

BUNNY HOP

Thrummed Bunny Slippers in 3 Adult Sizes

By Nikol Lohr

➡ These slippers are soft as a bunny, thanks to their thrums — unspun wool knit right in for a warm, cushy, fleecy lining. They're also quick as a bunny! Knit in bulky yarn, they have the same stitch count as your average worsted hat. Worked up quickly in economical (\$5/100g ball) bulky wool, they're a recession-busting and adorable last-minute holiday gift. And you can always omit the "bunniness" if your subject isn't silly rabbit material.

Aside from the cush, these slippers have a great fit and actually stay on your feet, thanks to the heel shaping and wide button flap. They're entirely seamless, knit sole first, with stitches picked up all around, then shaped from the sole up. The fat button strap is picked up near the edge and knit in place, as are the floppy ears. The wide flap gives the style gender neutrality, but you can also substitute a narrow strap for a girlier Mary Jane.

All About Thrums

Thrums are little chunks of unspun fiber worked periodically into your knitting. Each thrum is a separate piece worked into just one stitch, along with the yarn, and its ends are left sticking out on the wrong side of the knitting. Imagine duplicate stitch if you used a separate piece of yarn for each stitch, except here the yarn is fleece and you work it in while you knit instead of afterwards. On the right side of your work, you get a little pattern of Vs or hearts, but on the wrong side, you get a crazy shag rug of super awesome fluffy-wuffy warmth! The thrums will compress a little and felt together over time, becoming less puffy but just as cozy.

Choosing a Fiber

Light, fine, bouncy fibers like Merino, Bluefaced Leicester (BFL), Corriedale, Rambouillet, and down wools make the best thrums (bypass the stronger, less-crimpy fibers like Lincoln or Wensleydale). Because the structural integrity of the thrummed fabric relies somewhat on the fibers' ability to cling and felt, you'll want to avoid superwash fibers. You can use combed top or roving. You can even use washed fleece, as long as the lock structure is intact; just separate out locks, and if they're compressed, gently tease them before thrumming.

If you're using commercially dyed combed top (solid colors or uniform blends), soak and dry it first. This will remove processing additives and decompress it. Just soak it (don't agitate) in hot



water for about 10 minutes, drain and squeeze out excess water in some towels, and let it dry. If you don't have one of those dryer racks for shoes and sweaters, you can even dry it in the dryer (but don't tumble-dry or else it will felt). The fiber will be airier and nicer to draft and thrum.

Hand-dyed fiber has already had any processing additives rinsed out, so it's ready to go. Similarly, roving and the fluffier combed top you get from small mills like Zeilinger's is also ready to go.

If you're new to unspun fiber, go with hand-dyed Merino or BFL combed top.

Thrums from Combed Top

Combed top is a rope of fiber from which all the neps, short bits, and vegetable matter have been combed. The fiber's arrangement is very directional, which makes an easy prep for thrums.

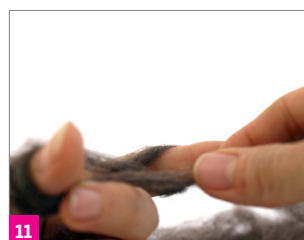
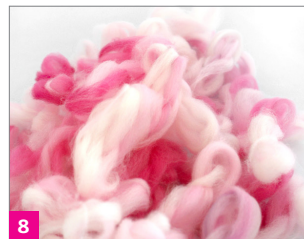
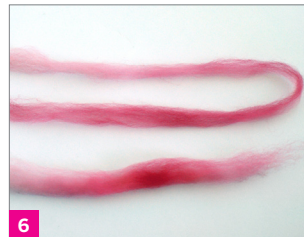
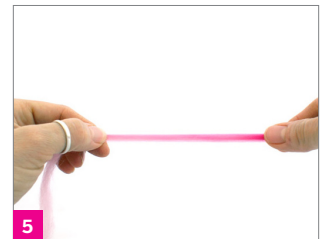
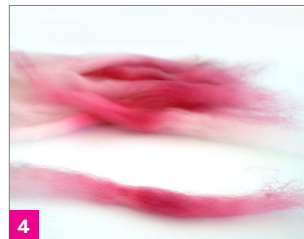
1. Unsoaked, commercially dyed top (compressed, with a chalky hand), hand-dyed top (fluffier and dense), and top from a small mill (loose and airy).
2. Break (do not cut!) off a piece of top that's about 8" long.
3. Pull off a little lengthwise strips, about $\frac{1}{8}$ "– $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick.
4. I get 15–20 strips from a piece of typical commercial top or about 7–10 from the fluffier type of top you get from a smaller mill.
5. Draft out each strip, gently stretching the fibers apart, moving your hands every 3"–4" and repeating. If the strip breaks, don't worry; you can combine 2 shorter strips when you wind them. Drafting the fiber adds air to it. The more air you can trap in your fiber, the warmer and cushier it will be.
6. After you draft it, it will be quite light and fluffy and about twice as long as the original strip.
7. Wind each drafted strip around your thumb and forefinger in a figure eight, like you would if you were starting to wind a center-pull ball of yarn. I like the little figure eights to be 3"–4" long. Smooth down the loose ends; they'll stick to the rest. Make sure you get at least 2 full rounds, but it's fine to end up with 3 or 4 depending on the thickness of that particular strip. It doesn't matter if your thrums are different thicknesses; it'll average out. Some people recommend using thrums about the same thickness as the yarn, but I like the pudgy thrums way better than the skinny ones. Keep in mind that the fatter your thrum, the longer you'll need it to be to keep it secure in your knitting.
8. Repeat until you have a nice pile of them. If you have a lot of different colors, you can toss them all together to mix them up.

9. Note: If you're using hand-dyed top with dramatic color changes and you want to preserve the color progression and/or keep both slippers balanced color-wise, split the strip in half down the middle before you begin.

Thrums from Roving and Sliver

Roving is a rope of carded fiber with an irregular arrangement of fibers. Sliver is roving that's been drafted slightly, so the arrangement of fibers is somewhat more directional, but for thrums, we'll treat it the same as roving. Both include short fibers and lots of air, which makes a very warm prep, but also a little trickier to prepare for thrums. Roving can also vary dramatically by fiber and mill. It can range from thick and chunky to narrow and wispy, so how much prep you need depends much on the product itself.

10. Most roving will require some preparation. I like to tear off a strip a few feet long, and then draft the whole thing twice.



How-To Knit Thrums

While I knit continental in real life, I prefer to knit English when I thrum. This way, I can wrap the yarn first, then wrap the thrum, and when I pull it through, the yarn stays in the back; when knitting continental, the yarn tends to drift to the front. Continental also stretches the yarn a bit more as you go, which can loosen the thrums below while knitting the rows after the thrum. I'm not saying you can't thrum continental; just keep an eye out.

13. To insert a thrum into your knitting, start to knit the stitch as usual: insert your needle knit-wise, wrap the yarn, but before you pull it through the stitch and off the needle, wrap a thrum around it as well, then knit it as usual. To wrap the thrum, fold it over the needle and hold the ends together at the back of the work along with the yarn.

14. Once it's knit in, it will stay put unless it's too short (if it's borderline, give it a light tug by both ends from the back). When you pass the thrum on the next round, knit it together with its yarn as one stitch.



13



14

Pattern

ABBREVIATIONS

BO bind off	P purl
CO cast on	RS right side
K knit	Sl slip stitch purlwise (unless noted otherwise, as in ssk)
k2tog knit 2 together (decrease): knit stitches together as one	ssk slip, slip, knit (decrease): slip 2 stitches knitwise, one at a time, then knit them together as one
M1 make 1 (increase): lift the bar between the stitches from the front, knit into the back of the lifted bar to twist the bar and form a new stitch	st(s) stitch(es)
	WS wrong side

MATERIALS

Yarn and Fiber
 » 2 skeins Valley Yarns Berkshire Bulky (100g, 108 yds, 85% wool/15% alpaca, shown here in Light Pink) or Valley Yarns Northampton Bulky (100g, 109 yds, 100% wool)
 » 2 ounces combed top or roving See fiber recommendations; Art Club cotton candy merino combed top shown here.
 » Accent yarn for embroidering eyes, nose and mouth
 » A few feet of thin Merino or Rambouillet roving Must be roving, not combed top, plus a scrap of white yarn for the tail (optional).

Needles
 » US10/6mm 16"–22" circular needle

Gauge
 » 13 st=4"/10cm in plain stockinette without thrums

Notions
 » 1¼" buttons buttons (2)
 » Yarn needle
 » Sewing needle and thread if your yarn needle is too big for your button's holes

Size: Adult S (M, L)
S: Women's 6-8
M: Women's 4-6
M: Women's 9-11/
Men's 7-9
L: Men's 10-13

Thrummed Bunny Slippers

The thrum pattern shown here places 1 thrum every 3 stitches, every 4th row, with adjustments made for the size and shape of the particular row. The foot has a stitch count to accommodate the Thrum 1, Knit 2 repeat, with the centered toe stitch as the start of the round and an even number of stitches in either direction from the center toe stitch to the center back division.

Start your thrums centered on the 3rd row of the sole and at the center toe stitch of the 2nd rnd of the foot. Or feel free to wing it or stagger your thrums if you like: CO 11 (13, 15).

Sole

- » 44 (52, 60) rows
- » All odd rows, except as noted: Sl 1, K to end.
- » All even rows: Sl 1, P to 1 st from end, K1
- » Rows 17 (21, 23) and & 29 (31, 35): Sl 1, K1, M1, K to 2 st from end, M1, K2
- » Rows 35 (39, 45), 41 (45, 53), and 43 (49, 57): Sl 1, ssk, K to 3 st from end, k2tog, K1

Transition from sole

- » Sl 1, K to end. Turn work.
- » Sl 1, K to end.
- » With WS still facing you, PU all edge and heel stitches all around sole, marking center back heel — 63 (75, 87) st, including toe st. You'll have 22 (26, 30) sts on each side, 10 (12, 14) at the heel and 9 (11, 13) at the toe. The center toe stitch will be your center front, and your center back will fall between the back 2 stitches. It will be a little tight picking up the heel stitches, but your knitting will relax as you progress upward.
- » Turn work so RS is facing you. Sl the first stitch, then lift the 2nd stitch from the right needle (was the first stitch before you slipped that one) over the slipped stitch and onto your left needle (the last stitch and first stitch of the round have just traded places. (Figure C).

Foot

- » Round 1–7 (9, 11): Knit.
- » Round 8 (10, 12): K1, ssk, K to 2 st before center back marker, K2tog, ssk, K to 2 st before end, k2tog.
- » Round 9 (11, 13): K1, ssk, K1, ssk, K1, ssk, work around to 8 st before end, K2tog, K1, K2tog.
- » Round 10 (12, 14): K to 2 st before center back, K2tog, ssk, K to end of rnd.
- » L only: Repeat Last 2 rnds.
- » Round 11 (13, 17): K1, ssk, ssk, ssk, K to 6 st before end, K2tog, k2tog, K2tog.
- » Round 12 (14, 18): K to 2 st from back, K2tog, ssk, K to end.
- » Rounds 13 (15, 19): K1 P1 rib to 1 st from end, then ...
- » Round 14 (16, 20): Using the last st from Round 13 and 1st st from Round 14, K2tog. Continue ribbing in pattern.
- » Round 15 (17, 21): K1 P1 ribbing.
- » Round 16 (18, 22): BO in pattern.

Strap #1

- » With sole facing down and the toe facing to the left, looking at the last knit row before the ribbing, count 3 (4, 5) stitches right of center, then count 11 (13, 15) more st to the right as your



starting point.

- » Working into the row beneath the ribbing, PU 11 (13, 15) st, picking up vertically into the bar in the center of each stitch (Figure D). All rows (except as noted): SI1, K to end.
- » Row 11 (13, 15): SI 1, K3, BO 3 st, K4 (so you'll have a gap with 4 st on either side of it).
- » Row 12 (14, 16): SI 1, K3, CO 3 st, K4.
- » Row 15 & 16 (17 & 18, 19 & 20): SI 1, ssk, K to 3 st from end, K2tog, K1.
- » Last row: SI 1, ssk, BO to 3 st before end, K2tog, BO all stitches.

Strap #2

- » With sole facing down and the toe facing to the right, count 3 (4, 5) stitches left of center. Working into the last row before the ribbing, PU 11 (13, 15) st, picking up into the bar in the center of each stitch. Proceed as above.

Ears

- » With the toe facing you, and looking at the last row before the ribbing, count 4 (5, 6) st to the left.
- » You're going to pick up the ears starting here, picking up horizontally through both legs of the stitch and working down the column of stitches (Figure E).
- » PU 4.
- » SI 1, K3
- » SI 1, P2, K1
- » SI 1, K1, M1, K2
- » SI 1 P3, K1
- SI 1, K1, M1, K3
- SI 1, P4, K1
- » SI 1, K3, M1, K2
- » SI 1, P5, K1
- » SI 1, K6
- » Repeat last 2 rows.
- » SI 1, P1, P2tog, P2, K1
- » SI 1, ssk, k2tog, k1
- » SI 1, P2tog, K1
- » SI 1, K2tog, psso
- » Do the same on the other side, except count down 4 rows before you start picking up stitches, and work up the column toward the ribbing.

Tail

For the tail, you'll make and lightly felt a roving pompom. You can make a regular pompom instead if you don't have roving. Roving makes a fast-felting, irregular ball perfect for a tail. I used Mountain Meadow Merino roving.

- » To make the pompom, wrap the roving around your index and middle fingers 3 times. Tie it off firmly in the center with some white scrap yarn, leaving a long tail. Cut the folded ends, just as you would with a yarn pompom. Roll the ball vigorously in between your palms, as if you were aggressively rolling a meatball (Figure F). Using the tails, sew on the tail just below the ribbing on the center back (Figure G).
- » Weave in the ends. Try on the slipper and decide where to position the button. Sew on the button and try out the button-hole, tacking the ends to make it smaller if necessary.
- » Embroider the nose, mouth, and eyes (Figure H).

