

## Mordanting Wool

Art 185LJ April 14, 2023

You need:

Your wool fiber/yarn/fabric/clothing

Detergent, for example "Unicorn power scour"

Alum (aluminum sulfate)

**IMPORTANT! When you clean and dye wool materials, make sure to not chock the wool by going from hot to cold water, or to move the wool textile around in the water too much. Agitation and shock make the wool felt (unless it is "super wash" treated).**

### 1. Measure

Weigh the wool (when it is dry). You will need 15% of alum of the weight of your wool. If you have 100g fiber, use 15g mordant.

### 2. Clean ("scouring") the wool material

If you are using yarn or loose wool fiber it is very important to scour the fiber. Clean the yarn/fiber using a pH neutral detergent. "Unicorn power scour" is a good one. If you are using an old piece of clothing it probably does not have as much grease (lanolin) in it, still using a good mild but degreasing detergent is a good idea.

If you are working with new yarn/fabric wool clean at a fairly high temperature, around 140f, which feel really hot. The lanolin needs to melt.

### 3. Heat up water and alum

Use a pot big enough to allow your textiles to move around in the pot. Fill with water put the alum in it, stir well. Heat up to at least the temperature of the rinsing water in previous step (if you just cleaned your textiles).

### 4. Simmer the wool material

Put the textiles in and bring up to around 180f. Let simmer for an hour, move the wool material carefully to make sure the alum reaches all parts.

### 5. Wait

if you have time, leave the wool in until the water cools, overnight for example.

### 6. Rinse

Rinse very well in water the same temperature as the water in the alum pot.

### 7. Dye or dry

You can now dye the fabric/yarn/wool or let it dry until you are ready to use it.