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Reinforcing Sock Heel Tips

By Erssie Major

There are several ways of reinforcing a heel. Here are a few:

1. Change to a stronger yarn that has a nylon content, and don't use soft yarns (i.e. wool 100% fleece yarn, cashmere, silk or alpaca) for a heel
2. Use a textured stitch...this can be a simple slip stitch, eye of partridge or any ridged pattern...I have used some tweed and herringbone stitches and some people decorate their heels using colourwork or even some surface embroidery. Basically you just want ridges or bumps to stand up to protect that area.
3. The old fashioned way to reinforce a heel was to start knitting/holding the sock yarn together with another strong nylon thread although some knitters say although the nylon thread is strong, it can actually cut through the softer sock yarn like a cheesewire.
However there are some updated reinforcing threads available online here are the links for a couple that sell them:
Yarn Market for the US:*
http://www.yarnmarket.com/yarn/Lang_Yarn-Jawoll_Reinforcement_Thread_Yarn-3475.html
Creat and Knit for the UK:*
http://www.createandknit.co.uk/index.php?main_page=index&cPath=130_93
4. You can also double up your yarn at the heel or knit much tighter stitches at a smaller gauge to make a firmer fabric.
5. You can knit an extra heel on the bottom to mirror the shape, then double it up as a lining.
6. It is possible to knit the sock, then turn inside out and pick up around the heel area and knit an inner heel in a stronger but finer yarn so that it fits neatly inside the outer heel protecting the main yarn. When this inner heel gets a bit thin or develops holes it is not connected to the whole sock and so will be easy to repair.

For more information go to the <http://www.erssieknits.com> website and the Tutorials section where there is a list of links to tutorials for reinforcing heels as well as a link to the Erssie Knits YouTube Channel where there are videos on sock knitting including a slip stitch heel. I can't publish the content of other people's posts or tutorials on my website without permission, but I am allowed to link to the originals all of which are free to access via the Erssie Knits website.

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