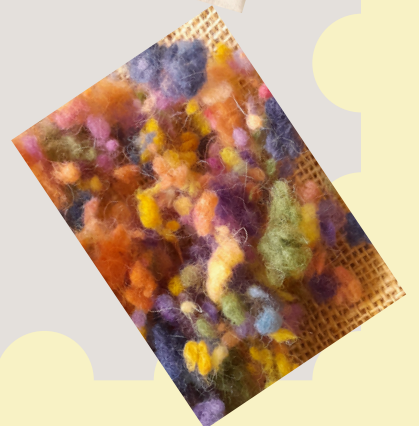


# TREGAVER FIBRE



## GUIDE TO WOOL TYPES



## So much terminology, but no need for confusion!

Needle felting terminology can be a little overwhelming when you begin felting. You'll see terms like core, tops, carded, batts, and that's before we get to specific breed wool.

This guide will explain the basic terms that you need to gain a basic understanding of the types of wools used for felting. By using this guide, it should help you pick the right kind of wools for your projects, and not to buy things that you may not have a use for.

### Core wool

Core wool is what I like to call the “guts” of every felted sculpture!

Core wool is generally cheaper than many other processed (prepared) types of wools, and you use it to make the base of your project.

Imagine it being the naked form that you will later dress! There are various types of core wool:

Noil: - this is the waste left over from yarn spinning - it's a really cheap and easy way to create the core of your project. We buy our core noil from our local mill, helping to reduce what goes to landfill.

### Uncarded Core:

This is fleece that has washed (scoured) but not prepared in any further ways. Our uncarded core has been scoured by our local mill, and is Perendale wool (the name of the sheep breed) from a friend's farm.

### Carded Core:

This is fleece that has been scoured, and processed by carding, a step that untangles any knots etc, and it then is brushed by a machine with fine wire teeth in to a ‘ribbon’ or ‘strip’ like a long snake often called ROVING of fibre which are roughly aligned into a loose, fluffy web.

You may also see kits with polystyrene as a core - I highly advise NOT to buy these, or use polystyrene in a core - it breaks down into tiny particles that don't biodegrade, and there are also increasing health concerns.

Can I use old knitting yarn? - Absolutely - but try to ensure that it is pure wool yarn, as acrylic yarn can shed microplastics which are not only bad for the environment, there are concerns that you may also breath the microparticles in while working.

Which should you start with? It actually doesn't really matter. I personally prefer to use uncarded core, but it really is a matter of preference.

## What's after the Core? - Surface wool!

This is where you put the 'clothes' onto your sculpture! It's the step where you dress the core so it's not visible.

There are various types here too:

Carded wool - also called roving when describing a long snake of fibre -it's as described above, but you'll often find a huge variety of colours!

We offer carded mixed natural fibres as our natural colour palette - from a black coffee brown/black, to rich caramel, and almost every shade between, these are the natural colours of the fibre animals they come from - a mix of sheep, goats and alpacas! These are great for animal makes - tiny mice, little bunnies, or larger animals such as cats and dogs and more!

You'll also find dyed carded wools in a wide spectrum of colours.

Carded batts - this is the same as carded wool, but instead of a 'long snake' of fibre, it's a sheet. We create our own carded batts here at Tregaver using our drum carder, and we have lots of varied colours and fibres!

Tops (also called Combed Tops) - this is fibre that has gone through a further step - first it is carded, and then it is combed to ensure that all the fibres are neatly aligned, rather than a web of fibres.

Clouds - this is uncarded fibre that has been washed and sometimes dyed, then teased apart to create a fluffy 'cloud' of wool. Great to cover the outside of your core.

Your surface wools are what you use to dress the outside of your core. So, for example, if you were creating a little fairy, you'd make the core, and then you would pick a surface wool to cover the core. Carded wools or carded batts are the best thing to use here, tops tend to be used for a smooth and controlled finish, or for detailing.

Locks - Like locks of hair, many sheep grow beautiful locks of wool. In fact, so do angora goats and suri alpacas! Different breeds of sheep grow different textures, from waves, to curls, to crimps! Our teeswater, wensleydale and gotland sheep all grow curls, whereas our grey faced dartmoor grows waves. Locks are used for tails, manes, beards and hair mostly.

Nepps - Tiny balls of wool used for embellishments

Note - 2D felting, sometimes called 'painting with wool' is when a picture is 'drawn' with a felting needle onto prefelt - prefelt acts as the 'paper' to the painting. Most fabrics can be used, however most 2D felting artists prefer to use wool felt. We sell 100% pure wool felt - many commercially available felts are either wool blended with acrylic, or are pure acrylic.... and remember, acrylic is a plastic which has been made to resemble wool!