

Fact Sheet 9. Mohair explained



MOHAIR AUSTRALIA
YOUTH PROGRAM

Mohair is a protein fibre produced by angora goats. It grows rapidly at about 2cm per month and is shorn every six months. Angora goats that are bred well should be covered with a soft, lustrous and kemp-free mohair fleece of even length and uniformity of staple.

When mohair is classed, the fibre is assessed for:

- fineness
- length
- kemp levels
- style and character
- lustre
- condition
- vegetable matter content.

Mohair may be classified as kid, young goat, fine hair and adult hair.

Characteristics of mohair

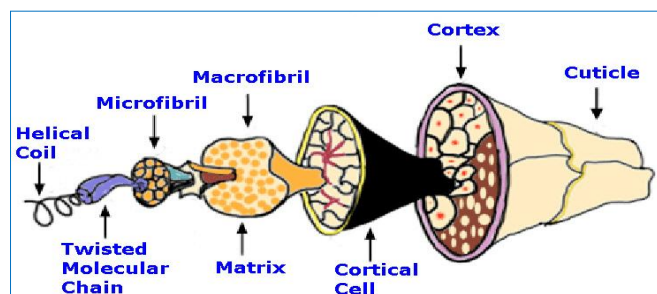
Mohair is soft fibre that comes from the hair of the angora goat. It is sometimes referred to as the 'diamond fibre', as it has a distinct lustre and sheen. When blended with other textiles, like alpaca merino or silk, mohair lends that lustre to the fibres.

The diameter of the mohair fibre increases with the age of the goat. The thinner fibres from young goats are used more for clothing, like sweaters, while the thicker, coarser fibres are used for carpets, upholstery, drapery fabric and outerwear.

Mohair is more expensive than standard sheep's wool because the production process is more involved, and as a result, it is considered a luxury fibre, similar to cashmere or angora.

Mohair from angora goats should not be confused with angora wool, which is actually derived from angora rabbits.

Figure 1. Inside a single strand of mohair sciencedirect.com



The characteristics of mohair include:

- lustre – this is one of the most important characteristics
- non-flammability – mohair is almost non-flammable
- durability – mohair can be twisted or bent without damaging the fibre
- elasticity – mohair will stretch an average 30% over its length and then spring back.

Uses for mohair

Mohair has many diverse uses, from knitwear to home decor, and even doll-making.

Knitting and crochet

Since mohair is extremely fine, it is mixed with other fibres to create chunky and worsted (medium-weight) skeins, or lengths of yarn. Mohair yarn is often blended with silk yarn, wool yarn and merino wool for added strength or it can be spun from 100% mohair

Mohair is popular for knitting cold weather clothes, like sweaters, socks, hats, gloves and scarves because it has the same warm properties as wool, but is lighter in weight, has an attractive sheen and wears better.



100% Mohair Yarn L Carter

Home furnishings

Mohair is sometimes used in home furnishings such as upholstery fabric, carpets and drapery, because it has a beautiful sheen and is a strong fibre.

Faux fur

Mohair is often used to make more realistic fur items, because the fluffy and soft nature of the fabric makes it able to mimic those qualities in animal furs. Faux fur made with mohair is not entirely fake, however, as mohair does come from an animal.

Doll wigs

As mohair is shiny and soft, similar to human hair, it is often used for high-end doll hair.



New born baby doll

Advantages of using mohair

Mohair is a popular fibre as it adds strength, warmth, and luxury to any item. The advantages of using mohair over other fibres includes that:

- mohair is extremely lustrous and shiny, with similar qualities to silk
- like many natural fibres, mohair is very strong and durable. In fact, it is stronger than a similarly-sized steel fibre
- mohair fibre holds dye extremely well, so it is a great way to add colour to a garment or home item
- mohair is very warm while remaining lightweight, and it is a great insulator
- mohair inherently has a beautiful lustre and shines when the light hits it. The mohair fibre itself is soft like silk, with a luxurious feel.
- mohair is good for people with sensitive skin, as the wool is not as irritating as standard sheep's wool can be
- mohair fabric resists creasing because of the fibre structure
- like most wool, mohair is moisture wicking (meaning it moves moisture away from the skin and dries rapidly), and naturally flame retardant.

Lynne Carter (July 2020) Photos L Carter