

Rinse well using the hose. Soap left on the skin is irritating. Hold the end of the hose next to the skin and move in a circular scrubbing motion until the water runs clear. You may have to spot shampoo again, if the lamb still has dirty or stained areas after the first wash.

Once you are satisfied that your lamb is clean, remove excess moisture from the fleece with your hand or with a flat surface such as the back of a wool card. Dry the fleece with a terry cloth towel or carefully with a hair dryer or beef blower. Keep the hair dryer moving because it can burn the lamb's skin if held too long in one spot.

Keep the lamb in a clean, well-bedded pen filled with plenty of clean, dry bedding until show time. Cover the lamb with a blanket to keep the straw or shavings out of the fleece.

Blanketing Your Lamb

Blanketing your lamb helps keep your lamb clean. It may also help to bring out the natural lanolin in the wool creating a "bloom" or gloss to the fleece. Before blanketing your lamb, always use a curry comb or brush to remove any surface dirt, hay, straw or shavings. A blanket can be made from a clean burlap sack or pillow case. Flannel fabric stays in place better than shiny, polished fabrics. Open the sack or pillow case down one side almost to the corner, leaving 15-25 cm fastened together at the corner to fit over the lamb's brisket; then open just enough of the end for the lamb's head and neck. Put the lamb's head through the hole in the bottom of the sack. A twine loop or cotton string around the rear legs will help hold the blanket in place. Check blankets often. Watch that the twine, or string, doesn't chaff or rub the skin.



Carding Your Lamb

The card is a special tool used for straightening wool fibers for spinning, weaving as well as for fitting show lambs. On a show lamb the 'hooks' on the card are used to stand up the fibres so they can be trimmed evenly. To use a wool card hook your thumb around the handle of the card and place your fingers placed solidly along the back of it. Your fingers support and keep the card in position as you work it.

Catch the end of the wool fibres with the hooks on the card and lift gently. Do not catch the fibres too deeply as this makes for hard work and is painful for the lamb. You will need to practice finding the right depth to card to do a good job. Practice until you can card with a rolling motion of your hand and wrist. Set the heel of the card in the fleece first; then push the top side of the card into the fleece and bring the heel up and out of the fleece at the same time. Carding makes the fleece stand up so it is easier to trim with your shears. Go slowly at first until you get the feel of it. Never try to rake the card through the fleece.

When the card fills with wool, it should not be cleaned by pulling one card over the other. You can use a small rake which you can make by putting a ninety degree bend in the prongs of a discarded dinner fork.