

Navajo-Churro

The Navajo-Churro is a North American breed, acclimated to the dry climate of the southwestern United States. The breed's wool has sustained both Navajo and Hispanic traditions.

Fleeces are double-coated for the most part, although the degree to which an outercoat is present or evident varies; the undercoat does tend to predominate. The presence of the outercoat contributes durability to textiles made from Navajo-Churro wool, while the undercoat provides cushioning and insulating qualities. There may be a little kemp (short, brittle fibers), but it's relatively uncommon and sparse.

When the sheep are raised in their natural environment, their wool has low lanolin content. Sheep raised in climates with more humidity and vegetation than the Southwest may grow longer,



© Nikyle Begay

coarser fleeces that contain more lanolin.

The breed's fiber combination—fortified by its diverse natural color options—produces functional and durable rugs and tapestries. Yet

Navajo-Churro wool exemplifies versatility: it also works well for sweaters, mittens, gloves, and other useful items. Weave it, or try it in knitted lace or colorwork.

Fleece weight	2–8 pounds (1–3.5 kg); yield 60–65 percent (most loss is due to dust, rather than grease).
Staple length	Undercoat generally 3–5 inches (7.5–12.5 cm); outercoat generally 6–12 inches (15–30 cm).
Fiber diameters	UNDERCOAT 10–35 microns, most in the low 20s. OUTERCOAT 35+ microns. KEMP 65+ microns.
Lock characteristics	Wide base tapering to a narrow tip. Low grease and open.
Natural colors	White; light to dark browns, some with reddish undertones; grays and blacks. Outercoat and undercoat can be different colors. Some sheep have spots.



© Deborah Robson



© Connie Taylor