

## Advice on Washing Hanks of Yarn and Knitted Goods

### Our Hanks

**General:** After spinning, the yarn is in an oiled condition. If we wash it for customers at the mill, a small amount oil may still remain. Some knitters, especially those using knitting machines, prefer to use oiled yarn and then wash the finished items afterwards. Others wash the yarn prior to use. Yarn can be stored oiled without detriment.

**Washing:** The oil we use is mineral or vegetable based with an added emulsifying agent: this means that it will come out of the yarn easily in water. Fill the sink, or if possible a larger container, with comfortable hand-hot water and immerse a few hanks or finished items, moving them gently in the water. They can be left for a minute or two to allow the emulsifier to work.

When removing, dunk each item a couple of times to realign the fibres and gently squeeze out water in a downward movement.

Repeat as necessary until water is clear, using slightly cooler water each time. For coloured wool this will be sufficient, but for white wool, white alpaca or mohair you may want to add a mild washing liquid or soapflakes to the second water, then rinse. **NEVER CHANGE FROM HOT TO COLD** and do not put wool in cold water at all: it will go hard. Wringing or rubbing causes wool to felt, especially in hot water. Mohair is tougher than wool and its felting property is much lower.

**Drying:** Hanks and knitted items may be spin-dried, but **NOT** tumble-dried. If spinning, use a low speed and short spin and repeat if still dripping. Hang to cool and dry naturally, away from direct heat or strong sunlight. When completely dry shake well to free and realign the strands. Knitted items should be pulled into shape, pinned out and pressed under a damp cloth before making up, and can be washed either before or after doing this (probably easier after if there are many pieces). Most natural fibre moults a little fluff until it is knitted, washed and settled.

### Knitted Goods

All wool, mohair and alpaca can be washed with care, but if you have any worries, you can dry clean. Follow the same approach as above: use a cool wool cycle in a machine or hand wash. Do not alter the temperature suddenly, and either squeeze (do not wring) out the moisture or spin dry on a short spin, **NEVER TUMBLE DRY**. Dry flat if possible and press lightly if necessary.

*Remember: if you want to make felt or shrink something, wash at 60°C and tumble dry!*