

# Hand-Plated Kokopelli Socks



Pattern Name: Upstream Master Sock by Cat Bordhi

Source: New Pathways for Sock Knitters, Book One

Yarn: Knit Picks Stroll Tweed in Reindeer Heather (1.9 skeins, 94 g) and Dove Heather (0.9 skein, 47 g)

Gauge: 5.5 sts and 5 rows = 1 in holding three strands together (I used 3.25 mm)

## Notes

Using two strands of Reindeer and one strand of Down.

I had previously unvented a way to force a certain color stitch on my [Pink and Navy Socks](#) when using strands that aren't the same color. But I had never used it to do an actual color pattern. So I thought it was time to try out that technique.

I am what I call a “brute-force” thrower, as I hold the yarn between thumb and index finger, insert the needle, sort of pinch it with my left fingertips, let go of it with my right hand, wrap the yarn with an arm motion, grab the needle again, and complete the stitch. I was very surprised to watch the videos for Susan Rainey's *It's Not About the Hat*, as she knits exactly the same way.

What I found on the pink and navy socks was that when I wrapped the three yarns, whichever strand was closest to the tip of the needle would be the strand that showed when I worked that stitch on the next round. So when I started getting too much navy, I would sort of manipulate the strands as I wrapped so that I got a pink strand as the leftmost one. It wasn't even necessary to have the other pink strand in the center and the navy as the rightmost.

So why couldn't I work a color pattern this same way? Well, as it turns out, I can!

While the which-strand-is-leftmost technique will work for all knitters (well, I guess MIKs would need the desired strand to be rightmost, but that would still place it closest to the tip of the working needle), how each knitter gets there will be different. I'm not sure how a picking knitter would rearrange the strands easily to make sure the desired strand winds up leftmost.

I do find that constantly twisting the three strands to bring the needed color to the proper spot means I need to untwist by letting the WIP hand and spin. Or sometimes I can roll the strands the other direction to untwist them, which in this particular case means while I'm working the back of the leg. Work two stitches, roll the strands a bit, and repeat across until the twisting is undone.



*Pattern already started. Between the blue markers, I have 4 white, 1 brown, 1 white, 2 brown, 3 white, 3 brown, 3 white. Work R to L and look only at the leftmost strand of each stitch.*

The gold pins are how I mark the increase rounds on the way to the heel turn. The colorwork chart is adapted quite a bit from the chart used to make the textured Kokopelli Socks.

## Two Notes

1. I do NOT wind the balls together. Doing so would probably make it impossible to manipulate the strands, or at least make it much more difficult. Plus, if you wind multiple yarns together and change your mind about the combo...well, unplying them is very unpleasant. I simply corral them in a gallon zipper bag.



2. The left-most strand set-up works in the round as well as in the flat, as when working the heel, even though you're purling on WS rows.

## February 17, 2019

Finished the first sock with a yard of the Down left!

On to sock #2 with a mirror-image kokopelli. But tomorrow...

## February 19, 2019

When I was finishing the second sock, I ran out of Down long before I could match the number of ribbing rounds I had done on the first, so I BO after just nine rounds of ribbing, then had to frog the first a bit to match. Which is weird, because I thought I made the first sock with the smaller ball of Down, exactly to avoid this problem.

I think this technique needs an official name.

## February 20, 2019

I learned that I managed to replicate the machine knitting technique called *plating*.

So do I call it "handknit plating"?



*WS closeup to prove that all stitches were worked with all three strands*

Wouldn't this technique make three-color argyles nice and easy? I think so, and such a pair of socks are in my mental queue.