

# Sheep and wool



# Sheep and wool



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# Sheep and wool



## Introduction

Over the years LEAF Education (formerly Farming & Countryside Education) has produced a wide range of e-activity booklets covering many topics including rural crafts, activities at shows and events and seasonal activities.

Within these e-booklets there have been resources with a focus on sheep or wool and so we decided to bring these together into a new publication.

The current booklet has been adapted for parents and home educators at a time when farm visits are not possible. However, there are many sheep-related activities that can still be carried out at home. Why not have a go at some of them?

They can all be carried out at home but adult preparation is essential. You might also like to consider some of the activities as an introduction to a farm visit when we are again able to get out and about. There is a section offering guidance on farm visits.

Have fun!

# Sheep and wool

## Sheep on a stick

### Materials required

This activity needs a lot of “assembly” of materials and preparation in advance. You will need some scoured sheep’s wool if you can get hold of any (or shredded paper if you cannot source wool), a template sheep shape – cut out lots on thin card; cut out shapes from black card for head and ears, pipe cleaners cut in half, eyes, glue, tape and lolly sticks – all available from on-line craft stores.

### Instructions

Some adult supervision is necessary.

Children stick the sheep’s head to its body and its ears to the top of its head at either side.

Using tape behind the ears they add twisted pipe cleaners for horns. Children stick wool or shredded paper onto the body but not the head. Using some lengths of wool they make some legs; tie the strands of wool together in a knot to make the sheep’s feet. Add the eyes and a lolly stick by which to hold the sheep!

### Comments

This activity can produce a very attractive “sheep” for the children to keep and can provide a focal point for further discussion work about sheep.



# Sheep and wool

## Pom pom sheep

### Materials required

For each sheep cut two circular pieces of card with a smaller ring cut in the centre, large enough for a small ball of wool to be passed through. Have available small balls of wool of appropriate colours, felt face shapes (ready cut) and eyes. Scissors and glue are needed.

### Instructions

Each child has two card circles and is shown how to wind the wool round and round for about three layers.

With adult supervision, the wool is cut carefully between the two outer layers of the card rings. A length of wool is wrapped in between the two outer edges and is pulled tight and knotted. This should create the pom pom!

A face shape and eyes can be glued on.

### Comments

Adult guidance is usually necessary for this activity. Many children will demonstrate immense patience in creating their sheep and adults are often enticed to join in!



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## Counting sheep in Old English

### Materials required

Some sheep — use model farm animals

### Instructions

Explain about Anglo-Saxon English and old counting systems. (You can find details at the link below)

It has always been important for shepherds to keep a count of their sheep, knowing whether any have died or strayed or whether there are new lambs. Even today numbers are important so that farmers can pay the right taxes or receive the correct grants which are often based on the number of their animals.

Regional variations on the counting system “yan, tan tethera...” are provided here:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yan\\_tan\\_tethera](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yan_tan_tethera)

### Comments

These old counting methods were also used for knitting stitches!

Counting imaginary sheep is also recommended as a way of getting off to sleep if someone is struggling with insomnia. The repetitive nature of the task is said to calm the mind.

Ask pupils to find out about more sheep sayings—can they explain any of them?

<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/sheep>

<http://www.special-dictionary.com/proverbs/keywords/sheep/>

# Sheep and wool

## Weaving friendship bracelets

### Materials required

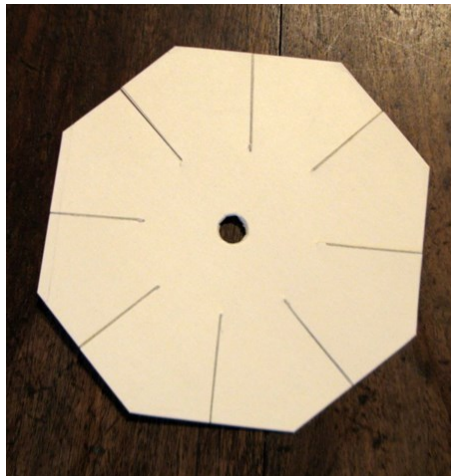
Small piece of card

Lengths of different coloured wool

### Instructions

#### Make your loom:

Cut an octagon shape out of card. Then cut slots in each side and a hole in the middle.



#### String your loom

Cut 3 pieces of wool about 1m long, fold in half to make a loop, then use a 50cm long piece to secure the loop.





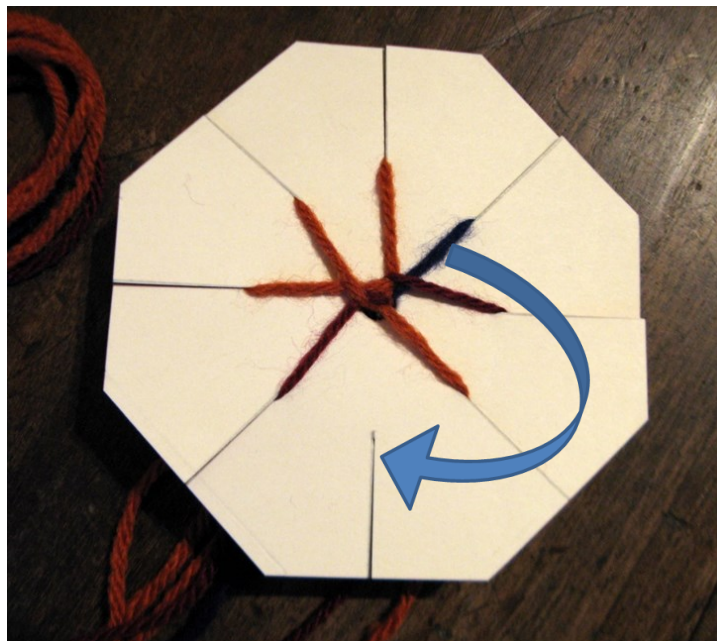
# Sheep and wool

Push the loop through the hole in your loom and then slide the threads into the slots.



## Start weaving

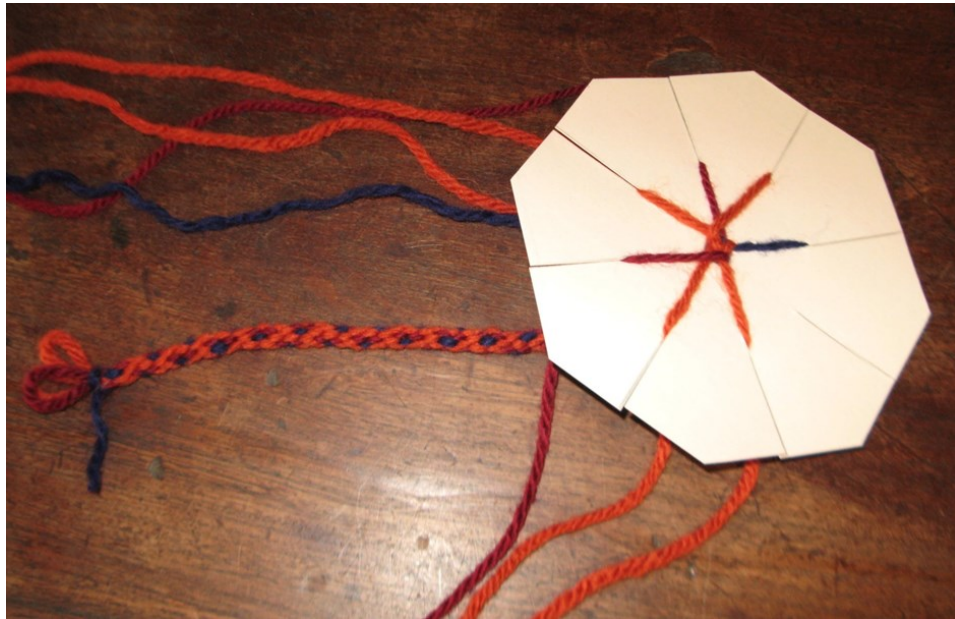
Hold the card flat with the empty slot in front of you. Take the 3<sup>rd</sup> thread to your right and jump it over the other two into the empty slot.





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Turn the card so the empty slot is in front of you again, jump the 3<sup>rd</sup> thread to the right over and into the empty slot.



Keep repeating until your bracelet is long enough. Remove from the loom and tie the ends.



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## More weaving activities

If you want to try more weaving activities, take a look at this publication which contains background information about weaving and step by step instructions for a colourful weaving project suitable for the classroom.

<http://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/resources/849>



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## Weaving with sticks

Simplicity is key. No looms for this, just two pencils and a length of string!

### Materials:

Balls of wool  
Two pencils or sticks  
String or wool thread to act as warp thread  
Needle  
Pipe cleaners  
Stick on eyes (from craft suppliers)

### Instructions:

Attach string or wool to one end of each pencil or weaving stick to act as the weft thread.

Hold the sticks in your left hand, keeping them parallel with about a 1" gap between them.

Using your wool, trap the end with your thumb or make a loop and pop it over one stick. Weave a figure of 8 around the sticks, gently sliding the weave down the sticks as you work but don't push it all off the end until you have made the full length of weaving you require.





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When you have enough (25cm for making a sheep) slide the weaving to the end of the warp threads and knot them as close to the top of your weave as you can. The weaving can then be rolled up, held in place with a stitch to make a sheep with wobbly eyes and pipe cleaners for legs/ears!



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## More ideas!

You can find a wide variety of resources about sheep on Countryside Classroom.

These include cut out and create 3D sheep; a video about the work of a sheep farmer; lesson plans, photographs and much more.

<http://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/resources?search=sheep>

### Sheep



LEAF Education worked with the Heritage Crafts Association to produce feltmaking resources for the classroom and these are available here:

<http://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/resources/847>

# Sheep and wool

## Lambing

Find out what's involved at lambing time:

<http://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/features/82>



And when we are able to visit farms again, here are five suggestions for following up a lambing visit:

<https://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/blog/51>





# Sheep and wool

## Sheep farm visits



When the time comes, LEAF Education can help schools to find a sheep farmer who may either welcome you onto the farm or visit your school. Contact us to find out about your Regional Education Consultant.

Or try searching the map <http://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/places> and put in your postcode or nearest town and then zoom out to see whether there are farms you can visit in your area.

Always consult the Industry Code of Practice—Advice to Teachers and Others to make sure you have a safe visit.

<http://www.visitmyfarm.org/component/k2/item/339-industry-code-of-practice>

Any farm you visit must have handwashing facilities with soap and warm water and children must wash their hands thoroughly after touching animals and before eating.

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## LEAF Education


LEAF Education works with school communities to help children and young adults understand the connection between farming and their daily lives.

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