



## Wool - Why do sheep have wool?

### Fact

- Sheep are mammals and all mammals have some protective hair of some kind.
- Sheep live outside so they need something that gives them protection from the weather.
- Wool is warm because it is soft and curly and it traps air. Air acts as an insulator; keeping the sheep warm in the colder weather by trapping warm air next to its skin.
- Wool is very durable, doesn't get damaged by many things. This means it doesn't rot easily.
- Wool is even fire resistant. It won't catch on fire easily.
- Wool is waterproof thanks to a special oil called Lanolin that stops water from soaking in.

### Do you know

- There are 13 sheep for every person in New Zealand.
- 60% of New Zealand wool is used to make carpet.
- New Zealand is the second largest exporter of wool in the world (Australia is the first).
- One sheep produces about 5.4kg of wool fleece per year.
- The majority of sheep shearing is done in spring.
- If we wear woolly garments they will keep us warm by trapping warm air next to our skin.

### Experiments you can do

Ask your teacher to help you find some natural sheep's wool; wool that has come straight from a sheep and hasn't been processed. Compare that with the wool in a jumper, or on a sheepskin rug or in a carpet. What does it feel like? What does it smell like? What might have happened to the wool to get it to look, smell and feel like the wool in the jumper, carpet or sheepskin?

### Other Investigations

Do some investigation yourself and find out how wool gets from the sheep into things like a carpet and a jumper.

Do you have any garments in your house made of wool? How do they get washed?

Find out if you have any wool in your house that has been felted?

How was it made?

### Jokes

Where do sheep like to eat? At a baa-beque!

Where do sheep go for a haircut? To the baah-bers!

Why did the sheep fall off the cliff? Because it missed the Ewe turn. From Olivia

What do you get if a sheep studies Karate? Lamb chops. From Daniel