

Fine Fleece Shetland Sheep Association – Traditional 1927[®] Shetland Fleece Grading Chart[©]

Revised 4-18-2017

FFSSA Grade	Grading Description	Typical Crimps/ ”	AFD & SF ¹ Range	CV	Shetland Fleece Description	Garment and Yarn Usage
1	Superfine Premium <i>(Lamb, neck wool, very fine adult*)</i>	8 or more	20-25.0	CV < 22%	<i>Uniform quality (fineness and staple length), consistent crimp, very silky, soft handle. Because of the exceptional handle, this is a very rare premium grade of the highest quality Shetland fleece. * Adults below 20 microns midside are considered non-standard</i>	Next to skin garments like scarves, shawls, hats, baby wear, gloves, underclothing, and lace. <u>Cobweb Lace to Fingering wt yarns</u>
1	Superfine <i>(Lamb, neck wool, very fine adult)</i>	8 or more	20-25.0	CV 22-24%	<i>Uniform quality (fineness and staple length), consistent crimp, very silky, soft handle. May have a bit more tip to the locks than Superfine Premium.</i>	As above, plus light sweaters like Fair Isle, scarves, fine wearing garments, etc. <u>Cobweb Lace to Fingering wt yarns</u>
2	Fine Premium	6 or more	25.01-29.9	CV < 22%	<i>As G1 but may be lacking in uniformity. This is a rare, premium, high quality G2 fleece because of the exceptional handle.</i>	Some next to skin garments as above, plus sweaters like Fair Isle, scarves, etc. <u>Lace to DK wt yarns</u>
2	Fine	6 or more	25.01-29.9	CV 22-26%	<i>As G1 but may be lacking a bit in uniformity and may have more tip to locks. Has a good handle but may lack the silky soft handle of grade 1 and premium G2. Many Fine Fleece Shetland adults fall into this grade with some in the Premium G2. A few exceptional fleeces fall in G1.</i>	For mid-20's: some next to skin garments as above, plus sweaters like Fair Isle, socks, etc. For higher 20's to 30: Fair Isle sweaters, Aran sweaters, socks, hats, light blankets, medium shawls, etc. <u>Fingering to DK wt yarns</u>
3	Good (Medium)	4 or more	30-32.0	CV ≤ 30%	<i>Similar to Grade 2 but a bulkier and slightly coarser fleece, may lack uniformity, and have a bit more tip. A premium G3 fleece would have a CV lower than 22%. Slight guard hair would be reflected in a higher CV.</i>	For sweaters, socks, light to medium wt blankets, hats, etc. <u>Sport to Worsted wt yarns</u>
4	Heavy (Coarse/ Britch wool/ Rug)	(straight or slightly wavy)	< 32	CV >30%	<i>Longer outer coat/guard hairs on sides and back (dual coated), handle can still be soft, may have finer undercoat. AFD is not relevant in this grade, due to coarser fibers making the CV high and hence the SF higher than AFD. Non-FFSSA Fleece.</i>	For sweaters, socks, blankets, rugs, harder wearing garments, etc. May have to either pick out guard hairs or spin bulky yarn. <u>Sport to Bulky wt yarns</u>
5	Rough (Coarse/ Britch wool/ Rug)	(straight or slightly wavy)	>32	CV >30%	<i>Coarse fiber with strong guard hair presence (dual coated), may still have a soft handle, undercoat can be soft. SF is higher than the AFD. Non-FFSSA Fleece.</i>	Due to strong guard hairs, best for traditional heavy woven wadmal (heavily fullled) blankets, braided roving rugs, felting, or woven rugs. <u>Bulky wt yarns</u>

¹SF (spin fineness) combines the AFD with the CV into a single measure of fineness. Exceptional Shetland fleece has a lower SF than AFD.