



Processing Wool

WOOL PROCESSING OPERATOR

ALSO CALLED

- General hand
- Operator
- Textile production operator
- Machine operator
- Basic operator



WHAT'S THE JOB ABOUT?

- **Operating one or more machines in a wool processing or textile mill. These machines process wool in the worsted or woollen systems for the production of yarn and fabric. The processes include:**
 - o **SCOURING** –The dirt, suint (sweat), lanolin and other contaminants are removed from greasy wool.
 - o **CARBONISING (Woollen system)** –Scoured wool is fed through acid baths, into ovens to burn (carbonise) the vegetable matter and onto rollers to crush the carbonised matter. The wool is then shaken vigorously to remove the dust.
 - o **CARDING (Worsted system)** –Scoured wool is passed through wire rollers that straighten and align (card) the fibres and remove burr, seed and other vegetable matter to produce a sliver of untwisted wool.
 - o **GILL BOX (Worsted system)** –Slivers of different batches of carded wool are blended together.
 - o **COMBING (Worsted system)** –Fibres are straightened to remove any tangles, short fibres and remaining vegetable matter to produce a 'top'.
 - o **DRAWING (Worsted system)** – The 'top' is drawn to reduce the size and thickness of the sliver and twisted into a 'rove' to strengthen the strand.
 - o **BLENDING (Woollen system)** – Wools are blended to ensure an even batch.
 - o **CARDING (Woollen system)** – Rollers line up parallel fibres that are then criss-crossed.



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- o **SPINNING** - Spools of roving from the worsted system or criss-crossed slivers from the woollen system are placed on spinning frames that give sufficient twist for the desired yarn strength.
- o **DYEING** – Wool can be dyed at several stages during processing, usually in a dye house.
- o **WEAVING** – Cloth is woven on a loom where weft threads are woven in and out at right angles to a series of parallel warp threads.
- o **KNITTING** - Knitting machines create a continuous row of loops of yarn which are then interlocked to the next row.
- o **FELTING** – A combination of mechanical and chemical action with moisture and heat interlocks the fibres without spinning, weaving or knitting.
- o **FINISHING** – A number of different processes that give fabric the desired look and feel.

WORK CONDITIONS

- Wool processing operators work indoors in a mill or factory.
- Shift work may be required.
- Operators may encounter Occupational Health and Safety issues such as noise, dust, heat and machines with many moving parts.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is provided as necessary.
- Some routine maintenance or adjustment of the machinery may be required.

EXPERIENCE AND RELATED TRAINING

- Training and induction of operators is usually provided on the job.
- Some employers may map an individual skill development plan for each operator.
- Gaining a formal qualification will help you to develop the knowledge and skills that you need to progress in the wool processing industry.
- If you are already working at this level you can have your skills recognised by applying for a qualification with a training provider.



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Career path	Training Requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General hand / Trainee <p>You will develop the skills to operate a machine in one of the above processes.</p>	<p>VOCATIONAL TRAINING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate 1 in Early Stage Wool Processing • Certificate 1 in Textile Production
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operator Level 1 <p>You operate a machine in one of the above processes.</p>	<p>VOCATIONAL TRAINING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate 2 in Early Stage Wool Processing • Certificate 2 in Textile Production
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operator Level 2 <p>You have been trained to operate two machines from the above processes.</p>	<p>VOCATIONAL TRAINING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate 2 in Early Stage Wool Processing • Certificate 2 in Textile Production
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operator Level 3 <p>You are trained to operate a range of machines from the above processes.</p>	<p>VOCATIONAL TRAINING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate 3 in Early Stage Wool Processing • Certificate 3 in Textile Production
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobber <p>You operate and adjust the mechanical setting of a range of machines to meet quality requirements.</p>	<p>VOCATIONAL TRAINING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate 3 in Early Stage Wool Processing • Certificate 3 in Textile Production

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