

elf shoes

by Pamela Wynne



Liberate your inner pixie, sprite, jester, imp or grinch! These puckish slippers are knit in the round and full to fit. They feature turn-down cuffs, short-row heels, and a curly elfin toe shaped with short rows and i-cord.

SIZING: Instructions are for infant (toddler, youth, adult, adult wide). Foot length and cuff height are customizable.

GAUGE: 13 stitches / 4 inches, in stockinette stitch, before fulling

MATERIALS:

- 1 skein Cascade 220 (100% wool, 220 yards) in Main Color (MC) (Larger adult sizes may require a second skein)
- ½ skein Cascade 220 (100% wool, 220 yards) in Contrasting Color (CC)
- Set of five US size 10.5 (6.5mm) double-pointed needles
- tapestry needle

KNITTING TERMS:

- **k:** knit
- **p:** purl
- **st:** st
- **k2tog:** knit 2 together
- **ssk:** sl 1 knitwise, sl 1 knitwise, insert left needle into the front loops of both slipped sts and knit them together
- **sk2p:** slip 1, k2tog, pass slipped st over.
- **st st:** stockinette stitch. When knitting in the round, knit all sts.
- **i-cord:** k all sts; do not turn. Slide the sts to the other end of the needle and k the row again, pulling the working yarn snug through the first st of the row.
- **w&t: Wrap and turn.**
 - **From the right (knit) side:** Slip the next st purlwise. Bring yarn to the front of your work. Slip the slipped st back to the left needle and return the yarn to the back of your work. Turn.
 - **From the wrong (purl) side:** Slip the next st purlwise. Bring the yarn to the back of your work. Slip the slipped st back to the left needle and bring the yarn to the front of your work. Turn.

INSTRUCTIONS

With MC, cast on 28 (32, 36, 44, 52) sts and divide over 3 or 4 needles. Join for knitting in the round.

For a short cuff, k 1.5 (1.5, 2, 2.5, 2.5) inches. For a taller cuff, k 2.5 (3.5, 4, 4) inches.

[FIRST HALF OF HEEL]

You'll work heel back and forth over half of the sts. Set aside the other half of your sts for the instep.

Row 1: K 13 (15, 17, 21, 25), w&t.

Row 2: P to last st of the heel section, w&t.

Row 3: K to 1 st before unworked st, w&t.

Row 4: P to 1 st before unworked st, w&t.

Repeat Rows 3 and 4 until there are 4 (6, 8, 8, 8) sts live in the middle and 5 (5, 5, 7, 9) sts wrapped on each side, ending with a purl row.

[SECOND HALF OF HEEL]

Row 1: K 4, (6, 8, 8, 8). On the next st, pick up and knit the wrap with the st. Wrap the next st (this st will now have 2 wraps) and turn.

Row 2: P to first wrapped st. Pick up and purl the wrap with the st, w&t.

Row 3: K to next wrapped st. Pick up both wraps and knit them with the st, w&t.

Row 4: P to next wrapped st. Pick up both wraps and purl them with the st, w&t.

Repeat Rows 3-4 until you have worked all the heel sts. The first and last sts of the heel will still have two wraps. Resume knitting in the round, with all 28 (32, 36, 44, 52) sts. When you come to the wrapped sts, pick up and k both wraps with the st.

FOOT: Knit the foot in st st until it is 1/2 inch longer than the wearer's foot. If a fitting isn't possible, refer to the shoe size chart at the end of the pattern.

TOE: The toe is shaped with short rows, to make the sole longer than the instep and force it to curl up. At the same time, paired decreases along the side will narrow the toe. Yvon of Storm in the Attic invented this super-clever construction, which can be applied to any sock or slipper (see <http://www.stormpolder.nl/DIY.htm#free>).

Divide the sts in half on your needles: half for the sole and half for the instep. Knit across all the sole sts. Wrap the next st (the first st of the instep) and turn.

*P across all the sole sts. Wrap the next st (the first st of the instep) and turn.

K across all the sole sts.

K together the first 2 sts of the instep, k to last 2 sts of the instep, ssk.

K together the first 2 sts of the sole, k to last 2 sts of the sole, ssk. Wrap next st (the first st of the instep) and turn.

Repeat from * until 8 sts remain—4 for the instep and 4 for the sole. K2tog, ssk, k2tog, ssk.



Place the 4 remaining sts on a single needle. You will now work a small piece of i-cord for the pointy toe. If you'd like a more blunt toe, work one row of i-cord, break yarn, thread yarn end through all 4 sts and weave in. If you would like a longer curly toe, work more i-cord (up to three-quarters of an inch) before finishing off.

CUFF:

With CC, working from the inside (purl/wrong side) of the slipper opening, pick up and knit 28 (32, 36, 44, 52) sts, starting at the center back of the slipper. This section will be folded over, so it should face the opposite direction from the existing sts. Knit 1/2 (1/2, 1, 1, 1) inch.

Arrange the sts over 4 needles as follows:

Needle 1: 7 (9, 11, 13, 15) sts

Needle 2: 7 (7, 7, 9, 11) sts

Needle 3: 7 (9, 11, 13, 15) sts

Needle 4: 7 (7, 7, 9, 11) sts

The four pointed triangles on the cuff are worked one at a time, back and forth, over a small number of sts. **For the infant size**, work all 4 points using instructions for Toddler Point 2 below.

| TODDLER | YOUTH | ADULT | ADULT WIDE |
|--|---|--|--|
| <p>POINT 1: Row 1: K 9, turn. Row 2 and all even rows: P Row 3: repeat Row 1 Row 5: k1, ssk, k3, k2tog, k1 Row 7: k1, ssk, k1, k2tog, k1 Row 9: ssk, k1, k2tog Row 11: sk2p Break yarn.</p> <p>POINT 2: Reattach yarn. Row 1: K 7, turn Row 2 and all even rows: P Row 3: Repeat Row 1 Row 5: k1, ssk, k1, k2tog, k1 Row 7: ssk, k1, k2tog Row 9: sk2p Break yarn.</p> | <p>POINT 1: Row 1: K11, turn. Row 2 and all even rows: P Row 3: Repeat Row 1 Row 5: K1, ssk, k5, k2tog, k1 Row 7: k1, ssk, k3, k2tog, k1 Row 9: k1, ssk, k1, k2tog, k1 Row 11: ssk, k1, k2tog Row 13: sk2p Break yarn.</p> <p>POINT 2: Reattach yarn. Row 1: K 7, turn Row 2 and all even rows: P Row 3-5: Repeat Row 1 Row 7: k1, ssk, k1, k2tog, k1 Row 9: ssk, k1, k2tog Row 11: sk2p Break yarn.</p> | <p>POINT 1: Row 1: K 13, turn. Row 2 and all even rows: P Row 3: Repeat Row 1 Row 5: K1, ssk, k7, k2tog, k1 Row 7: K1, ssk, k5, k2tog, k1 Row 9: k1, ssk, k3, k2tog, k1 Row 11: k1, ssk, k1, k2tog, k1 Row 13: ssk, k1, k2tog Row 15: sk2p Break yarn.</p> <p>POINT 2: Reattach yarn. Row 1: K 9, turn. Row 2 and all even rows: P Row 3: repeat Row 1 Row 5: k1, ssk, k3, k2tog, k1 Row 7: k1, ssk, k1, k2tog, k1 Row 9: ssk, k1, k2tog Row 11: sk2p Break yarn.</p> | <p>POINT 1: Row 1: K 15, turn. Row 2 and all even rows: P Row 3: Repeat Row 1 Row 5: K1, ssk, k9, k2tog, k1 Row 7: K1, ssk, k7, k2tog, k1 Row 9: k1, ssk, k5, k2tog, k1 Row 11: k1, ssk, k3, k2tog, k1 Row 13: k1, ssk, k1, k2tog, k1 Row 15: ssk, k1, k2tog Row 15: sk2p Break yarn.</p> <p>POINT 2: Reattach yarn. Row 1: K11, turn. Row 2 and all even rows: P Row 3: Repeat Row 1 Row 5: K1, ssk, k5, k2tog, k1 Row 7: k1, ssk, k3, k2tog, k1 Row 9: k1, ssk, k1, k2tog, k1 Row 11: ssk, k1, k2tog Row 13: sk2p Break yarn.</p> |

ALL SIZES:

POINT 3: Reattach yarn and work as for Point 1.

POINT 4: Work as for Point 2.

Repeat all steps for second slipper.

FINISHING: Weave in all ends, taking care to keep the pointy bits pointy.

FULL your slippers. I ran mine once through my washing machine's regular cycle, with hot water and wool wash. A friend got perfect shrinkage after two cycles in a top-loader that doesn't have an agitator. Be sure to check your slippers often to avoid over-shrinking. And remember that different yarns will respond differently to the fulling process. For instance, Patons Classic Wool will shrink much more quickly than Cascade 220.



SHAPE your slippers using any combination of the following techniques: (a) stuff with plastic bags or other waterproof material; (b) wear the slippers around, over socks, until they've formed to your foot shape, then allow them to dry in shape; (c) put the slippers over a water-resistant pair of shoes or boots to dry. Remember to mold the curly toe into shape.

SHAVE the fuzz off your slippers using a safety razor or sweater stone.

To make non-skid slippers, use a foam brush to paint 2-3 coats of Plasti-Dip (available at hardware stores) onto the soles of your slippers, following package instructions.

| | US SHOE SIZE | INCHES BEFORE TOE |
|----------|-----------------|-------------------|
| CHILDREN | Age 0-6 months | 4-4.5 |
| | Age 6-12 months | 5-5.5 |
| | 7-8 | 6-6.5 |
| | 9-10 | 7 |
| | 10-11 | 7.5 |
| | 11-12 | 8 |
| | 12-1 | 8.5 |
| | 2-3 | 9 |
| | 4-5 | 9.5 |
| WOMEN | 5-6 | 9.5 |
| | 7-8 | 10 |
| | 9-10 | 10.5 |
| | 11-12 | 11 |
| MEN | 7-8 | 10.5 |
| | 9-10 | 11 |
| | 11-12 | 11.5 |
| | 13-14 | 12 |
| | 15-16 | 12.5 |

Big, big thanks to the knitters who tested this pattern and provided valuable feedback; to Adrian for her sweet stump shots and for baby elves; and most of all to Yvon for her badass toe innovation.