



Informative Guide to finding a Fiber Mill

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Step 1: Decide if you would rather drive to the mill, or mail the fiber.

- **Drive to the mill:** conduct a google search for “fiber mill in (insert the state you live in or surrounding states)”
 - **Tip:** if you can't find a mill close to drive to conduct a google search for “Fiber Festivals (insert your zipcode, state, or surrounding states)” and see who their vendors are and if there are any Fiber Mills listed. Most fiber mills allow you to drop off your fleece with them at any fiber festival that they attend, but make sure to call them first to make arrangements. This can save you money on shipping and you can enjoy the festival all at the same time!
- **Mail the fiber:** conduct a google search for “fiber mill”

Step 2: Call and ask questions!

- Do you provide dehairing services? If yes, how is it done and what is the minimum amount needed in pounds?
 - **Dehairing machine:** this is the machine used to remove guard hair from Pygora
 - How many passes do you do? (some mills will state they will do a standard number of passes through the machine and be done. Others state that there is an additional charge for extra passes above their standard)
 - It is important that they do how ever many passes it takes for that particular fleece. Each animal is different and a “standard” number of 2 or 3 passes may not be enough.
 - Can I send you a sample of dehaired Pygora from each animal for you to either match, or have your machine do better?
 - **Tip:** this is an invaluable tool to use if you know how to dehair your own fleece. NEVER tell a mill how many passes to make due to variability between fleece, even on the same animal. It is much better to give a sample to match then telling a mill to do a certain number of passes.
 - **Carding machine:** some mills will state that they run it through extra passes in their carder and it takes out the guard hair. This will **NOT** work for Pygora and will just mix the guard hair and fine underwool together.

- What other services do you provide?
 - **Washing:** If yes, does the price for dehairing include washing?
 - **Tip:** Some mills will discount your dehairing costs if you wash your own fleece, and other mills make it mandatory that they wash all fleece before being dehaired. Its always helpful to ask if you wash it yourself if there is a discount!
 - **Roving:** If yes, do you also provide pindrafting or pencil roving?
 - **Combed top:** If yes, how long does the staple length need to be for this service and how many pounds of fleece after dehairing is required?
 - **Blending:** If yes, do you need to provide the fiber for blending or does the mill have fiber available to blend with your Pygora?
 - If they provide fiber for blending ask what fibers they offer (Merino, Yak, Como, Silk, Finn, or other fibers you make like added or some they may suggest).
 - **Dyeing:** If yes, do you have a color chart that I can see with a list of sample dye colors? Can you create spiraling, heathering, or variegated yarns?
 - **Yarn:** If yes, ask if they are able to do 100% Pygora or if it needs to be blended with another fiber.
 - **100% Pygora:** What type of yarn am I capable of having made (lace, fingering, DK, worsted, bulky, chunky) and how many pounds are required at minimum to create it? Additionally, ask if it will be a single, two ply, three ply, etc.?
 - **Blended with another fiber:** Refer to blending questions above. Also ask if they have worked with Pygora before and what their recommendations are if you are new to blending fibers.
 - **Tip:** If you have a yarn that was made with 100% Pygora that you really like, it can be helpful to send a sample of it to the mill so they can see and feel what you are trying to accomplish. Also, if you have a blend of Pygora yarn that you like know what it was blended with and the percentages of each fiber and ask the mill to re-create it.
- What is the current wait time for the fiber to be processed and returned to you?
 - **Tip:** Make sure to ask this question! Some mills current wait time is 2 years while others are 4-5 months, and some mills only take fiber by appointment. If they take it by appointment you will need to schedule a date to send your fiber to them and then they will process it from that date within a specified number of weeks (typically 4-6 weeks).