

Judy Ross, Dyeing with Llama - Using a canner on the stove top



Wilton icing colors – For this example I used white suri llama and a small amount white merino top roving (I wanted to see if the merino would dye different), I prepared my fleece that had been washed by soaking the fleece in a white vinegar and water solution for 30 minutes. Squeezing out excess moisture and placing the wet fleece in the jar (NO lids), filling with warm water and adding one tablespoon white vinegar to each jar. Some dyers do not use the vinegar but I always do. For this batch I used the **Wilton icing GEL** adding a little to the bottom of the jar using a butter knife, a little in the middle and a little to the top; I **DID NOT stir**. After setting the jars in the canner (blue enamel purchased at Walmart) I filled the canner with warm water almost to the neck of the jars (no lids), Bring the pot slowly to a slow boil and reduce heat so it remains just at the slow bubble boil, sometimes it was 180 to 190. It took about 30 mins for most of the jars to absorb the dye. In some of the jars I added two different colors and found there was some white fleece that did not dye also when I added two different colors it did not blend the colors totally when using the gel.

I set the rack on the sides of the canner and allowed the contents to cool, rinsed with warm water and set out to dry, NO FELTING of the fleece occurred.

For the second batch I used the liquid icing colors adding about half as much as with the gel, I gave a gentle stir that allowed the dye to mixed more consistent. As the water heated I would gently press the fleece down and found it gave a more even saturated color.

Very bright colors, did not wash out. By asking others that use this method I am told the colors do not fade.

Merino top roving and suri llama was in the same jar, the merino dyed a little darker in most cases

Judy Ross, Chesapeake, OH

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Cyndi Bolt and Judy Ross Dyeing llama – Using Pro Chemical Liquid Reactive Dyes



Stove top, stainless steel dye pot. Using clean white llama fleece, 4 ounces each of suri, single and double coat fleeces, some sheep fleece to see if it absorbed differently.

Soaked fleece in a mordant of Citric Acid Crystals, salt, soaked for 1 hour, rinsed, put in dye pot with warm water. Added dye and simmered at 180 to 200 for about 2 hours until dye had been absorbed.

OLDER suri white with some black – blue dye, The black did not change.

Double coat white and 2 ounces of white sheep wool – Teal, seemed to dye the same.

Single Coat 8 yr old white – orange

Teal did not absorb totally but did rinse clean. All colors seemed to dye consistent. After processing the fleece I did notice that some of the guard hair in the older suri did not absorb totally

Cyndi Bolt, Wayne, WV, also took a multi colored fleece, grey, tan, beige and dyed with Pro Chemical Liquid reactive dye in different strengths. The results were the colors were enhanced with more concentration of the dye. Multi colored fleece dyed will give you a range of colors for your project.

<http://cyndibolt.com>

Cathy Flashman, Gay, WV used RIT dye for her project



I used a dye that is readily available to any and all, RIT, Golden Yellow. I put each variety of fiber into a net bag, tagged it, and dyed them all together on the stovetop. Simmered for one hour, removed the bags and let them cool in the sink before rinsing. I rinsed until the water ran clear, then dried overnight. I used handcards and carded two rolags worth of each fleece, and spun S and plied Z. Each yarn is a two ply.

#1. Double Coat llama – rather short for llama, even a double coat. If it was a nicer fleece, I'd have separated the guard hairs and spun just the nice fibers. Resulting yarn from this sample has a rough hand.

#2. Single Coat llama – very nice. Felts fairly easily, so I would caution anyone dyeing in the to do so carefully! That said, it cards nicely, spins smoothly. The yarn has a soft hand and a nice drape.

#3. Suri – nice to work with, also felts easily. Slippery fiber, I might not recommend it for a beginner spinner. The yarn has a nice hand.

#4, Sheep – Interestingly, this fleece looked nice before dyed, then I had my doubts after it was dyed – it looked a lot rougher, Handling the rolags, I didn't think it would make a nice yarn, and I was pleasantly surprised at how it turned out.

#5 Mohair – the easiest to felt by far. **I absolutely would recommend that the artist spin this first and dye after!** This fiber also carded and spun easily.

Thoughts on llama: I would not have any reservations recommending llama fiber to a novice spinner. I would just as readily advise an expert spinner to use it. While it does need a lot of twist compared to some sheep wools, it is not as slippery as mohair or suri, both of which, in my opinion, can be a daunting experience to any spinner.



**Alane Thomas,
Huntington, WV**



Partially felted neck. Fleece from a 13 year old llama.

I wanted to make sunflowers out of the fleece. I first took some of the llama fleece and spun a few yards of two ply. I did not have to card or comb the fleece and it spun beautifully! If not for this project I would have spun much more into yarn.

I took a large portion of the fleece and dyed it trying to get a golden orange. I am not the best at dyeing and so the fleece came out in different colors as I was mixing **Easter Egg colors**. Knowing the colors produced would not all make into sunflowers I decided to make an arrangement of flowers.

I did make a sunflower. I rolled some of the fleece with warm water and dish soap to make the petals. I needle felted as needed to some petals and added them to the center. After getting the general shape I added a metal stem and needle felted more onto the center to hold the stem into place. I then used the two-ply yarn and make French knots for dimension in the seed area. I then looked at what I had left and decided the brown and reddish colors left would make nice cone flowers. I again rolled and felted some of the fleece to make petals and connected by needle felting. The cones were made by straight needle felting. I used some of the naturally felted area of the llama fleece at this point.

The last flowers were made by using a small circular shape (made from the top of a plastic bottle) and then combining three circles into a flower. I used beads as the centers to add color.

I still had fleece left and made the two butterflies using a cookie cutter for shaping.

I enjoyed the project and working with the llama. Very little was discarded Even the highly felted areas were worked into the centers of the sunflower and cone flowers.



Nadine Borovicka

FIVE different types of fleece

Double Coat, easy to spin, like a long wool

Single Coat, very fluffy and easy to spin. Felted a bit when dyeing.

Suri, very easy to separate but had a lot of neps and short pieces that ended up with a lot of thick and thin spot.

Sheep, very springy and was a very lofty yarn. More woolen than worsted.

Mohair, my least favorite not very springy

Mordant water 2 gallon, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup white vinegar, soak for 20 minutes.

Dye 1 gallon of water 2 tsp dye, **jacquard acid dye**, 4 tbsp vinegar.

Bring water to boil, add dye, add fiber, drop to low and simmer 20 minutes, let sit in dye until cool. Each sample was spin by hand fluffy and small amount. The fiber was spun worsted short draw.

**Mystery project, be creative and make a work of art.
Two best friends worked together on this project**



Ann Grimes



Needle felted fish, shape with and stitching. Made from 13 year old, felted neck fiber, very matted. Double coat, lots of guard hair.

The fiber was matted to the point that it could not be pulled apart. I just kept playing with the mangled mess and it started looking like a fish. I went with the shape and then needle felted it to become more solid , thick form.

I over dyed the pink and green fiber with Easter egg dye, green, blue and orange. I needle felted spirals of pink and green on top of the blue fish.

Fish Bowl – I used a ring from the bottom of a lamp shade to form my shape. I wet felted around the ring using the various colors of dyed fiber. I then created a fish shape and needle felted and stitched it onto the circular shape.

Easter Egg Dye – divided fiber in half, put dry fiber in plastic containers in two cups of water, placed 2 red tablets of Easter egg dye along with 3 tablespoons of vinegar. In two cups of water, I placed 2 blue tablets of Easter egg dye along with 3 tablespoons of vinegar. More colors, in the red fiber I put an additional cup of water with two tablets of purple dye, pouring over the fiber, In the blue fiber I put an additional cup of water with two green tablets dye, pouring over fiber. Making the different colors needed for the project.

GREAT use of the long guard hair from the neck.

Mystery project, be creative and make a work of art.



Nancy Crockett, Wayne, WV

Very matted, long white neck fiber from a 13 year old llama.

Hand carded, took a long time and dyed using Easter egg dye. I took carded fiber and layered it around a round glass jar. I wet the fiber with hot water and a few drops of Dawn dish washing liquid. I took a plastic bag and rubbed the fiber for about 20 minutes. I rinsed the fiber in cold water. I then took the felted fiber off the jar and added more hot water and dish washing liquid and worked it a while longer. Rinsed the fiber and allowed it to dry.

Nuno Felted scarf, 14 year old double coat llama



**Debbie Powell
Leon, WV**

I was given over a pound of llama roving, and was to use “as is” to make a nuno felted object. The roving was very soft, so the logical option was to make a scarf. I had done zero wet felting using llama fiber. The roving was not well processed in that there were several areas where the fibers were not carded at all, the roving was not even thickness, was not even width, and was sometimes in short pieces.

If one was spinning the fiber, this would not be an issue, however, when one is felting, the fiber needs to be “shingled” out and therefore, the quality of the roving (not the fiber) becomes an issue. The fiber was very soft and silky feeling.

Materials Used:

bubble wrap
thin packaging sheet cut to size for the resist
curtain sheer
pool noodle
Dawn detergent
Water

Fiber Used:

Llama roving
Hand dyed wensleydale locks
Hand dyed border leicester locks
Raspberry Angelina
Hand dyed silk hankies
Novelty yarn
Hand dyed cheesecloth
Pulled silk threads

Nuno Felted scarf, 14 year old double coat llama

Finished Item Discussion:

The “plan” at the beginning was to make a nuno felted scarf using silk hankies and cheesecloth with embellishments. What I ended up with was just that – yeah!

What about the felting process itself and how the fiber felted? This was a huge learning experience. First, some comments about how the fiber felted, specifically how this particular roving felted:

1. The first thing during the felting process that was noted was that felting doesn't start occurring until the processing starts getting rough. It started felting when I began the squeezing process. The rolling barely started the felting process.
2. The roving was wonderfully soft and the finished product was also soft, but has a quantity of guard hairs sticking out of it. Anyone with sensitive skin would not want to wear it against their skin. Looking at it, with the fibers sticking out, one would think that it would be very scratchy – it is surprisingly soft.
3. Llama fiber felts into a much thinner fabric than one with my experience anticipated. My guess is that is due to the fact that it doesn't shrink up, like merino does.
4. The embellishments felted very nicely including the coarser locks.
5. What I would do if using this fiber to make something again;
 - a. No adjustments need to be made.

Some additional comments:

1. The llama fiber did not shrink when it felted, like is normally seen with merino, or even border leicester. I had expected some shrinkage and that the fabric would be thicker.
2. The coarse (wensleydale) and thick (border leicester) locks that normally will not felt well, if at all, on merino, felted very nicely onto the llama. If you love using locks to embellish, llama is the way to go.
3. The llama fibers did not felt through the thicker silk hankie until the fabric was handled very roughly.

I believe that most people could use this roving for items next to the skin. People with sensitive skin most likely could not due to the guard hairs. It would be very good for a felted purse (using resist method), wall hanging, table runner, fancy coasters, just about anything that would not be against the skin. Of course, scarves, mittens, pot mittens are also good application (for non-sensitive folks). If this fiber were spun and used to knit or crochet, it could be worn against the skin. The spinning process “hides” the guard hairs, while the felting process exposes them.



Black and White very matted neck fiber 8 year old llama, Nadine felted a beautiful neck piece



Nadine Borovicka , Huntington, WV took on several felting projects

Various colors of very old and felted roving. Nadine knitted the roving to make a vest.



The llama roving for the vest was relatively easy to work with. Part of it had been slightly felted, but even the roving that hadn't didn't drift apart very easily. But were I spinning it, the drafting wouldn't have been too hard (at least on what hadn't been felted) which was great for the vest because I could be a little rough with it when working. It did shed a lot. Mostly longer hairs. I've worked with several roving type yarns and I've experienced a bit more shedding and pilling with all of them vs. plied yarns. I did get a lot of shedding when I fulled it slightly at the end. And I actually encouraged it a bit by rubbing the surface. If I could get it to shed what hair it was going to while I was working with it, it wouldn't be so bad when someone got to wear it.



Core spun from the felted pieces, some locks. Cast on 20 stitches, size 11 needle. Nice to work with as some of the non-felted undercoat was really soft.

This item did shed a lot as the white was mostly guard hair.

Could be felted to make a small purse and still utilize the natural look.