The Cottage Industry | The Woollen Mill
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**Wool comes from sheep.**

**Sheep are sheared** for their wool. The wool is then called fleece.

**Shearing with Hand Shears**
These were originally like large scissors.

**Shearing with an Electric Shears**
This process is like shaving with an electric razor.

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After shearing the wool needs **sorting**. The best wool comes from the sheep’s shoulders or its loins.

**The wool needs to be willowed** to open up the wool and loosen the fibres a little before it can be carded.

**Willowing by hand**

**Willowing using the Willower**
This is a large rotating metal drum with big teeth.

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The process of **carding** gets all the knots out of the wool and straightens it ready for spinning.

**Carding with Hand Cards**
This made one rolag of wool at a time, ready for spinning.

**Carding using the Carding Engine**
This machine can make endless rolags or wool ready for spinning.

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**Spinning** turns the woollen rolag into strong yarn.

**Spinning using the Great Wheel**
This only creates one yarn at a time.

**Spinning on the Spinning Mule**
This machine spins up to 400 yarns at the same time.

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**Weaving** turns yarn into cloth or fabric.

**Weaving on a Hand Loom**
The loom lifts the warp as the weaver pushes a foot pedal, but the weft must be passed through the warp by hand each time.

**Weaving on the 'Dobcross' loom**
This machine raises the warp and passes the weft through by itself.

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The woven cloth needs to be **washed and dried**. There are also a number of processes to choose from that give the cloth a special finish, depending on what it will be used for.

**Washing in the Fulling Mill**
Some cloth was pounded as it was washed in order to shrink it. The cloth would be dried on a Tenter Frame.

**Washing using the mill’s industrial washing machine**
The cloth would be dried on the mill’s industrial Tenter Machine. One example of giving the cloth a special finish would be to make it fluffy using the Teasle Gig or the Moser Raiser.

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You can create patterns if you weave with different coloured wool that has been dyed as fleece or yarn. Otherwise, **dyeing** the finished cloth would give you just one colour.

**Dyeing using plants and vegetables to make the colours**

**Dyeing using chemical dyes**