

SUSTAINABLE & ECO FRIENDLY

Known for their quiet natures, alpacas are also a popular livestock for people who are serious about sustainability. As animals who have a highly efficient digestive system and a naturally low-impact on their environment, alpacas are a naturally environmentally friendly source of high quality fleece.

Coming in over 22 recognized colours and shades, and numerous patterns, alpaca fibre offers many natural colour options for commercial and cottage textile enthusiasts. Alpaca also takes natural dyes without hassle, leaving room for endless creative possibilities.

Since alpaca fibre is lanolin free, it requires no harsh chemicals for scouring. It also requires fewer processing steps to produce a quality end product. All alpaca fleece can be used in some way, with minimal waste. What cannot is 100% biodegradable.

Alpacas require annual shearing to maintain their physical health, so a single alpaca can provide fibre that serves a range of purposes during its lifetime (upwards of 15 years!), producing an end product which can quite literally last for generations without sacrificing quality.

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ALPACA FIBRE

An Overview

A LUXURY FIBRE FOR A REASON

Most commonly measured by micron (μ), other factors indicating quality and purpose of alpaca fibre that are taken into consideration including length, colour, and uniformity.

Because of the low scale height on the shafts of individual fibres, alpaca can often feel softer in-hand than other wool-fibres of a similar micron.



There are 6 commonly recognized grades of alpaca fleece, from which a variety of end products can be made based on the unique strengths of each grade.

Alpaca grades range from:

Grade 1: $<20\mu$ (Ultra Fine/Royal Baby)

- Suitable for next-to-skin soft textiles

Grade 2: $20-22.9\mu$ (Super Fine/Baby)

- Suitable for next-to-skin soft textiles that will be gently used, such as baby clothes or fine wear

Grade 3: $23-25.9\mu$ (Fine)

- Suitable for next-to-skin wear, and the most versatile of the grades, it can be used in harder wearing textiles

Grade 4: $26-28.9\mu$ (Medium)

- Best for outerwear, socks, felting, and other frequently handled textiles

Grade 5: $29-31.9\mu$ (Intermediate)

- Best for outerwear, use in batting, felting, or duvets

Grade 6: $32-35+\mu$ (Coarse/Robust)

- Appropriate for felting, rugs, interior textiles, insulation, and batts

VERSATILE QUALITIES

Alpaca can be as fine and as soft as cashmere, with many of the great qualities of wool. It is well known for its excellent thermal regulation properties. Some of the other traits which make Alpaca such a versatile fibre include:

- Its resistance to pilling
- Its unique felting qualities
- It "breathes" because it wicks moisture
- It is also comparable to wool for moisture absorbency
- It behaves like cotton in moisture regain, which helps it feel more lightweight than wool
- It can be used on its own, or blended beautifully with other fibres, including wool, silk, and synthetics

