



**EDIX**<sup>®</sup>  
saddles

**EDIX<sup>®</sup> general information  
and maintenance wool articles**



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saddles

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# General and purchase

In the market you will find a huge range of products made with Merino wool and Merino sheepskin. What exactly is Merino wool or Merino sheepskin and how can they be in advantage for the products we use for horses. This explanation aims to give you some insight into this beautiful product itself and its maintenance.

The EDIX® sheepskin products are all unique and handmade from natural materials. Characteristic for this can be small irregularities in material or structure. Proper use and proper care of this natural material guarantees you long enjoyment. This brochure will introduce you to the natural product Merino sheepskin and its properties and will guide you in the right maintenance.





# History

Archaeological findings showing humans wearing animal skins proves a very old custom. Back then people had two main reasons for the use of animal skins. One is to distinguish themselves from each other on the social ladder and the second reason is to protection against cold. The term fur dates from the time of the Normans, the first traders of all kind of animal skins called fur traders.

Fur is a fascinating but often controversial subject, the basis of many discussions is of course the fact that fur is an animal product.

The profession of fur-maker from the Middle Ages has evolved into three professions in the present, that of tanner, of fur trader and fur processor. A sheep is one of the most useful and oldest domesticated animals of humans and certainly the most important supplier of fur. Through selection, specific varieties have been cultivated over the centuries. For example sheep are being bred especially for milk, wool or meat. Today the world population of sheep is around 1 billion animals.

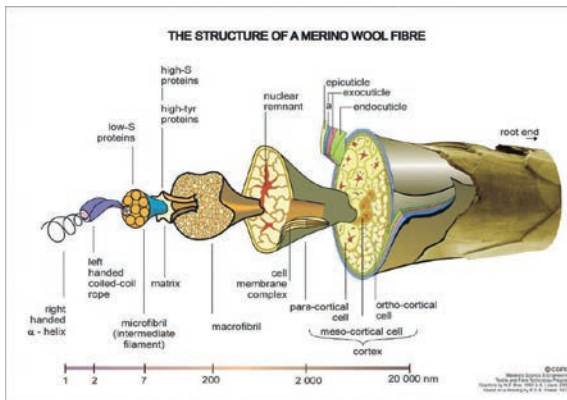
# Production

For production of articles for horses the breed of the Merino sheep is used for its wool or the sheepskin. This originally North African sheep breed was distributed throughout the world by the Spaniards in the 16th century. Despite that, the main production countries for Merino wool are New Zealand and Australia. To obtain an even better quality of wool the Merino sheep breed was crossed with some other breeds. The Australian Merino sheep breed is one of the best-known breed in the world and is praised for its very high quality of wool. The Merino sheep is a rarity in the Netherlands and there is only one herd grazing.



# What is wool?

Wool or fur, is hair from animal skins. In particular, the single wool or skin with wool of the Merino sheep is used for the production of clothing, blankets, accessories and even wool is used for medical purposes. Sheepskins are electrical semiconductors, they neutralize body and muscle tension and promote blood circulation. Therefore it is medicinally used for people who are bed- or wheelchair-bound. Using sheepskins for hospitalized people prevents wounds due through longtime lying down in bed. The Merino wool is very special. It distinction itself through its thick and strong quality of wool fibers. Although the Merino wool has a very fine structure, on each square centimeter of Merino sheepskin compared to other breed of sheep, grows ten times as many hair.



*Cross-section perspective of a wool fiber*

Wool differs from hair because it has scales, that's why seeds and twigs get stuck in them. This protects the sheepskin against damage. The Merino sheep is therefore able to move around thorny vegetation without damaging its skin. The Merino wool fiber is much longer than you can see with the eye

each fiber has a bend every 2,5 cm and is completely twisted. When it was a humans hair we would speak of frizzled hair. This kind of hair holds air very well and therefore Merino wool is a very good thermal insulator. Despite the scales on the wool fiber and the twisted character the Merino hair can easily be spun. Shaved woven wolle needs to be woven on a natural or synthetic fabric to further be processed into a basic fabric, in the contrary to a sheepskin where the wool through its natural attachment to the skin ensures an optimal base fabric. It needs no explanation that in case of the use of a sheepskin including the wool, you will have the strongest base fabric which still has all the features of the wool. A product made with a natural sheepskin has a much longer durability as a product made with woven wool. Merino wool is a fine and very soft, strongly frizzled wool type with relatively short fibers (4-18cm). This strongly frizzled fiber is naturally extremely resilient. The result is a strong elasticity and shape stability. It absorbs shock, regulates temperature fluctuations and prevents pressure and abrasions. All above mentioned characteristics of the fur of the Merino sheep together with its good moisture-absorbing and heat-insulating ability, makes the Merino sheep, a very suitable breed for the production of fur products.

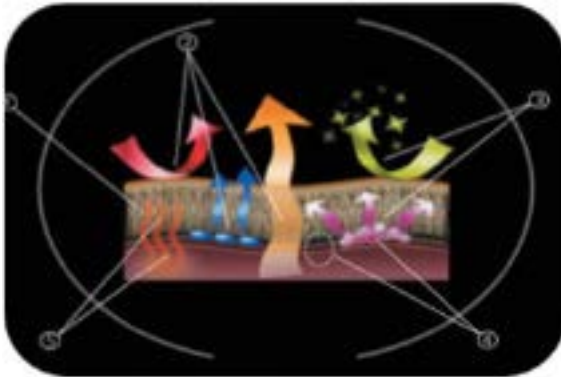




# Natural characteristics of Merino fur

## Overview of the natural characteristics of Merino fur:

- Promotes humans and animals health through it 's breathable and temperature-regulating properties
- Prevents wounds of pressure and abrasions
- Promotes blood circulation
- Reduces muscle tension
- Naturally dirt-repellant
- Is self-cleaning due to the presence of lanolin in the fibers, with very simple care by shaking, brushing and airing.
- Wool is sustainable
- Wool is a safe material
- Wool is bactericidal (lanolin)





# Types of threats in the durability of natural fur products

## 1. Bacterial Fungi

Fungi are spread by minuscule floating fungal spores that are everywhere. They are not fungi yet, because they need moisture to develop into a fungus. Once fungus, they are clearing up trash, but it keeps itself alive by eating, hair and flakes are affected. Known common places where fungus easily develops are bathrooms, basements, the meter cupboard but especially in the horse sector: the saddle cabinet.



## 2. Mite

House dust is the collection of solid invisible particles in the air. Think of skin flakes, hairs, fibers, sands, feces of insects, basically anything that (invisibly) swirls through the air and eventually accumulates somewhere. An arachnid creature that finds a food in home dust is the mite. The mite is not visible to the eye. The mite feeds on skin flakes and hairs from humans as well as from animals. The house dust mite thrives best in a humid, naturally warm environment. An ideal place for the mite can be found in less regularly cared wool for, especially when kept in a room with a relatively high humidity, again often the saddle cabinet or storage space of your horse harness.





### 3. Moths

A common problem is moth damage. There are 2 types of moths, the clothes and fur moth. Damage to fur in particular is caused by the larvae of the fur moth using the proteins presented in fur as food. The larva thrives in dark cool indoor spaces. Here, too, the saddle cabinet or other storage space in the stable is the ideal living environment for this larva. Especially in combination with the attraction of moths for sweat and moisture. Moisture, as well as mold and mite, can cause considerable irreparable damage to fur products.



### 4. Irregular and or incorrect maintenance

Irregular and incorrect maintenance is disastrous and limits the lifespan of your product. Being the biggest threat affecting the sustainability of your beautiful but relatively fragile sheepskin product. Your investment is worthy of regular and good maintenance, this only guarantees an enjoyable long use of your sheepskin product. Please read the following instructions carefully.

# Maintenance of fur

## **1. Not washing does not mean your sheepskin becomes unhygienic.**

Sheeps wash themselves neither, as read above wool has its own abilities to stay clean. It does not mean either that you do not need to take care of the fur. Indeed you have to. Optimal taking care starts preferably before each use. To prevent hard spots, you should completely brush out the dried sweat and loose hairs. Finish this treatment with gently patting the fur, due this patting your fur keeps airy. After this treatment leave your sheepskin product in the outside air to breathe and dry. If above instructions are followed thoroughly, you prevent your product to wear and tear.

Do not expose in direct sunlight, but your sheepskin product appreciates good airing in foggy weather and even a good snowbath. These weather circumstances contribute to the natural refreshing and cleaning capacities of the fur. Snow even kills bacteria.

## **2. Felting, tangling of the fur**

Through scales of the fur fibers, the fur fibers become entangled which is a normal phenomenon in use and the extent in which this happens depends on the type of fur. Fur naturally slightly crimped has the tendency to less wear and tear. Crimped or and entangled fur has no loss of its qualitative characteristics.

You can, if you want, (try) to prevent the fur to entangle, but take in mind that each sheepskin is a natural product which returns to its own natural shape. Compare this to the way human hair acts. Curled hair can be brushed but always the curls come back. Do not use a brush with PVC balls on the end of each pin!

### 3. Do you still want to wash your fur product?

Your fur or sheepskin product is naturally fed with lanolin, a natural sheepskin grease. This grease ensures that your sheepskin product can last for years with simple and regular maintenance. Keep in mind all cleaning products extracts this grease from the skin and wool fibers.

It is therefore absolutely essential to use a special leather and wool detergent for washing. Any simple wool detergent will irreparably damage the product by removing this fat from your product. The right detergent will at the same time feed your sheepskin with essential grease. EDIX® has the leather wool detergent N5 from FRA in her assortment, bottles of 220ml, which has the necessary restoring properties.

Washing your sheepskin product by hand is preferable. In case you choose washing in a machine, choose for a special wool program at 30 degrees and the lowest speed of centrifuge. Do not dry in the dryer or expose your wet sheepskin product to direct sunlight!



Drying your sheepskin product is the most vulnerable part of the cleaning process. Due to the fact your sheepskin is a natural product drying has to take place in the same way. Depending on your fur product (a nose fur has different proportions compared to the used sheepskin of a western pad), the drying process can take several days or even up to 1 week. Definitely do not ever use a dryer, also never expose your sheepskin to the front of a heater, or under direct sunlight. An accelerated drying process makes the skin hard.



During the described drying process regularly stretch and knead the product, but do not wring. In doing so, always leave the original shape central. This action opens pores of the leather and gives the fur fiber the chance to re-entangle. A too fast drying process dehydrates the lanolin, added via the special detergent, resulting in a stiff and hard skin due to the lack of wool grease. Only by careful handwashing or special wool program machine washing followed through careful drying all as described above, your fur or sheepskin product will be able to maintain its suppleness.



# Resuming

Used by the nomads 12,000 years ago wool makes one of the oldest and most functional raw materials for production of protective articles for humans and animals. The described characteristics and properties of wool and sheepskin makes it a unique product for you and your horse. A simple regular care guarantees you and your horse enjoyment of this great product for years.

EDIX® supplies Australian Merino sheepskin as a base fabric for her articles. EDIX® articles are manufactured using a high-quality materials combined with meticulous manual manufacturing.

**EDIX® wishes you enjoyment with your sheepskin product.**





Handmade high quality products bij EDIX® an official registered trademark,  
all products are designed en developed in the Netherlands.

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