

Alpaca Product Care Sheet

Congratulations on your purchase of a fine alpaca product!

You may find that with proper care, your valuable alpaca garment will become a personal favorite or even a *family heirloom*! Properly cared for, your well made alpaca garment should last a very long time. Here are some tips, gleaned from experts, on the best ways to keep your fine alpaca garment clean and in good shape for years to come...

We do not recommend using a washing machine to clean natural animal fiber garments. We recommend hand washing or dry cleaning. Socks with high alpaca content should be left out to air dry to keep them nice and soft. Some of our socks with lower alpaca content are designed to allow machine washing and drying.

Note that some items like socks should be washed before being worn to remove the "sizing" which may make the new item feel stiff or itchy.

Temperature changes between the wash and rinse water tends to be the most common cause of shrinkage. **Make sure the water stays the same temperature.** Lukewarm is best, about 100 to 105 degrees. Don't use extremely hot or cold water.

Do not use Woolite! Even the "gentle" formula can be too harsh. Clothes washing soaps can also be too harsh for some fibers. We recommend **baby or other mild shampoo.** Skip the ones with fragrance or conditioners added - cheap shampoo is just fine. **Swish your garment very, very gently in a (clean!) sink** with the shampoo, **let sit for a few minutes** (two to three only), and **rinse in the same temp water.** Be sure to think in advance about how you'll get the same temperature water for washing and rinsing. Try to **handle the item as little as possible.**

Leave it in the sink for a few minutes for it to drain, gently squeeze just enough water out so you don't soak the floor when taking the garment out of the sink. **Lay it out on a towel and GENTLY roll up in the towel.** Don't squeeze or press hard- you only want to have the towel absorb more water. Leave it in the towel for about 5 minutes. Transfer to a dry towel, block, and let air dry. **Turn over and place on fresh, dry towel every few hours** (drying time is highly controlled by room temperature and humidity). Another drying method is to use a sweater dryer rack. These allow you to lay out the sweater and provide good air flow around the garment. They typically cost around \$10.

With proper care, your alpaca garment will give you many years of soft warm enjoyment and you too will have an alpaca heirloom!