, as in normal knitting. 

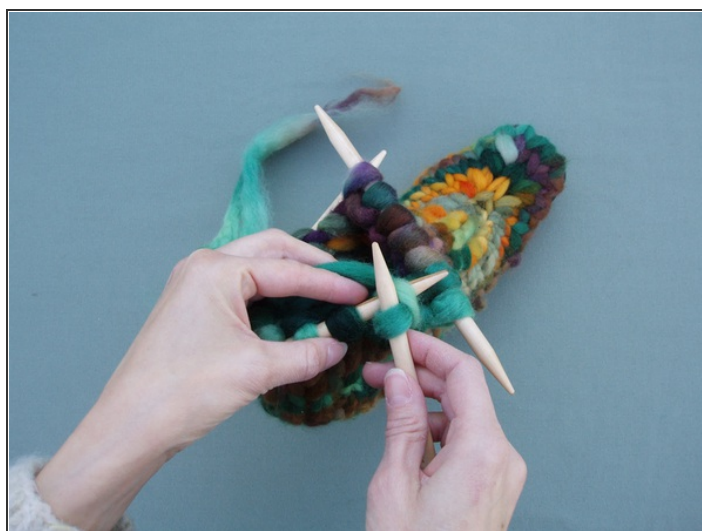
Step 6 — Fill in the front.



- Face the front toe area and put 3 of the centermost stitches on a DPN.
- Cut the yarn at the back of the shoe (leaving a tail) and use that ball of yarn to knit the front 3 stitches on the DPN.
- Turn the shoe so the back heel faces your body. Transfer 1 open stitch (held by the other DPNs) to each side of the DPN holding those 3 centermost stitches.
- You now have 5 stitches on the centermost front DPN. Purl those 5 stitches.
- Note: this is a good time to weave in any extra ends or tighten up any holes or loose spots in the knitting, since we are now going to tightly enclose the shoe. 
- Turn the work again to face the front toe area, and transfer 1 open stitch to each side of the same centermost DPN.
- You now have 7 stitches on the centermost front DPN. Knit those 7 stitches. You should now have 14 stitches on all the DPNs around the shoe.
- Facing the back heel, add 2 more open stitches to each side of the centermost DPN.
- Note: At this point, you may have to break up the center stitches with more dpns. 

- You now have 9 stitches on the centermost front DPN. Purl those 9 stitches.
- Turn the shoe to face the front toe area and add 2 more open stitches, as before.
- You now have 11 stitches on the centermost front DPN. Knit those 11 stitches.

Step 7 — Grow the boot.



- From where you left off, start knitting around for 10 rounds.
- Note: You may knit around for as many rounds as you want, depending on how much yarn you have left. But remember to leave enough yarn for a final rib cuff and the bind-off.



Step 8 — Rib and bind off.



- After your last round is completed, begin a knit purl rib pattern (k1p1) for 5 rounds.
- Bind off all 14 stitches loosely and tie in any remaining ends.
- Repeat Steps 2-8 for the second boot.
- Voilà! You've just made yourself a rustic pair of knitted slouch boots.

This project first appeared in [CRAFT Volume 01](#), pages 78-85.

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