



Take a Fresh Look at Yarn

HISTORY OF WOOL

Wool is one of the most versatile fibres known to humans. The textiles created from the wool of sheep range from thick and coarse carpets and rugs to the very fine knitted merino suitable for underwear and baby garments. Today there are synthetic fibres that mimic wool in colour and texture but their properties are so different that consumers are always aware of the differences.

Wool has a long and an international history and was probably the first fibre to be woven into a textile. No one is really sure when humans started to use the fleece of sheep for wool. However, there is evidence to suggest that humans living during the Stone Age some 10,000 years ago in Mesopotamia used sheep for three basic needs: food, clothing and shelter. Wild sheep are not wool bearing but under the confines of

man's protection and influence they evolved through experimental breeding, good feed and the right climate.

Interestingly enough, even today if sheep are neglected there is a return of the long hair and rudimentary wool which is unsuitable for human use.

The next major development in the history of wool was when humans made use of the fleece by learning to spin and weave. Evidence of this has been found in the tombs and ruins of Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece and Babylon, in the barrows of early Briton, among the relics of the Peruvians and in the midst of an archaeological dig of a Danish bog with origins about 1500 BC. Another development was the realisation that the sheep raised for meat was not necessarily best sheep for wool and in as early as 200BC the

Romans began to improve their flocks which became the famed Spanish Merino sheep.

Wool and the artisans who worked with it became highly sought after in many parts of the world. In 1377 the King of England, Edward 111, stopped the import of foreign wool and woven goods. Instead he invited Flemish weavers fleeing the Spanish invasion to settle in England. As a result the local wool industry thrived and he became known as "the royal wool merchant". The Romans took their sheep to all the parts of the world they dared conquer. The Norman conquerors sent about a hundred weavers to Italy where their skills were copied at once by the Italian weavers. The thriving wool trade in Spain funded the voyages of great explorers like Christopher Columbus. Columbus also took sheep to Cuba on



ostrich

Materials
 60mm Polyball
 40mm Polyball
 1.5 Armature Wire
 Ostrich Wool

1. Cover one large 60mm Polyball with Supertac.
2. Wrap Ostrich Wool around the ball to completely cover it.
3. Repeat this with a small 40mm Polyball.
4. Cut a length of 1.5mm Armature Wire for the neck and legs. Double the length of wire for added

- strength.
5. Insert the wire into the Polyballs to create the neck and legs.
 6. Wrap the wire with a length of Ostrich Wool and adhere with Supertac glue.
 7. Add a few small feathers for the tail, beads for the eyes and felt for beak.
 8. Push the legs into a ball of Plasticine and cover with glue and sand.
 9. Glue black felt feet on, where the wire legs meet the Plasticine.



woven wall hangings & magic carpets

1. Use a Pre-cut cardboard loom.
2. Wrap Acrylic Wool onto the cardboard loom and adhere the ends with tape.
3. Use coloured wools such as Silky Faux Fur,

Materials
 Pre-cut Cardboard Loom
 Tape
 Wools & Yarns: Feathers
 Silky Faux Fur, Metallic Yarn

- Ostrich Wool or Feathers, and Metallic yarn to weave your patterns onto your loom.
4. When complete, cut the threads on the back of the loom and knot together to prevent unravelling.

1. Draw a 12cm circle in pencil on a piece of Bleached Hessian. Cut the shape out.
2. Thread a large eyed needle with Ostrich Wool and begin stitching, using a running stitch around the outside of the circle. Keep stitching 4 or 5 circles towards the centre of the Hessian.
3. Tie off the stitching and pull up the long threads of the wool to fluff it out.
4. Use felt, pipe cleaners and joggle eyes to complete the facial features.
5. Wrap lengths of Ostrich Wool around your hand a few times and secure it with thread or a pipe cleaner for the ears. Glue the two ears in place.



Lion face

Materials

- Bleached Hessian
- Silky Faux Fur
- Chenille stems
- 20mm Joggle Eyes

his second voyage in 1493 and Cortez took their descendants to Mexico.

In the American colonies, the British initially tried to monopolise the wool trade by insisting the colonies purchased only British wool. This resulted in the smuggling of a few sheep which multiplied to about a million by 1665. George Washington later imported sheep and brought spinners and weavers out from England. In the early 19th century Merinos were imported to improve the existing stock. Spinning and weaving were established in homes and became small cottage industries. The first wool factory was established in America in 1788.

The first sheep came to Australia with the First Fleet in 1788. While en route to his new country, Governor Phillip had obtained them from the Cape of Good Hope and they were suitable for food and known as "Cape Fat Tails". In the late 18th century the Merino breed, now a fine specimen after about 2,000 years of breeding, were introduced from South Africa. Sheep farming continues to be a major primary industry in Australia.

Today sheep continue to provide our food and fibre needs just as they have done for centuries past.

Try the new range of exciting textured and colourful yarns through these wonderful creations, from 2D to 3D these wools may be used in a variety of ways. Deanne Clark will be conducting a full day workshop working with the wools on Wednesday the 27th August. Check our Website or Insert for more details.

1. Knit a triangle shape with Silky Faux Fur that may be used to shape the tail of the mermaid.
2. Use Plasticine to model the body and head of the mermaid.
3. Glue the knitted tail to the Plasticine body with Supertac.
4. Use metallic fabrics, metallic yarn, beads and wool to complete the fins, bra and hair. Beads may be glued or just pushed into the Plasticine body, and glued to the wool and fabric.

Materials

- Plasticine
- Silky faux Fur
- Creative Beads
- metallic Organza
- metallic Yarn

Mermaid

