

Fleece Terms

Break - A weak spot in the fiber. It can be caused by disease, illness, stress, or poor nutrition in the goat while the fiber was growing on the animal.

Crimp - How kinky or wavy the fiber is. Crimp describes individual hairs, not the lock as a whole. A fiber can have crimp without being curly.

Dehairing - The process of removing guard hairs from fiber.

Finish - The very end of the lock or curl. Is the end curly or straight? Type-A should be consistent throughout the lock. Type-B should have curl on the end of the lock. Type-C may have some curl on the ends.

Guard hairs - coarse body hairs that protect the fleece. In type-A fleeces, they should not be obvious. In type-B fleeces, there are two kinds: a very coarse, stiff guard hair and a finer, less obvious guard hair. Type-C fleeces must have only one type of guard hair that is very coarse and obvious.

Handle - The way fiber feels (type-A: silky, smooth, cool; type-B: light, fluffy; type-C: creamy, warm). Fiber should not feel sticky.

Kemp(y) - coarse, brittle fibers (coarser than guard hairs)

Luster - The amount of shine in the fiber. Types-A and B have luster.

Matte - The lack of shine in the fiber. Type-C Pygora has a matte finish.

Micron - Scientific, objective measurement of fineness. A unit of length equal to one thousandth of a millimeter. A low-micron figure indicates a very fine fiber; a higher figure indicates a larger diameter or greater thickness. (Type-A averages 23 microns while type-C can be as low as 17 microns with type-B in the middle. All are within the fine-fiber range.)

Second cuts - Short, uneven bits of fiber in a fleece caused by improper shearing.

Separation - Used to describe the difference in micron count/fineness between guard hair and desirable fiber.

Staple - Length of an individual lock

Style - The amount of curl in a lock of fiber. Type-A has ringlets; type-B has soft curls, and type-C has little or no curls.



Benefits of Joining The PBA

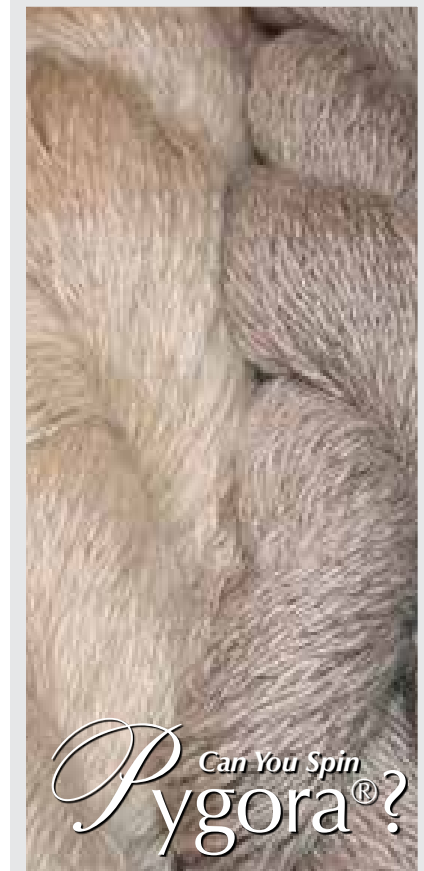
When you join the PBA, you get:

- The Pypeline—a quarterly Pygora newsletter filled with valuable information on what is happening in the Pygora world.
- Free classified ads in the Pypeline
- Free listing on the PBA website
- Reduced rates for services such as goat registrations and transfers
- Free use of the official PBA display banner (member must pay shipping costs)
- Free Goat of the Month photo posting on the PBA website homepage with the name of the goat, breeder and owner
- Participation in Pygora fleece studies with access to study reports
- Ability to apply for Educational Fund grants available for promoting and educating the general public on the Pygora goat
- Access to Pygora educational materials, including additional informational brochures.
- Ability to make a difference in the PBA community by volunteering on any of several committees or on the board. You can be a part of the decision making.
- Voting rights for adult members

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Website: www.pba-pygora.org

Spinning Pygora® Fiber





A lovely assortment of naturally colored Pygora clouds and how they look when spun

Can You Spin Pygora® Fiber?

Pygora goats produce a luxurious, soft, fine fiber that is wonderful for hand spinning. It works well for warm garments that are soft against the skin and for delicate lace items. It also felts well. Pygora fiber comes in a range of natural colors, including white, black, browns, caramels and greys and is easily dyed. Pygora fleece remains very fine as the goat ages.

The only fiber that may be called Pygora is that which comes from goats registered with the Pygora Breeders Association. All Pygora goats must conform to the Pygora Breed Standard that includes conformation, color/patterns and fleece characteristics.

How Do You Prepare Pygora® Fleece For Spinning?

There are several steps to preparing Pygora fleece for spinning: washing, dehairing and combing/carding.

Washing

Pygora fiber can be spun washed or unwashed as there is little or no lanolin in the fleece. You can send the fleece to a fiber processor for washing or do it yourself. Wash the fiber gently in warm water with an appropriate fiber wash (such as *Soak* or *Eucalan*). The fleece can be contained in a lingerie bag during washing. Use warm water for both washing and rinsing, and do not agitate the fleece in the water. Rapid water temperature changes and agitation can cause the fiber to felt.

Carefully press out the excess water (do not wring).



Washed Pygora fiber ready to be dehaired - notice the stiff guard hairs in the foreground?

Remove the fiber from the lingerie bags, and spread it onto a drying rack (a clean plastic screen laid flat makes a good drying rack). Fluff and turn the fiber occasionally until it is completely dry.

Dehairing

A Pygora fleece consists of guard hairs that are discarded and the lovely, soft undercoat that is spun. To enjoy the full softness of the fiber, the guard hair must be removed (called dehairing). This is best done on a commercial dehairing machine. Choose a fiber mill that is experienced in working with Pygora fiber, and talk to the mill to make sure they do not 'work' the fleece too hard trying to remove all guard hairs as this can weaken the fiber.

You can hand dehair your Pygora fiber, using any of several methods, including mini combs, cotton cards, or tweezers and a magnifying glass. However, this is a time-consuming process. If you want to hand dehair, do so before washing the fleece.

Some type-A fleeces may have very few, soft guard hairs. You may decide not to dehair such a fleece. Consider carefully, however, as guard hairs prickle against the skin, take dye differently from 'good' fiber and could affect the twist of the yarn. Also, nondehaired Pygora will shed guard hairs with use and bloom.



An award-winning shawl made of spun Pygora fleece



Pygora fiber being carded on a small machine

Combing/Carding

If you send your fleece to a fiber mill, it will be returned in the form you choose (a 'cloud', roving, batt, etc.). If you decide to process a fleece yourself, use cotton cards with a fine cloth or mini combs to prepare your Pygora as desired. Pygora may be blended with a fine wool such as Merino to give it "memory."

Spinning Pygora® Fiber

When spinning Pygora, you can spin it soft and fuzzy for a fluffy item such as a hat or mittens, or spin it more firmly for good stitch definition and a stronger wearing yarn. When spun worsted, type-A fleeces produce a wonderful smooth yarn with a silky luster. Type-B fleeces usually are finer than type-A fleeces and can be spun into a lustrous, soft, worsted yarn or spun woolen and fullled (slapped against a hard surface to bring out the fluff) for a soft, warm yarn with a halo. Type-C fiber, the finest of the three types, is perfect for spinning into a fine, delicate, soft lace yarn.

For in-depth information on the Pygora fleece types, please visit the PBA website at pba-pygora.org



Never too early to learn to spin!