

Heritage Sheep Breed FIBER PROFILE



Cotswold

One of the oldest of the British longwool breeds, the Cotswold likely dates back to Roman times. Derived from and comfortable in the Cotswold hills of England, they are sturdy, large animals that grow abundant wool.

Gloriously long and lustrous, Cotswold fleeces are often shorn twice a year to make them more manageable, although a full year's growth can provide material for making dolls' wigs or Santa beards. Most of us prefer to use it at a shorter half-year's length, whether the fiber will be processed by hand or in a mill.

Elegance, strength, and beautiful natural colors characterize Cotswold wool. While most Cotswolds are white, animals that grow gray and black fleeces have become deservedly popular over the past several decades. The warmth of



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the grays and blacks comes from the nature of the pigmentation and from the fibers' shine.

Worsted-spun yarns make the most of Cotswold's remarkable luster and durability. Depending on fleece, preparation, and spinning, yarns can be either supple or crisp. The strength and body of the fiber

make it a natural for art yarns like corespuns and bouclés, in addition to fashioning even, durable wovens or being used in lock form to create pile fabrics. Improbable as it may seem, when spun fine and smooth—think worsted techniques—the fiber's exceptional drape makes nice shawls.



Fleece weight	8¾–20 pounds (3.5–9 kg), generally 12–15 pounds (5.5–7 kg); yield about 60 percent.
Staple length	7–15 inches (18–38 cm), generally 8–12 inches (20–30 cm).
Fiber diameters	33–42 microns.
Lock characteristics	Heavy, lustrous, and hanging in ringlets.
Natural colors	Traditionally white; also deep black and all shades of gray.

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