



Alpaca fleece processing charges

from August 2023

We base our charges on the actual weight of your fleece remaining at different stages of the process as we turn it into yarn, as detailed overleaf. But we've summarised below the price per kg incoming weight (that is, the weight of fleece you send to us for processing) based on an average 75% return rate (how much finished yarn you get back per kg of raw fleece). There's also a 'Ready Reckoner' on our website which you can use to estimate the likely return rate and cost for your fleece.

Yarn type Costs for yarn on cone, excluding VAT and delivery	Average cost per kg incoming weight assuming 75% return	Notes
Chunky (3 or 4 plies, 80-100m/100g)	£70.00	There is a minimum charge of £100 + VAT per batch, which equates to c. 1.5 kg incoming weight for fleece to be spun into yarn
Aran (4 plies, 100-150m/100g)	£72.50	
Light Aran (2 thick plies, 150-200m/100g)	£75.00	
Double knitting (3 plies, 150-200m/100g)	£77.50	
Light DK (3 plies, 200-250m/100g)	£80.00	
4 ply (2 plies, c. 250-300m/100g)	£82.50	
Light 4 ply (2 plies, c. 300-350m/100g)	£87.50	
2 ply (2 plies, c. 350-400m/100g)	£95.00	The cost will be somewhere within this range depending on how finely the yarn is spun
Superfine (2 plies, 400-500m/100g)	£105.00	
Additional charges		
Sorting	£16.00	per kg rejected fibre
Skirting cria or very contaminated fleece	£48.00	per hour
Cutting long suri fibre (>15 cm)	£48.00	
Tweed and barberpole blends	£15.00	per batch
Finishing as 100g balls or skeins	£10.00	per kg finish weight
Labels for 100g balls or skeins	£10.00	
Finishing as 50g balls or skeins	£20.00	
Labels for 50g balls or skeins	£20.00	
Tying 100g skeins for dyeing	£8.00	
Tying 50g skeins for dyeing	£16.00	
Dyeing fleece or yarn	£48.00	per kg, minimum 500g
Rovings		
Rovings (washed and carded fibre) – these will be supplied loose in bags of c. 500g	£36.00	£100 minimum charge equates to c. 3 kg start weight

Here's how we calculate the actual charge for your fleece:

Tumbling	£3.50	per kg start weight
	+	
Washing	£17.50	per kg tumbled weight (c. 95% of start weight)
	+	
Carding, drafting, spinning, plying, steaming & conewinding		
• Chunky	£55.25	per kg washed weight (c. 90% of start weight)
• Aran	£58.00	
• Light Aran	£60.75	
• DK	£63.75	
• Light DK	£66.50	
• 4 ply	£69.25	
• Light 4 ply	£75.00	
• 2 ply	£83.25	
• Superfine	£94.50	
• Rovings	£17.50	
	+	
Finishing		
• Cone	-	per kg finish weight (c. 75% start weight)
• 100g balls or skeins	£10.00	
• 50g balls or skeins	£20.00	
Labelling		
• 100g balls or skeins	£10.00	
• 50g balls or skeins	£20.00	

Fibre separating

Black or dark brown fleeces (which are really difficult to clean so need to go through the fibre separator after the first wash to open up the fibres ready for a second wash before carding), fleeces which are very heavily contaminated with vegetable matter,* and those with a lot of guard hair, will need to go through an additional fibre separating stage before carding. Dyed fleece usually also needs to be separated to open up the fibre before carding.

Fibre separating (also called 'dehairing') is charged at £14.00 per kg on the weight of alpaca after washing, so including this stage will increase the cost by between 2% (for fine yarns) and 10% (for chunky yarns) and reduce the average return rate by 5-10%.

* Please note that it is impossible to remove all the vegetable matter from very heavily contaminated fleeces

Indicative costs for yarn on cone (excluding VAT and delivery) for fleece requiring fibre separating	Average cost per kg incoming weight assuming 65% return
Chunky	£77.00
Aran	£79.25
Light Aran	£81.50
Double knitting	£83.75
Light DK	£86.00
4 ply	£88.25
Light 4 ply	£92.75
2 ply	£99.25
Superfine	£108.50
Rovings	£46.75

Blending with wool

Very fine, delicate fleece or very short, straight, or coarse fleece may need to have 20-30% (or occasionally up to 50%) of fine wool tops (washed, carded and combed fibre) added to help the alpaca fleece through the carder and ensure that the sliver is strong enough for drafting and spinning. This adds to the size of the batch and therefore to the cost of processing your fleece, but you will of course get a larger quantity of yarn at the end (and that yarn will be much softer and smoother than would be possible with pure alpaca) so the cost per kg finished yarn will actually be lower.

We will always try to process your alpaca fibre on its own if that's what you prefer, but in some cases we just aren't able to work with it without adding wool, and this won't always be apparent until we get to the carding stage. We therefore ask for your permission in advance to add wool if necessary to spin your fibre (but of course if you don't want us to do this, we can instead return your alpaca fibre in its part-processed state and charge only for the processes we were able to complete).

We typically use Blue-faced Leicester tops for blending with alpaca, as it has a similar staple length and plenty of crimp, but all sorts of other blends are possible. Shetland wool processes very nicely with alpaca and comes in a wide range of natural and dyed colours, so we can usually match the colour of your fleece (or blending natural alpaca with dyed wool tops is a relatively inexpensive way of spinning a coloured yarn). Adding a small percentage of wool to alpaca will also improve the elasticity and washability of the yarn, and reduce the likelihood of pilling and shedding. Finally, don't forget that we can also blend with plant fibres – for example, alpaca spins beautifully with rose fibre, a very fine silk-like fibre which is particularly good for spinning finer yarns.

Indicative costs and return rates for spinning alpaca yarn blended with different proportions of wool are provided below. Costs are given per kg start weight of alpaca and per kg finished yarn for comparison. (These costs are based on using Blue-faced Leicester tops, which we currently charge at £27.50 per kg. Dyed Shetland costs the same, natural (undyed) Shetland is £21.00, and rose fibre £42.00 per kg.)

	<i>Indicative costs and return rates for alpaca blended with wool</i>							
	Pure alpaca		20% wool		30% wool		50% wool	
Estimated return	75%		94%		107%		150%	
Estimated cost	<i>per kg start wt</i>	<i>per kg yarn</i>	<i>per kg start wt</i>	<i>per kg yarn</i>	<i>per kg start wt</i>	<i>per kg yarn</i>	<i>per kg start wt</i>	<i>per kg yarn</i>
Chunky	70.00	93	82.25	88	91.00	85	119.50	80
Aran	72.50	97	85.50	91	94.75	89	124.50	83
Light Aran	75.00	100	88.50	94	98.25	92	129.50	86
DK	77.50	103	91.75	98	102.00	95	135.00	90
Light DK	80.00	107	95.00	101	105.50	99	140.00	93
4 ply	82.50	110	98.00	104	109.00	102	144.75	97
Light 4 ply	87.50	117	104.50	111	116.50	109	155.00	103
2 ply	95.00	127	113.75	121	127.00	119	167.00	113
Superfine	105.00	140	126.50	135	141.50	132	190.00	127
Rovings	36.00		42.00		46.50		60.50	

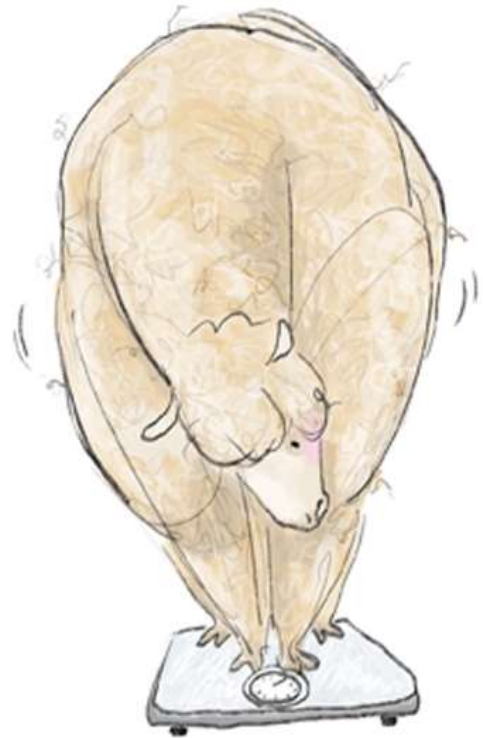
NB: Costs exclude VAT and any charge for fibre separating if required.

The estimated return rates are based on average quality fleece – finer fibre is likely to give a higher return, coarser fleece may be much lower.

Delivery charges

Packaging & Delivery Charges for return of your yarn	
Up to 2 kg	£18.00
Up to 5 kg	£21.00
Up to 10 kg	£24.00
Up to 15 kg	£27.00
Up to 20 kg	£30.00
Up to 25 kg	£33.00
Up to 30 kg	£36.00

Please note: All prices exclude VAT



Deposits

We ask a deposit of £10.00 per kg for new customers to book a processing slot for 10 kg or more, and for all customers making a booking for 20 kg or more. We'll invoice you for the deposit (if applicable) on receipt of your booking form. This will be deducted from your invoice for fleece processing when your order is complete, but is non-refundable in the event of cancellation.