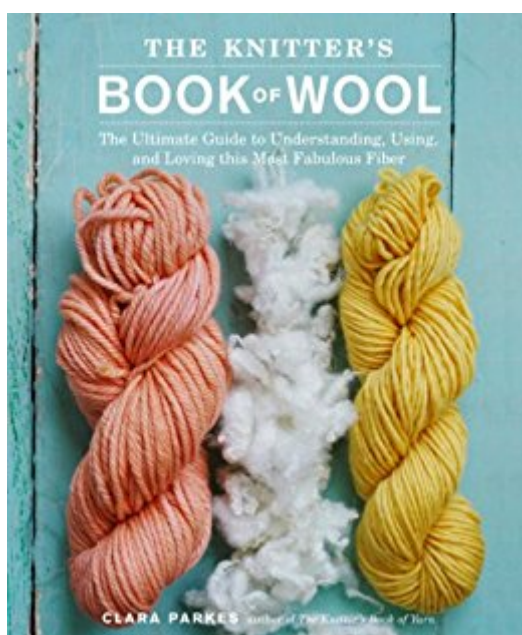


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The Knitter's Book Of Wool: The Ultimate Guide To Understanding, Using, And Loving This Most Fabulous Fiber



Synopsis

In this complete guide to wool - the most popular yarn around - passionate wool expert Clara Parkes translates the vast world of sheep and their wool into the language and context of knitting. What is wool? Clara starts with the fundamentals: what wool is made of, how it gets off the sheep, and how it is transformed from a jumbled mass of dirty fluff into a gorgeous yarn that so tempts us at our local yarn stores. Who makes it? Parkes conducts an inspiring tour of sheep breeds from around the world - introducing us to the animals who give us their wool - and explains how to best knit with yarns made from their fibers. Which yarn do I use? If only there were a way to read a skein to know how it would behave and what it wanted to become. Now there is! Parkes demystifies the generic (non-breed-specific) wool yarn you'll find at your local yarn shop, showing you how to best determine what every yarn longs to be. What do I knit? Parkes went to some of the most creative and inquisitive design minds of the knitting world to provide more than 20 patterns that highlight the qualities of specific types of wool. The Knitter's Book of Wool teaches you everything you need to know about wool - and its journey from pasture to pullover. The next time you pick up a skein, you won't have to wonder what to create with it. You'll just know. From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

Clara Parkes has written another sensational book for knitters, this one focusing on nine different types of wool. She calls this 207-page book a "love letter to wool", and indeed it is. Her book is based on her lifelong love of wool and her experience with spinning, knitting and observing wool. For many of us knitters, we look forward to Clara's regular KNITTER'S REVIEW which she sends over the internet. In it, she often reviews different yarns and their uses, along with providing knitting tips and resources. Clara has no favorites among the nine wools that she describes in this book - - she loves them all equally. Each has their own hand, purpose, and texture for knitting. Beaverslide Dry Goods produces a wool that smells like flowers. Made in Canada, Clara says this wool is a joy to wear and work with. The Elsa Wool Company produces yarns from Cormo sheep. Originating in Colorado, the fibers in the yarn are "soft and vibrant". One of the patterns in this book, the Sweet Fern Fingerless Mitts, uses this yarn. Foxfire Fiber and Designs produces beautiful alpaca. The Nara Scarf in the book is made from this wool. Green Mountain Spinnery is one of Ms. Parkes' favorite yarn sources. I second that, having loved Green Mountain Spinnery yarns from my first encounter with them. Their new book, *99 Yarns and Counting: More Designs from the Green Mountain Spinnery* was recently published and it is full of wonderful patterns and information about their cooperative. Clara loves Nature's Palette Green Sheep Columbia Worsted Yarn. She describes the yarn as "plump, pure and colorful". It is durable yet also soft to the touch. The Comfy Cardigan pattern in the book is made from this yarn. Marr Haven Yarn is a knitters paradise for wool. The Allegan Cardigan pattern in the book is made from this yarn. The sheep raised at Marr Haven are Merino/Rambouillet and the wool is minimally processed and rich in lanolin. Rowan Purelife British Sheep Breeds is a "truly British yarn made from the fibers of four notable British breeds: the Bluefaced Leicester, Jacob, Black Welsh, and Suffolk". She describes these yarns as "full-bodied, the knitterly equivalent of rye bread". There is a wonderful hat pattern in the book that uses this Rowan yarn. Wellspring Woolens Poppi's Worsted comes from Icelandic Sheep raised in Minnesota. Ms. Parkes describes Icelandic sheep as a pure breed, not messed with genetically over the years. Ms. Parkes helps knitters understand how wool behaves and how particular yarns can be used in knitting. The book takes the knitter from the sheep's initial shearing to the transformation of this wool into beautiful yarn. Yarn becomes demystified in Ms. Parkes' hands. The knitter is shown the potential of each yarn to become what it wants to be. The patterns in this book are lovely. My

favorites are the Flicka Hat, a Fair Isle pattern made from sportweight yarn; Bella Baby Ensemble, a sweet girl's sweater in blue sportweight yarn; the Baby Bear Pullover for children, made with bulky weight yarn in an aran white color; and the Lillia Hyrna Shawl, a lace shawl knit with 2-ply laceweight yarn in a beautiful cream color. Whenever I purchase a knitting book I ask myself three questions: Am I likely to knit the projects in the book? Are the patterns easy to understand? Is the book a good resource? The answer to these three questions is a resounding 'YES'. Ms. Parkes has provided a wonderful book for knitters that will have a special place in my bookshelf and that I know I will read over and over. I've ordered more than one copy because I also plan to give it out as a gift to some knitter friends. Thank you Ms. Parkes!!!

Clara Parkes explains wool the way Alton Brown explains food - expertly, and with obvious affection for the hows and whys of it, and with a light and easy style that makes the vast amount of information shared highly digestible. This book is far more than a collection of patterns, though the patterns are great and further the "lessons" in wools and their characteristics. You'll get down into the working parts of wool - where it comes from, why felt felts or doesn't, itches or doesn't, the various types of sheep and the wools they produce, and will help you understand the animals and fibers behind the wool you buy. But you don't have to be a total yarn geek to appreciate it; it is written in a light and very readable way. You can absorb all the wisdom and walk around like a wool guru, or use it as a reference. If you've ever been to, or fantasized about, a fiber festival, reading this first would add to your enjoyment immensely. "That's not just a sheep, that's a Wensleydale! And now I know what that means!" It's like watching the Yarn Channel - you'll get smarter without much effort.

This book is an excellent text to learn about different breeds of sheep and the wool produced from those breeds. I learned so much from this book (and also the guide to yarn book). I am able to make use of that knowledge immediately as I purchase yarns. It is a valuable addition to my library. I would recommend this book (and Parkes' guide to yarn) to fiber artists interested in using natural fibers. One thing though: I crochet and I purchased this book even though the title indicates it is for knitters. Even crocheters can be extremely interested in learning about wool and yarns! Therefore, I think the reference to knitters in the title should be omitted. Think more inclusively for the next edition.

This book tells all - about wool, that is! If you are interested in the fiber arts, this is a book you really

should read! It will help you understand the source of fibers, the differences among the types of yarn available on the market, and appropriate uses for each. Clara's writing style is very conversational and the depth of knowledge in her writing is evident on every page. This is not a dry, academic accounting of wool, but a lively and impassioned story of wool, a good read for anyone - knitters and non-knitters alike.

Anyone who uses wool yarn for any purpose needs this book. Although all of the directions for items made of wool yarns are for knitters, Parkes's coverage of the characteristics related to the wool shorn from a tremendous variety of sheep breeds is fascinating as well as immensely helpful. I knew that I couldn't tolerate wool next to my skin through all of the decades of my life until my favorite yarn salesperson told me about merino and I bought my first ball of Meritona. That hooked me, and I bade "farewell" to synthetics and became a wool snob. 'The Knitter's Book of Wool' gave me a list of merino alternates to try. It serves as a guide for selecting yarn produced by the spinning technique most appropriate for the item to be knit. This book, as well as Parkes's earlier 'The Knitter's Book of Yarn', should be the go-to source for information and guidance for anyone who uses yarn. It isn't just for knitters. Clara Parkes will become one of your favorite authors, a trusted friend who always steers you in the right direction.

Loved this book to reference all my yarn questions for my knitting endeavors with Prayer Shawl Ministry. Initially, I purchased the book for a shawl pattern by Sivia Harding and not only was her pattern terrific, the whole book was fascinating!

This book is amazing, it's so well-researched and the information is presented in such a rich and engaging way, you just want to sink your hands deep into a skein. I love her writing style in general, but this and the Knitter's Book of Yarn have been such staples to my fiber-education!

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