

# British Wool: Processing Terms



## SHEARING

Once a year, usually in the warmer months, sheep are gathered for shearing. A professionally trained shearer is a skilled and careful practitioner, able to shear one sheep in less than two minutes - 250 sheep in one day.

**RAW WOOL:** Wool from the sheep's back, still containing grease and dirt.

## GRADING

Assessing, by eye and touch, each individual fleece and placing into groups of the same type and quality, ready for sale by auction.

**MICRON:** Wool fibre diameter is quoted in microns. 1 micron = 0.001mm. The lower the micron figure the finer the quality.

## AUCTION

The Wool Board holds regular auctions throughout the year at its Bradford headquarters. The wool is sold electronically and bidding is in pence and half pence per kilo.

## SCOURING

Washing the wool to remove the grease and dirt.

## CARDING

Turning clean, wools from staple to sliver form and separating the fibres.

## COMBING

Straightening long fibres and removing the shorter ones.

**TOPS:** Long fibred wool which has been combed by machines.

**NOIL:** Short fibre removed during combing.

## SPINNING

Pulling out the fibres and adding twist to make a continuous, strong thread.

**WOOLLEN YARN:** Yarn made by twisting wool whose fibres lie in different directions.

**WORSTED YARN:** Yarn made from long wool whose fibres lie parallel.

**YARN COUNT:** The means of defining the density of a yarn.

**KNITTING:** Stretch fabric made from a single continuous yarn knitted in interlocking loops.

## WEAVING

Creating cloth from yarn. One set of threads is interlaced with another set which are lying in the opposite direction.

**WARP:** Yarn used as the basis for weaving cloth. This is laid down the length of the fabric.

**WEFT:** Yarn interwoven across the warp threads to make solid fabric.

**MENDING:** Woven cloth may have faults. These have to be repaired.

**FINISHING:** Woven cloth is stabilised by wet and dry processes to set it.

**TENTERING:** Stretching woven fabric to dry during finishing.

**FULLING:** The thickening and cleaning of newly woven cloth in woollen processing.

**TEASELS:** Used to raise the surface of woven cloth.

**FELT:** Wool cloth made by intermingling wool fibres and compressing them into a sheet.

## DYEING

Adding colour between any of the stages in wool processing.