How to Make Mohair Yarn

Steps in Making Mohair Yarn in Tajikistan

by Liba Brent
Step 1: Selecting Mohair Fleece for Processing

The quality of the yarn depends on the quality of the mohair fleece. To make yarn for knitting garments, it is important to select fine kid mohair.

What does quality kid mohair look like?
- it comes from a 6-12 month old Angora goat
- it is soft to touch
- it has a low percentage of kemp fibers
- it has well defined locks
- it has luster
- it is free of contaminants

Step 2: Dehair fiber

Tajik mohair fleeces contain kemp and medulated fibers and need to be dehaired. The best dehairing method is by using a large comb:

- separate individual locks from the fleece
- comb each lock starting at the cut end and then the tip
- shake the lock after combing to let loose kemp fibers fall out
- an average fleece will yield 1/3 of combed material, 1/3 of combed waste, and 1/3 of matted or contaminated hair that cannot be combed
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Step 3: Scour fiber

Dehaired fiber needs to be scoured in hot, soapy water until it is clean from grease, dirt and any vegetable contaminants:

• use mild detergent such as “Fairy” liquid soap or shampoo, 1 tsp per 2 liters of water
• do not agitate fiber during washing to prevent matting
• rinse fiber in clean water
• do not change water temperature during washing and rinsing; fiber should not be moved from hot to cold water and vice versa

Step 4: Card fiber

Scoured fiber needs to be carded using a carding machine suitable for mohair. In Tajikistan mohair can be carded on the Russian-made “Orlovchanka” machine. It is important that the machine is adjusted to work at a slow speed and that it does not tear fibers during carding.

• card only scoured fiber
• loosen the locks by hand prior to carding
• slowly feed the fiber through the carding machine
• repeat 2 times
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Step 5: Spin fiber

Carded fiber is ready for spinning. The fiber can be spun using a spindle, a manual spinning wheel or an electric spinning machine. The electric spinning machine is more productive and useful when spinning yarn for commercial purposes.

Step 6: Maintain yarn quality

Yarn quality directly affects its value and competitiveness on the market. Yarn made for export has to maintain specified quality standard:

- the yarn has to be even - each skein has to have an optimal twist; the number of twists per centimeter has to be same or very close throughout the skein
- the yarn cannot be overspun (too many twists)
- the yarn cannot be underspun (too few twists)
- each spinner has to maintain consistency in twist between skeins
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Step 7: Skein preparation

The yarn has to be washed in a mild detergent after spinning and wound onto a winder to dry
• wind the dry yarn into a skein and tie the skein in two places
• label each skein with weight and yardage
• make sure that a skein has no more than 2-3 knots
• maintain a consistent ratio of weight/yardage for all skeins
  (skeins that differ cannot be knitted into a quality garment)

Enjoy Tajik Mohair!
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