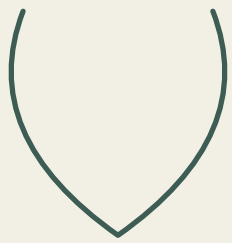
Choose Darning Yarn for a Wool Sock

Compare effective yarn thickness

Finer



May need a different stitch plan

Comparable



Assess softness and care too

Bulkier



May produce a pressure ridge

Illustrative only; compare the actual original yarn and swatch.

Compare yarn thickness, fibre behaviour and permitted washing before selecting a compatible soft darning yarn for everyday wool socks.

14 practical steps • Original diagrams and repair records

Illustrative repair plans — not physical test results

Before you start

A wool sock is knitted to move with the foot, and a repair yarn that is too thick, stiff or prone to different shrinkage can create a ridge. This is a material-selection worksheet for ordinary adult socks, not a repair procedure or a guarantee of wash compatibility. It excludes medical compression socks, protective socks, diabetic-foot-care products and other specialist items. A damaged sock that causes rubbing or pressure should not be worn.

Materials

Clean ordinary sock, care and fibre labels, potential darning yarn samples with known care instructions, light, magnifier, ruler, paper, pencil, blunt tapestry needle and comparable knit scrap. For optional comparison swatches, use only a care method permitted for all tested materials and keep samples separate from the sock.

Plan the repair

Identify the original knit yarn by visible thickness and construction, label information and ordinary softness. Compare candidates by actual strand size, pliability, fibre content, care requirements and observed behaviour of comparable swatches. A wool or suitable wool-blend darning yarn of similar effective thickness may suit ordinary wool socks; neither fibre name nor nominal yarn weight alone proves compatibility. Avoid bulky yarn or stiff thread. Wash comparison is optional on separate scrap and records actual changes, not a certification. Use a separate suitable darning method after selecting the yarn.

Steps 1–2

1. Confirm the sock type

Read the label and identify the sock’s ordinary use. Exclude compression, medical, protective and technical socks. If the sock is uncomfortable or damaged, do not wear it while assessing.

2. Find the wear point

Record the heel, toe or another location, and whether the original knit is merely thin or has missing loops. Widespread weak fabric may need replacement.

Steps 3–4

3. Identify the original yarn

Observe a sound nearby stitch and compare it with the worn area. Do not pull yarn from the sock to measure it. Record the fibre label or UNKNOWN.

4. Compare strand thickness

Lay candidate strands beside sound original knitting and compare visually. A multi-ply yarn may have a different effective thickness from its label category.

Steps 5–6

5. Compare softness and flexibility

Gently bend candidate strands or a small swatch without sustained tension. Avoid a rigid or scratchy material for a contact area. Record actual observations, not predicted comfort.

6. Check fibre and construction

Record wool content, blends, twist and any reinforcement yarn if known. A suitable compatible blend may be preferable to a thick all-wool yarn; match the actual knit and purpose.

Steps 7–8

7. Read care instructions

Compare the sock and candidate yarn labels for temperature, agitation, drying and other restrictions. If care needs conflict or are unknown, select another candidate or seek advice.

8. Prepare comparison samples

Use comparable spare knit and small candidate-yarn swatches rather than the sock itself. Make a few relaxed sample stitches where suitable, keeping strand thickness and stitch density comparable.

Steps 9–10

9. Record before observations

On the worksheet, record sample dimensions in a chosen unit, strand appearance, stiffness and any ridge. Note the measurement direction and sample construction.

10. Compare after permitted care

Only if all sample materials permit a common care method, follow that method on the separate samples. Dry as directed; compare relaxed dimensions, felting, texture and colour transfer. If no trial is performed mark NOT CHECKED.

Steps 11–12

11. Choose provisional yarn

Prefer a compatible effective thickness, soft hand and care behaviour. Avoid selecting a yarn solely because it is labelled wool or because it looks stronger.

12. Plan a small sample mend

Consider a low-profile flexible darning route and a suitable blunt needle. Do not make a dense hard patch at the heel or toe; seek another method if the yarn produces a ridge.

Steps 13–14

13. Observe any later repair

If an appropriate repair is made separately, inspect the relaxed interior and exterior for hard spots, loops and texture differences. Do not use a worn sock to test comfort or strength.

14. Retain the comparison record

Record the actual yarn choice, sample care observations and later ordinary use if suitable. Stop using a sock that rubs, causes pressure, or continues to wear through.

Fix, care and preserve

The candidate is much thicker

A thick strand may build a ridge. Choose a finer suitable yarn or a compatible effective strand thickness; do not use excess stitches to hide it.

The labels disagree

Do not assume the less restrictive instruction is safe. Choose materials compatible with the sock’s intended care or refer.

The sample changes after washing

Record the actual shrinkage, texture or colour change. A mismatch suggests another yarn may be preferable; one sample does not prove durability.

The repaired sock rubs

Stop wearing the sock. Reconsider the bulk and texture of the repair; replacement may be better than adding more yarn.

Originality and evidence boundary

Original Steadleaf English prose, design, diagrams and records. Follow the actual item, textile and tool instructions. No physical repair, durability, load, strength, washing, flame-resistance or compatibility testing was performed by the publisher. Ordinary adult garments and non-technical household textiles only; no safety or performance certification.

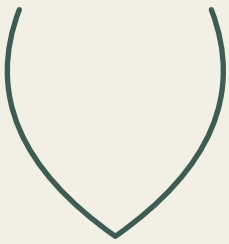
Print the following pages separately if desired. Schematics are illustrative, not full-size cutting patterns. Record only actual observations.

Pattern 1

Yarn thickness comparison: three illustrative strands beside the original knit loop scale, labelled too fine for the planned support, comparable candidate, and too bulky. Actual fibre, softness, stitch layout and care must also be considered. Not a strength or fixed gauge chart.

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Pattern 2

Wash-behaviour worksheet: for each candidate record fibre and care compatibility, sample construction, before and after relaxed length and width in the same units, texture/felting and visible colour change. Mark NOT CHECKED if no sample wash is performed. Do not wash a damaged garment to establish compatibility.

Record separate sample care observations

	Candidate A	Candidate B
Fibre / care label		
Sample construction		
Before L × W / unit		
After L × W / same unit		
Texture / felting		
Colour change		
Decision / uncertainty		

Use NOT CHECKED if no common permitted care trial is performed.

Record 1 — Materials and repair plan

Record actual observations only. Use UNKNOWN or NOT CHECKED for anything you have not established.

Sock / fibre / care / intended use

Wear location and knit condition

Original yarn appearance / evidence

Candidate yarn A and B

Effective strand thickness / flexibility

Care compatibility / unknowns

Separate sample preparation

Provisional choice / refer

Record 2 — Finish and follow-up

Record actual observations only. Use UNKNOWN or NOT CHECKED for anything you have not established.

Selected yarn / actual strand choice

Sample care method or NOT CHECKED

Before / after dimensions and units

Texture / colour / felting observed

Later repair profile if completed

Ordinary use observation if appropriate

Decision: continue / replace / refer

Date / follow-up