

# Types of Wool

## *Virgin Wool*

This means the wool is 'new' & has not been re-processed from old garments. ~ Good for Hooking

Note: Fabric made from re-processed wool is referred to as 'Shoddy', hence the general term of shoddy meaning of low quality (not good for rug hooking.)

## *Pendleton Wool*

Fabric made by the Pendleton Company, a famous USA woolen mill.~ Good for Hooking

## *Pendleton Flannel Wool*

Flannel refers to the weave/type of fabric; a wool fabric, usually a plain weave, may be a simple check or stripe made using woolen yarn and has a brushed finish. ~ Good for Hooking

## *Cashmere Wool*

Wool from the Cashmere Goat, Highly prized because of it's softness and light weight. ~ Good for Hooking

## *Merino Wool*

Merino is a breed of sheep. Merino sheep are a breed kept because of the length of their fleece and it's fine denier or thickness. Their fleece is often used for Worsted Yarns/Fabrics as the long 'staple' (individual fibers) meaning there are fewer hairs on the finished surface. ~ Good for Hooking

## *Tweeds ~ All Good for Hooking*

A Heavier weight cloth, traditionally woven in the area across the border between England and Scotland, including the banks of the river Tweed. It's made using yarn spun from the fleece of local sheep breeds like Cheviots & Herwicks that have coarse fleeces. Tweed fabric is often woven using a 'Marled' or 'Heathered' yarn, where many colors are spun together to form a muted coloring, and may be woven in a check, plaid or stripe, usually using a Herringbone weave. The cloth is warm, and has a brushed or hairy surface; it may be fine and fashionable or coarse and hardwearing. See <http://www.lintontweeds.co.uk/>

Donegal tweed is made in Ireland and is woven using black and white yarns that have knobs or bumps spun into the yarn.

Harris tweed is a trademarked product and is made only on the Outer Hebridean Islands; see <http://www.harristweed.co.uk/>

## ***Houndstooth and Herringbone ~ Most are Good for Hooking***

Houndstooth is a weave of fabric which results in a distinctive pattern where two colors of yarn form a 'check' that tessellates or interlocks.

Herringbone is a weave of fabric woven using two colors ( one for warp, one for weft) and a twill weave arranged so that a VVVVVVVVVV pattern of stripes is formed.

## ***Worsted Wool***

Yarn or cloth made from long staple wool, often Merino, that has a high degree of twist, with the fibers all aligned, & a non-hairy surface. Usually woven with a 'twill' weave. ~ Not Good for Hooking; worsted fabrics tend to unravel easily due to the lack of hairs used to interlock when 'fulled' or slightly felted.

## **Best Rug Hooking Weight**

Skirt/pant weight or coat weight

The weight of wool fabric you use depends upon the width of your strips, or your "cut". Regardless of the actual fabric used, you need a minimum of 4 or 5 threads in a strip in order for the strip to hold together during hooking. A very fine/lightweight flannel may have 45 or 50 warp threads to the inch, so you can cut 10 strips from each inch of fabric, while a heavy tweed may have only 15 or less, meaning you can only cut 3 per inch.

A light-weight fabric can be cut wider but will tend to collapse when hooked in wider widths; the loops will not stand erect and neatly, so it may be better to hook with two strips at once rather than use a strip twice as wide, while a heavy fabric could be frayed out to make lengths of yarn to be used to hook finer details.

## **Labeling of Wool**

The Wool Mark is an internationally used mark, made up of interlacing lines forming a sort of Shamrock effect, which wool mills are licensed to use if their product is 100% Pure New Wool and of high quality. Get to know this sign. However, even wool bearing this mark may be unsuitable for rug hooking; worsted & gabardine woolen fabrics qualify to use it. Also, some woolen fabrics are treated to make them machine washable, "shrink-proof, or are otherwise treated so that they will not "Full"; a term for a small amount of shrinkage which is desirable for rug hooking, since it helps lock the individual fibers to each other and make strips less likely to fray during hooking.

Most rug hookers find wool with up to 10% nylon content acceptable for hooking. Nylon accepts acid dyes the same as wool and silk, so overdyeing is not a problem. Many of the finer/softer fibers, especially those made of Lambs wool, Cashmere, Camel Hair, Vicuna, & Angora, wear better if made from a 90% wool -10% nylon blend.