

# Guide to Scouring

## Step-by-Step

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**Plaid Perch Farm**



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## Preparing

### Inspect your Fleece

- Check staple condition
  - Check for weak spots
  - Examine staple length
    - ideal staple length is greater than 2.5"
- Remove unwanted bits
  - VM (Hay, manure tags, etc.)
  - Second cuts
  - Short staples

### Gather your supplies

#### Container

Choose the container that will fit your needs:

- Will your container withstand the hot water?
- How will you heat your water? If adding hot water, you can use a bucket; if heating the water, choose stainless or granite.
- Make sure your fleece has room to move around.

#### Hot Water

Determine how you will heat your water. The ideal water temperature is between 140°F and 160°F

Think about how you will dispose of your used water. Set up your scouring in a place where disposal will be accessible.

#### Detergent

Find the detergent that is best for your water type and is accessible to you.

The percentage method helps measure detergent.

- First hot washes - use 5% of detergent to the starting fleece weight.
- Then reduce to 3% of detergent to the starting fleece weight

#### Other Helpful Supplies

- Gloves
- Thermometer
- Measuring Cup
- Laundry Mesh Bag

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## Washing

### Soaking

Select the soaking method that fits your scouring.

- Cold soak - soak the fleece in cold water. Ideally, overnight - 24 hours.
- Hot Soak - use hot water for 1-2 soaks before starting your washing. Let each soak rest for about 15 minutes.
- No Soaking - move directly to hot washes.

### Hot Wash

Wash your fleece in water at a temperature between 140°F and 160°F to remove dirt and lanolin. Let each wash set for 15-20 minutes before moving to the next step.

Start with using a 5% scour. Do 2-3 washes at this percentage.

Reduce to 3% for 1-2 more washes.

### Hot Rinse

Rinse your fleece in water at a temperature between 140°F and 160°F. Place your fleece in each rinse for 15-20 minutes each. Extract as much water as possible before proceeding to the next rinse.

When the rinse water looks pretty clear, you have finished washing and rinsing.

### Tips to keep in mind

- Keep water temperature between 140-160°F
- Extract water as best you can between washes and rinses
- Check the water color between washes and rinses
- To prevent unwanted felting, do not make significant temperature changes between washes and rinses or agitate too much

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## Finishing

### Drying

- Extract water by squeezing fleece or spinning it out
- Lay fleece out with lots of airflow to dry

### Storing

- Once dry, check that you have cleaned the fleece to your preference
- Store and label your fleece for future processing

Check out our Scouring Tutorial Video

