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Signed:  Janice L. Walsh

Date:  July 11, 2019
There is More Than One Way to Spin a Cat

(Using Cat Fur as a Spin-able Fiber)

Janice Walsh

Submitted to Olds College

January 31, 2018
Abstract

Approximately 94.28 million cats are residing as pets in the United States (Association, 2017-2018). Another 8.8 million pet cats are living in Canada (Association C. V., 2017). Many more millions are treasured as pets worldwide.

I found it ironic when gathering this information, many of the ads on the website pages were for vacuum cleaners. Whole industries are devoted to home cleanliness and much has been written about how to remove pet fur from furniture, flooring, bedding, carpeting and clothing. Pet fur is normally something that would be discarded. I want to show that it can become an asset. Fur can be recycled into a useable fiber that can be transformed into something useful as well as decreasing the amount found in the home, thus lessening the amount of housework required to clean it up. This will also help to alleviate the risk of allergic reactions, saving the lives of many cats who are euthanized due to owner’s health concerns. It is also healthier for the animal to have a coat that is well groomed and not matted.
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Introduction

Brushing one’s cat with either a brush or comb will easily allow you to collect the fiber for spinning. This allows you to bond with your animal and prevents mats or tangles from forming. Mats can restrict the feline’s movement causing pain and even developing hidden sores. Observing changes in the animal’s coat and will help you recognize possible health issues. Cats are meticulously clean animals who groom themselves by licking with their tongue. According to Johnson-Bennett (nd) cats groom themselves for a number of reasons. Licking can help cool the body temperature through evaporation. A stressed cat will groom to alleviate stress. In the wild, a cat will groom to remove all traces of prey they have eaten to prevent themselves from being discovered by a predator. Brushing or combing by the owner can help to prevent or lessen the amount of discomfort. Some of this fur gets ingested and causes the animal to regurgitate it in the form of hairballs.

Some cats will not tolerate grooming by their owners. The tools used may become something to be feared. Others perceive them to be a toy, swiping at them with their paws, claws out, or worse yet, biting the person wielding this torture device. Still other cats become highly agitated by this action. It is best not to provoke the stressed animal, but to find another method of fiber collection. Excess fur can also be removed by rubbing the cat with a chamois or a rough cloth (Vine, 1978).
Acquiring Fiber

To gather the most variety of fur, I placed fliers at the veterinarian’s office, posted on social media, asked family, friends and customers and the local pet shelter. People were very curious and willing to help.

I groomed my pets and saved their fur, documenting the amounts of collection for a period of time to see how much fiber could be expected.

A cloth with a tight nap such as velvet or corduroy can be laid over the cats’ bedding area or favorite resting place. Naturally occurring shedding fiber can easily be gathered from this cloth for spinning at a later date.

Lightly misting furniture or clothing with water will aid in fiber removal by gently gliding a squeegee, a damp paper towel or a sea cell sponge over the fur. Wiping with a dry rubber glove with nubs will also allow you to clean fur off a surface without rendering the fibers useless (YouTube.com, 2017).

Placing an open mesh fabric such as cheese cloth or an old nylon stocking over a vacuum cleaner hose will allow the fur to be removed from surfaces and gathered for spinning. The fabric should be secured to prevent it from also going into the unit.

There are an infinite number of products on the market made for cleaning up pet hair, but many will destroy it and not leave behind a fiber suitable for spinning.
Types of Fur

There are up to 130,000 hairs per square inch on a cat's body (Pollard, 2005). These are composed of four different types of fur: guard hairs, awn hairs, soft down hairs and whiskers.

The guard hairs or primary hairs are the coarse outer layers found on the back and sides of the cat. They are connected to the nervous system and respond to anger, fear, cold and excitement. When activated, they give the cat a fluffed up appearance (Pollard, 2005). These hairs also shield the cat from nature's elements. The guard hair determines the cat's color (Syufy, 2017).

The guard hair has a wide medulla at mid shaft but begins in the wine glass form near the root (MicroLabNW, nd).
Awn hair is short, thick and bristly. It forms a protective layer to the down hair and has sensory functions. VetInfo.com (nd) mentions that the length of the awn hair is determined by the cats’ breed.

Down hair is very fine and insulates the cat’s body from cold temperatures. It is prone to matting or tangles. In many cases, the down hair is lighter than the guard hair. Since the majority of the combed fiber is down hair, it may differ from your cat’s outward appearance (Tsutaya, 2011).

Whiskers are found on the face of the cat and sometimes on the legs. They also have a sensory function and help the cat navigate and also to survive.
Growth of Fur

The growth of cat fur, up to one third of an inch per month, is influenced by the cat’s environment. There is a cycle of rapid growth, a slower growth phase and then a resting phase. During this resting phase, the fur becomes detached at the base and new hair starts to grow, resulting in shedding. Cats that live outside grow a heavier coat for insulation. The extended daylight hours in spring activate the shedding process. When daylight begins to diminish in the fall, the new winter coat starts to grow (Carlson, Griffin, 1995).

Indoor cats live in artificially controlled conditions and their coat’s cycles of growth and shedding are influenced by both temperature and lighting. These factors may cause the animal to shed year round as more light equals more shedding (Carlson, Griffin, 1995).

The length of the fur used for my samples ranged from ½ inches to 1 ¼ inches in length, giving me quite a variety to spin.
I recorded the brushings and combing amounts of my resident cats’ fur for a period of eight months to see how much I could collect during this time frame. Not all the fur was useable to spin. During several of the months, despite grooming, the fur still developed mats. I stopped keeping track of the amounts when Lilly passed away at 18 years of age.

Shortly after, Robbie was in an indoor accident that resulted in his entire leg being amputated from the hip down. Grooming was too painful for him to continue during this time frame.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Robbie</th>
<th>Dusty</th>
<th>Lilly</th>
<th>Tinkerbell</th>
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<tr>
<td>October 2016</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>uncooperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2016</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>uncooperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2016</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>uncooperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2017</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>uncooperative</td>
</tr>
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<td>February 2017</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.7 (mats)</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>uncooperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2017</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>3.5 (mats)</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>uncooperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2017</td>
<td>2.6 (mats)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2017</td>
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<td>3.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>uncooperative</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 2018</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>12.5 grams</strong></td>
<td><strong>20.3 grams</strong></td>
<td><strong>15.1 grams</strong></td>
<td><strong>.7 grams</strong></td>
</tr>
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Robbie and Dusty are littermates, are very similar in size, yet shed at different rates. Lilly was half their size but yielded a similar amount of fur. Tinkerbell was given to us when her family relocated across the country. This was very traumatic for her. She didn’t want to be touched or petted, let alone be groomed. She also had been recently shaved.

After seeing the other pets enjoy affection, she finally allowed us to touch her and gradually accepted that the brush was not her enemy. It took almost a year before she allowed us to groom her, but only for three or four strokes of the brush at a time.
A 20 year old domestic short hair cat named Sophie was brushed by her owner for a 10 week period. 3.9 grams of fur was gathered during this time.

Fineness- Histograms

Brushings were taken from four cats’ fur from the side of their body and sent to Yocom-McColl Testing Laboratories, Inc. for micron testing. I wanted to see how fine the cats’ fiber is compared to merino wool, as merino is one of the finest wools. *The Fleece and Fiber Sourcebook* lists merino as a fine to medium wool estimated to be in the 22-32 micron range (Robson, 2011), while Margaret Stove’s merino wool fleeces are in the 14-24 micron range (Stove, 1991).

The resulting tests showed that the youngest cat, Tinkerbell, a Ragdoll cat, had the finest fur, while Lilly, a Himalayan and the oldest of the four, had fur that was less fine than the other three. Both Robbie and Dusty are Norwegian Forest cat brothers.

Lilly
Himalayan
18.1 microns

Robbie and Dusty
Norwegian Forest Cats
16.3 & 16.3 microns

Tinkerbell
Ragdoll
15.4 microns
# The Results

Yocom-McColl Testing Laboratories, Inc.
540 West Elk Place • Denver, Colorado 80216-1823 USA
PHONE (303) 294-0582 • FAX (303) 295-6944
EMAIL: ymccoll@ymccoll.com

Individual Animal Micron Test Report - Laserscan
Sorted by Fiber Diameter

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<th>Test No</th>
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<th>ID</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>AFD</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<td>12/25/14</td>
<td>Side</td>
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<td>4.1</td>
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<td>935875</td>
<td>Lilly</td>
<td>XXXX</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>09/01/98</td>
<td>Side</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>23.2</td>
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Report Date: 09/23/16
Animal and Sample Description

Animal Name: Tinkerbell
Breed: Ragdoll Cat
Sex: Female
Color: Cream/Brown

Animal ID: XXXXX
Sample Location: Side
Sample Date: 09/18/16
Age: 12/25/14

Laboratory Data

Mean Fiber Diameter: 15.4 microns
Standard Deviation: 4.1 microns
Coefficient of Variation: 26.3 %
Fibers Greater Than 30 microns: 1.2 %

This Test Performed According to I.W.T.O Method 12
Sirolan Laserscan
Micron Test Report

Janice Walsh
13425 Lisbon Rd
Brookfield WI 53005 USA

09/23/16

Test No: 935875

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<th>Animal Name:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sex:</td>
<td>Female</td>
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<tr>
<td>Color:</td>
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**Laboratory Data**

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<th>Value</th>
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<td>Standard Deviation:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coefficient of Variation:</td>
<td>23.2 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fibers Greater Than 30 microns:</td>
<td>1.7 %</td>
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</table>

This Test Performed According to I.W.T.O Method 12
Sorting Fiber

Fluffy Muffy is a 13 year old half Persian, half domestic long haired cat whose owner responded to an ad I placed on a social media site. Her coat was quite tangled and she was taken to a groomer who shaved her. I was given her entire fleece (82.3 grams) which was very matted and contained many second cuts that were removed by skirting. The useable fiber was saved to sample the different washing or scouring methods to see which worked best for me. Sliding the fiber between my fingers I could detect a slight trace of dust and natural body oil called sebum (Carlson, Griffin, 1995). The fleece itself looked very clean with no trace of vegetable matter, as she is primarily an indoor cat with a few outdoor privileges. I held it to my nose and inhaled and could detect no odor.

Photo courtesy of Fluffy Muffy’s owner: Michelle Anderson
Washing

Raw fiber was divided into two gram lots for sampling. Two grams were placed into a nylon mesh bag and submerged into cool water (McCuin, 2009). The fiber wanted to float and did not want to absorb water. It took several minutes and a dowel was used to physically push on the fiber and hold it under water in order for it to become saturated. The natural oils in the fur seemed to delay saturation. I let it soak for 10 minutes and put it into a cool rinse water for another 10 minutes. The fiber was gently removed and placed between two towels and blotted dry. Despite carefully selecting the locks to wash, both the wash water and rinse water contained many short fibers less than ½” in length. I believe this was due to being shorn. The blotted fiber was spread very thinly on a net mesh drying rack and left to dry overnight. It weighed two grams when dried, weighing the same as it did before its bath. When the raw fiber was rubbed between my fingers, a slight dusty feeling was left behind. My fingers were a bit slippery from the natural sebum. After washing, the dusty feeling was gone but I could still feel a bit of slickness from the sebum that the soaking did not remove.
Scouring

The sink was filled with 120F water and enough Dawn dishwashing liquid to make the water feel slippery. I placed two grams of fiber between tulle, taking great care to keep the locks in formation. I placed safety pins in between the locks to keep them separate. This was gently submerged into the soapy water. It went into the water with no resistance, unlike the sample in the cool water. It was left to soak for 10 minutes. There was a very slight cloudiness that arose from the fiber in the water, milky in color along with many very short cuts. The fiber was rinsed twice in 120F water. It was placed between two paper towels and blotted dry. I placed it on a drying rack and left it overnight. The sample weighed 1.9 grams when dried. The fiber feels clean with no hint of dust or oils when run between my fingers.
Water Temperature

I wanted to see if water temperature made a difference in the amount of dust and oils that would be released. The sink was filled with 120F temperature water from the tap to which boiling water was added, bringing the temperature up to 140F. Enough Dawn dishwashing liquid was added to make the water feel slippery. Another two grams of fiber was placed into a mesh bag and submerged. I let it soak for 10 minutes. There was a slight, bloom milky in color, of dust and oils coming from the fiber. The fiber was rinsed twice in the same temperature water, blotted dry between paper towels and left to dry on a rack overnight. The fiber weighed 1.9 grams when dry, the same as the fiber washed in 120F water. When both fibers were handled, there was little noticeable difference in the feeling, leaving me to believe that washing in 120F water is sufficient to clean the fiber. This saved time in preparation and eliminated the need to heat water to a higher temperature.
When washing cat fiber, I found it best to only clean small amounts at a time. Anything over 2 grams had a tendency to felt and become useless as a product to spin. Small amounts in tulle separated by safety pins allowed me to wash larger quantities at the same time without disastrous results. The fiber needs to be spread very thin when placed in the tulle. If allowed to be too thick, felting occurs. No agitation is a must.

Fur that felted after washing
Guidelines

Hochberg (1980) suggests that cat fur is easier to spin if the animal has not been bathed before the fiber is gathered and that the skeins should be washed after spinning. I tried both spinning in the grease and spinning washed fiber. Based on the samples I was working with, none were dirty enough that warranted washing beforehand. Going forward, all samples were spun unwashed.

Punis

Hochberg (1980) also suggests using the spinning directions that most closely resembles the pet. I mistakenly assumed this to be in regards to staple length. My first attempt was with a very short staple of cat fur. Since cotton is of a similar staple length, punis are a customary method of preparation. Not so in this instance. Nicely prepared tight punis were hand carded. Since spinning on a Russian spindle is portable, this was taken with me during my travels. Punis were stored in a covered plastic container and accompanied me in the car. Little did I realize that the vibration from the road was causing the fiber to felt and stick together. Along with the pressure from being held and the heat from my hands, drafting was near to impossible. I struggled with trying to attenuate the fiber and get it started on the spindle. I re-carded the punis to make them looser, but again, just holding them did not allow for drafting without fighting the fiber. I almost gave up and considered changing the subject of the in-depth study, as I found this exercise so frustrating. I abandoned the Russian spindle and spun the punis using a takli.
Rolags

If the punis themselves were the issue, rolags were an alternative. Hand carded and rolled much looser, the act of attenuating became a little easier, but still not without issues. It felt like the fiber was being torn as it was being drafted, again making for an exasperating experience.

I went back and reread Hochberg’s instructions to match the method of spinning that most resembles the pet. Cat fur is very similar to angora rabbit wool, both in feel and in characteristics. They both have guard hair, awn wool and down fibers. They are both non-elastic, fine, very warm, lofty and tend to halo. Their fibers tend to cling together. When this happens, consistency becomes difficult. Worsted spinning method is recommended. Gentle washing to set the twist is suggested. Laying the finished skeins flat to dry rather than hanging will prevent the yarn from stretching (Rasmussen, 2012).

Several skeins were spun worsted and several were spun woolen. The woolen spun skeins tend to shed their fibers as there is very little crimp to bind them together. Abrasion will make them pill and will not be the best choice for a garment. I would be concerned using the yarn for baby items, as little ones could inhale the wayward fibers.
Combs and Hackles

Since there is very little crimp to cat fur and it is so short in length, combing wasn’t a practical option for a worsted preparation. My attempt with a hackle didn’t go much better as the fiber slid through the tines.

Sausages

Sausages were hand carded and attempted. Again, just the act of rolling the fiber onto itself did not obtain the free flowing attenuating that occurs with spinning wool. I did not want to continue to fight the fiber.

Success

Rather than roll the fiber back onto itself, it was hand carded and removed from the hand cards in one large piece.
I broke the piece into small, manageable sections and spun from the tip ends, which are the top and bottoms of the photo below.

Photos courtesy of Janice Walsh

This gave me the result I was searching for. Spinning became enjoyable again. Consistency was no longer as elusive. Going forward, all mentions will be referred to as spinning from tip ends of sections.

Unless otherwise mentioned, all yarns were spun on a Schacht Matchless using a fast whorl with a ratio of 14:1 and plied on the same wheel, using a fast whorl with a ratio of 12.5:1.
Finishing Method

The same method of soaking the spun yarn in 120°F water for 10 minutes with enough Dawn dishwashing liquid to make the water slippery and two rinses in water of the same temperature was used for all washed samples unless otherwise stated. Every yarn was blotted dry between towels, either paper or fabric to absorb excess moisture. To help set the twist, skeins were placed over my hands and gently snapped to set the twist. To avoid stretching, all yarns were laid flat on a mesh drying rack overnight.
Samples

Unless otherwise stated, all samples were spun from raw unwashed fiber.

To determine the knitting needle size to knit the samples, a strand of yarn was held doubled and placed into a needle gauge hole that best fit. This was a starting point to help decide needle size (Johnson, 2014).

I subtracted .35 grams from all skeins to account for the weight of the ties when calculating Bradford counts.

None of the samples were washed and blocked unless mentioned. The purpose of this is to show just how little abrasion it took to raise the yarn’s halo. Knitting towards the bottom of the sample results in a loftier halo due to the amount of handling the sample received during construction. Less abrasion near the top equals less halo or bloom.
Singles-Rolags-Takli

**Fibers:** 100% Cat- Ben- Half Ragdoll Half Maine Coon (unwashed)

**Preparation:** Hand carded rolags

**Spinning Technique:** Supported long draw

**Number of Plies:** 1

**Spun:** Z

**Plied:** -

**TPI:** 6

**WPI:** 27

**Angle of Twist:** 270

**Weight:** .8 grams

**Yardage:** 10 yards

**Bradford Count:** 1/19s

Hand carded rolags were created during found time and placed into a plastic bin for transportation to be spun at a later date. The vibrations from being transported in the car and just being held during spinning were enough to slightly felt the fiber, making it extremely difficult to draft. I re-carded the rolags to make them looser. Consistency in attenuating was nearly impossible. Yarn was spun on a takli using a supported long draw method.

The yarn can be used interchangeably with angora. Hats, scarves, mittens, next to the skin soft items would all be suitable. Open work as well as lace would be appropriate because of the grist. More plies would allow for greater range of finished items.
Rolags
Singles-Drum Carded Battts

**Fibers:** 100% Cat -Dusty- Norwegian Forest Cat

**Preparation:** Washed in 120F soap and water, individual locks of fiber hand fed directly onto large swift drum of carder, taking great care to keep fibers aligned, drum carded batts torn into strips and spun from the tip ends.

**Spinning Technique:** Short forward draw

**Number of Plies:** 1

**Spun:** Z

**Plied:** -

**TPI:** 4

**WPI:** 23

**Angle of Twist:** 270

**Weight:** 1.6 grams

**Yardage:** 10 yards

**Bradford Count:** 1/5s

Locks of fiber were fed onto the large swift drum, by passing the licker-in drum, while taking great care to keep fibers aligned in preparation for a worsted yarn. The goal was a smooth compacted yarn to trap any short fibers and to lessen the halo that would occur. Three passes made a lovely but somewhat loose batt. Carefully separating the batt into lengthwise strips made for a fiber that was easy to draft.

Two samples were knit/crocheted on different size needles to show the difference in gauge. The halo obscures good stitch definition for lace and cables at a smaller size.
I carefully fed fur onto swift drum to maintain fiber alignment.

Batt after one pass.
Batt after the third pass.
Singles-Drum Carded Battts
2 Ply-Worsted-Spinning a Washed Fiber

Fibers: 100% Cat – Fluffy Muffy- Half Persian Half Domestic Long Hair

Preparation: Washed in 120F soap and water, hand carded, separated into sections and spun from the tip ends.

Spinning Technique: Short forward draw

Number of Plies: 2

Spun: ZZ

Plied: S

TPI: 5-7

WPI: 11

Angle of Twist: 30°

Weight: 3.46 grams

Yardage: 10 yards

Bradford Count: 2/5s

Because this was a sheared fleece, the fiber contained many sharp tips, the outcome of which is a prickly yarn. There is good stitch definition in the knitting, crocheting, lace and cables. This could be used for outerwear, table mats, coasters or pillows. The worsted spun yarn traps the fibers resulting in a smoother yarn with a slight halo.
2 Ply-Washed Fiber
3 Ply-Yak Blend

**Fibers:** 90% Cat- Ben- Half Ragdoll Half Maine Coon (unwashed) 10% Yak (cloud)

**Preparation:** Hand carded to blend, separated into sections and spun from the tip ends.

**Spinning Technique:** Short forward draw

**Spun:** ZZZ

**Plied:** S

**TPI:** 3-6

**WPI:** 10

**Angle of Twist:** 21°

**Weight:** 5.65 grams

**Yardage:** 10 yards

**Bradford Count:** 3/4s

Both the yak and cat fur are of the same staple length. The yak has more crimp than the cat fur, adding elasticity to the non-elastic cat fiber. Both bloom when washed, but the yak prevents shrinkage. The yak changed the color of the white and grey streaked cat fur. Three plies made a very round yarn that shows the cables well, but the halo obscures the lace holes. This is a soft yarn and would be suitable for items worn next to the skin. A blanket from this would be a luxury item.
3 Ply-Yak Blend

Ben

Yak

Blend
4 Ply

**Fibers:** 100% Cat (Anonymous long hair cat from Second Hand Purrs Rescue)

**Preparation:** Washed in 120F soap and water, Hand carded, separated into sections and spun from the tip ends.

**Spinning Technique:** Short forward draw

**Number of Plies:** 4

**Spun:** ZZZZ

**Plied:** S

**TPI:** 3-4

**WPI:** 10

**Angle of Twist:** 27°

**Weight:** 6.5 grams

**Yardage:** 10 yards

**Bradford Count:** 4/5s

Plying four singles from a yarn with a halo proved to be a challenge. To not cause breakage or tangling of the finely spun singles while plying, tension was applied to the bobbins. A slow treadling motion was required.

Haloing obscured any lace holes. The bloom fills all low areas of the sample, creating an interesting texture.

The yarn can be used interchangeably with angora. Hats, scarves, mittens, next to the skin soft items would all be suitable, depending on the amount of fiber available.
4 Ply
4 Ply Cable

**Fibers:** 100% Cat- Robbie- Norwegian Forest Cat (unwashed)

**Preparation:** Hand carded, separated into sections and spun from the tip ends.

**Spinning Technique:** Short forward draw

**Number of Plies:** 4

**Spun:** SS SS

**Plied:** ZZ then plied S

**TPI:** 1.6

**WPI:** 4

**Angle of Twist:** 270

**Weight:** 9.65 grams

**Yardage:** 10 yards

**Bradford Count:** 4/3s

I referred to Sarah Anderson’s method to spin a cabled yarn (Anderson, 2012). Two plies were spun in the SS direction with enough twist to make a balanced yarn. Judith MacKenzie suggests running this through the wheel again at the same rate of speed to add enough twist for the final ply (McCuin, 2009). The two singles were then plied together in the Z direction. This was repeated with a second bobbin of singles resulting in two plied bobbins. These two bobbins were plied, this time in the S direction, the outcome of which is a long wearing, round cabled yarn that yields good cable definition but is obscured when knit. Cabling increases strength and reduces abrasion. It increases elasticity and helps with memory (McCuin, 2009). Next to the skin soft items would all be suitable, depending on the amount of fiber available.
4 Ply Cable
Supported Long Draw-Woolen Spun

**Fibers:** 100% Cat – Fluffy Muffy- Half Persian Half Domestic Long Hair

**Preparation:** Hand carded rolags from washed fiber

**Spinning Technique:** Supported long draw

**Number of Plies:** 2

**Spun:** ZZ

**Plied:** S

**TPI:** 3-6

**WPI:** 9

**Angle of Twist:** 180

**Weight:** 4 grams

**Yardage:** 10 yards

**Bradford Count:** 2/8s

The rolags were very difficult to draft as the fibers did not want to release and felt as though they were being torn. Consistency in drafting was elusive creating a somewhat thick and thin yarn. This would be a good method to use if that is your desired outcome. Because I was aiming for consistency, I would choose a more appropriate preparation. The woolen spun yarn did not trap all the fibers and when the final wash was done, the sink had a large amount of short fibers in the water. This leads me to believe that this yarn will continue to shed and will pill with abrasion. To prevent this, felting of the finished item may want to be considered to solve these issues. This is from a sheared cat, so the yarn itself is prickly and should be chosen for projects with that in mind.
Supported Long Draw
Charka Spun

**Fibers:** 100% Cat (Sophie, 20 years old) 100% Cat (Quintin, 12 years old)

**Preparation:** Cloud

**Spinning Technique:** Long draw

**Number of Plies:** 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(Charcoal)</th>
<th>(Gold)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spun:</strong></td>
<td>ZZ</td>
<td>SS</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>17</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bradford Count:</strong></td>
<td>2/11s</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sophie is a 20 year old domestic short hair cat. She is the perfect example of a cat whose downy undercoat is much lighter than her guard hair. She appears to be a black cat but when groomed, her down fur is a charcoal color. After 10 weeks of grooming, her owner collected 3.9 grams of fiber. After being spun, this yielded just 10 yards of 2 ply yarn. So the sample had to be produced from another animal whose fiber was a similar staple length but was spun in the opposite direction. Both samples are very soft with much halo. The long draw did not trap fibers and there were many in the sink. This will continue to shed. It should not be used for items that will receive abrasion.
Charka-Long Draw
Bottom Whorl Spindle-Turkish

**Fibers:** 100% Cat-Ben-%50 Maine Coon 50% Ragdoll (unwashed)

**Preparation:** Hand carded, separated into sections and spun from the tip ends.

**Spinning Technique:** Short forward draw

**Number of Plies:** 2

**Spun:** ZZ

**Plied:** S

**TPI:** 3.5-5.5

**WPI:** 20

**Angle of Twist:** 27°

**Weight:** 2 grams

**Yardage:** 10 yards

**Bradford Count:** 2/8s

Because of the short nature of this fiber, spinning was slow going. The draft length was very short and the fiber slippery. If the draft length was too long, the spindle would fall. Only a small amount of fur could be held at a time to prevent felting.

The yarn is next to the skin soft with good definition, despite the halo. It would make lovely apparel and be an especially warm as a shawl or wrap.
Bottom Whorl Spindle- Turkish
Navajo Ply-Failure

The volunteers at Second Hand Purrs no kill cat shelter groomed the residents and saved the fiber for me. Thankfully, many of the cats found homes sooner than others and went to their forever homes, so only small quantities of fur were collected from them. This left me with many samples of very little amounts of fiber. I was racking my brain for a way to use them in this study. I wanted to showcase all the different colors and varieties of the fur. I thought Navajo plying might do this. The fibers were spun short forward draw and when one fiber ran out, the next one was joined regardless of how much there was. Light next to dark, blacks next to tans and so on until many of the little balls of fluff were spun and then carefully Navajo plied. The yarn was washed and rinsed, snapped and left to dry. When I went back to check on it I was shocked. I’ve never seen so many corkscrews in one skein. Oh, no...over spun. I ran it back through the wheel to take out some of the twist, only to discover that what balanced one fiber, over or under spun another. I forgot to take into account fiber length and had spun such a variety of lengths that what worked for one did not work for another. There is no way to list all the statistics for this yarn, except to say that a suitable end use would be to serve as an example of what not to do. Perhaps blending fibers of similar lengths together would have been a better use of the fibers.
Navajo Plied-Failure
Navajo Ply

**Fibers:** 100% Cat (littermates Ben and Mouse 50% Maine Coon-50% Ragdoll)

**Preparation:** Hand carded to blend, separated into sections and spun from the tip ends.

**Spinning Technique:** Short forward draw

**Number of Plies:** 3

**Spun:** Z

**Plied:** S

**TPI:** 5

**WPI:** 13

**Angle of Twist:** 270

**Weight:** 4.75 grams

**Yardage:** 10 yards

**Bradford Count:** 3/5s

Fiber from two littermates with similar fiber were blended together to get enough fiber to complete this exercise. Ben appears to be a white cat with a grey patch on his head. Mouse appears to be a white cat with some black markings in his tail. Both cats have a grey downy undercoat making this a light grey yarn. The fiber drafted easily and was Navajo plied using the instructions from Sarah Anderson’s DVD *Building Blocks of Spinning* (2013).

The yarn has a slight halo and the sample shows good stitch definition. It is suitable for next to the skin wear. According to their owner, both cats shed heavily and are groomed often. They would provide enough fiber over time to make a luxurious afghan.
Navajo Ply
Top Whorl Spindle-Bamboo Blend-Fulled

**Fibers:** 80% Cat (Ben-50% Maine Coon-50% Ragdoll) 20% Bamboo Top

**Preparation:** Hand carded to blend, separated into sections and spun from the tip ends. Bamboo cut to match staple length of cat (1”)

**Spinning Technique:** Short forward draw

**Number of Plies:** 1

**Spun:** Z

**Plied:** N/A

**TPI:** 5

**WPI:** 27

**Angle of Twist:** 270

**Weight:** 1.35 grams

**Yardage:** 10 yards

**Bradford Count:** 1/12s

The cat fiber was very slippery and needed something with a little resistance added to it so I could hold the fiber without felting it or dropping the spindle. The bamboo added the needed resistance without sacrificing the softness. The bamboo is responsible for the sheen and although both fibers are warm, the bamboo allows it to be a breathable yarn (Rasmussen, 2012). Since I knew I was going to full this single, I chose the bamboo to lessen the halo and prevent the fibers from sticking together.

After being spun, the yarn was allowed to soak in 120F soapy water. It was plunged into cold rinse water and agitated with a mini plunger and then returned to hot water. After repeating the hot water and cold water agitation cycle four times, it was laid flat to
dry.

This would be a good yarn for lace work. It is next to the skin soft and would be suitable for garments. This would make an attractive summer weight shawl. Adding more plies would broaden the selection of finished items.
Top Whorl Spindle-Bamboo Blend-Fulled

Ben

Bamboo Top
Alpaca Blend

Fibers: 70% Cat (Logan) 30% Alpaca top (unwashed)

Preparation: Hand carded to blend, separated into sections and spun from the tip ends.

Fibers are of a similar staple length.

Spinning Technique: Short forward draw

Number of Plies: 2

Spun: ZZ

Plied: S

TPI: 5

WPI: 13

Angle of Twist: 30o

Weight: 2.7 grams

Yardage: 10 yards

Bradford Count: 2/6s

Both fibers are warm, soft, inelastic and slippery, so may be better suited for textured patterns to prevent stretching. The sheen is due to the presence of the alpaca fiber. It also adds strength and helps extend the cat fur to go further.

It is next to the skin soft and would be good for neckwear, head wear, gloves and mittens, shawls and wraps, baby items and layettes. The sample shows good lace definition and texture in the cables.

The alpaca fibers were very short. They are similar in staple length so there was no need to cut them.
Camel Blend

**Fibers:** 70% Cat 30% Camel down

**Preparation:** Hand carded to blend, separated into sections and spun from the tip ends.

Camel is similar in staple length to cat.

**Spinning Technique:** Short forward draw

**Number of Plies:** 2

**Spun:** ZZ

**Plied:** S

**TPI:** 5.5-7

**WPI:** 13

**Angle of Twist:** 270

**Weight:** 4.6 grams

**Yardage:** 10 yards

**Bradford Count:** 2/4s

The addition of camel to the cat fur tamed the halo and allowed the stitches to be seen. It helped to prevent felting and added some color to the light grey of the cat fiber. Neither fiber adds elasticity, so textured stitches would prevent stretching and help a garment keep its shape. This would make a nice hat, mittens and scarves, as both fibers have insulating properties.
Cashmere Blend

Fibers: 65% Cat (domestic shorthair) 35% Cashmere Cloud

Preparation: Hand carded to blend, separated into sections and spun from the tip ends.
Cashmere is similar in staple length to cat.

Spinning Technique: Short forward draw

Number of Plies: 2

Spun: ZZ

Plied: S

TPI: 4-6

WPI: 13

Angle of Twist: 270

Weight: 4.25 grams

Yardage: 10 yards

Bradford Count: 2/4s

Cashmere contributes loft to this cat’s dense fiber. It lends softness and warmth, while this cat’s fur is coarse. Both are considered to be luxury fibers. The cashmere is very lightweight and will add elasticity to an inelastic fiber. Bringing crimp into the cat fur will increase the yarn’s memory (Green, 2012).

Hats, scarves, shawls, sweaters, cables and lace would all be good choices for finished items. A pillowcase woven from this would be luxurious.
Cashmere Blend

Cat

Cashmere

65/35 Blend
Cotton Blend

**Fibers:** 50% Cat (Luka-16 years) 50% Acala cotton

**Preparation:** Hand carded to blend, spun from tip ends of sections.

Cotton is of same staple length as cat.

**Spinning Technique:** Short backwards draw

**Number of Plies:** 2

**Spun:** ZZ

**Plied:** S

**TPI:** 6-8

**WPI:** 19

**Angle of Twist:** 270

**Weight:** 2.55 grams

**Yardage:** 10 yards

**Bradford Count:** 2/6s

Adding cotton to this short staple cat fur makes for a stronger yarn that is absorbent. It lightens the color of the yarn and contributes drape. Acala cotton was selected because of its shorter staple length, the same as the cat fiber. It also tames the halo, allowing stitches to be more distinct.

A summer top made from this would be a go to favorite as cotton absorbs moisture.
Luka

Cotton Blend

Acala Cotton

50/50 Blend
Flax Blend

Fibers: 65% Cat (Logan) 35% Flax

Preparation: Hand carded to blend, spun from tip ends of sections. Flax cut to match staple length of cat.

Spinning Technique: Supported long draw

Number of Plies: 2

Spun: SS

Plied: Z

TPI: 4.5-5.5

WPI: 10

Angle of Twist: 270

Weight: 4.75 grams

Yardage: 10 yards

Bradford Count: 2/6s

I was hesitant to try this blend. After washing, the transformation was amazing. The yarn went from being stiff to draping gracefully, from being coarse to being much softer and from being dull to having luster. The flax brought strength to a delicate fiber as well as changing the color. It made a very warm yarn cooler and tamed the halo allowing the stitch definition to take center stage. The flax will soften with each washing. It was spun dry, in the “S” direction as bast fibers tend to twist in the “S” direction naturally (Green, 2012).

This would be a good blend for light weight textured garments and accessories. Pillows, afghans, wall hangings and table runners could also be possible projects.
Logan

Flax Blend

Flax Strick

65/35 Blend

65
Hemp Blend

Fibers: 55% Cat (Mouse) 45% Hemp

Preparation: Hand carded to blend, spun from tip ends of sections.

Hemp cut to similar staple length of cat fiber.

Spinning Technique: Short forward draw

Number of Plies: 2

Spun: ZZ

Plied: S

TPI: 5-6

WPI: 15

Angle of Twist: 30°

Weight: 4.45 grams

Yardage: 10 yards

Bradford Count: 2/4s

After spinning the flax blend, I wanted a blend with a larger percentage of a bast fiber. The hemp makes this a very strong, absorbent yarn that will soften with each washing. A stiff, wiry yarn changed into a yarn of substance resembling linen. The halo was tamed and the stitch definition is outstanding.

Both summer and winter garments and accessories should be considered as this blend will suit all seasons.
Llama Blend

**Fibers:** 70% Cat (Robbie) 30% Llama (blanket)

**Preparation:** Hand carded to blend, spun from tips of sections.

Llama is similar in staple length to cat.

**Spinning Technique:** Short forward draw

**Number of Plies:** 2

**Spun:** ZZ

**Plied:** S

**TPI:** 6

**WPI:** 14

**Angle of Twist:** 30°

**Weight:** 5.15 grams

**Yardage:** 10 yards

**Bradford Count:** 2/3s

I was able to find a very soft short stapled llama blanket similar in length to the cat fiber. Both fibers are warm, but slippery, so a textured pattern would help to prevent a finished item from growing. The llama also adds strength, tames the halo and creates good stitch definition.

A textured vest from this blend would prevent the wearer from becoming too warm.
Mohair Blend

Fibers: 60% Cat (Dorothy-short hair) 40% Dyed Mohair Locks (purchased)

Preparation: Mohair locks cut to 1” to match cat staple length

Hand carded mohair seven passes to straighten crimp before blending with cat

Hand carded both fibers to blend, spun from tips of sections.

Spinning Technique: Short forward draw

Number of Plies: 2

Spun: ZZ

Plied: S

TPI: 5

WPI: 14

Angle of Twist: 30o

Weight: 4.9 grams

Yardage: 10 yards

Bradford Count: 2/3s

I first tried blending the cut dyed locks by sandwiching them in between cat fur and found it very difficult to blend as the crimp would not allow the fibers of the mohair to separate. This was solved by hand carding the cut mohair locks separately first. A minimum of seven passes was required to open up the locks. They were then blended with the cat fur. Both fibers have a slight halo and are warm. The mohair contributes luster and durability and makes the yarn very strong. It also prevents felting, which the cat fur is inclined to do. Shawls, stoles and wraps would be a good choice as they can be easily removed should the wearer become too warm. Fingerless mitts are another option.
Nylon Blend

**Fibers:** 75% Cat (Dusty) 25% Faux cashmere/nylon

**Preparation:** Hand carded to blend, spun from tips of sections.

  Nylon cut to 1” to match staple length of cat.

**Spinning Technique:** Short forward draw

**Number of Plies:** 2

Spun: ZZ

Plied: S

TPI: 4-5

WPI: 13

**Angle of Twist:** 30°

**Weight:** 3.85 grams

**Yardage:** 10 yards

**Bradford Count:** 2/4s

The nylon adds strength and will help resist abrasion. It will help prevent the cat fur from shrinking or felting. It helps to lessen the halo, creating clear stitch definition. Items made from this blend will drape beautifully. It is a good choice for next to the skin garments and accessories. Table runners and pillows would be good projects.
Ramie Blend

**Fibers:** 75% Cat (Coppurr-short hair domestic) 25% Ramie

**Preparation:** Hand carded to blend, spun from tips of sections.
- Ramie cut to match staple length of cat.

**Spinning Technique:** Long draw

**Number of Plies:** 2

**Spun:** SS

**Plied:** Z

**TPI:** 3-6

**WPI:** 14

**Angle of Twist:** 270

**Weight:** 4.9 grams

**Yardage:** 10 yards

**Bradford Count:** 2/8s

Ramie helps reduce shrinkage and add strength to the blend. I don’t think there is enough in this mix to add luster, but I was afraid to add any more. I didn’t want the resulting yarn to become too stiff. After washing it softened quite a bit. The yarn has a slight halo, but not enough to obscure textured stitches. I spun it in the “S” direction because the fiber I purchased had a strong natural “S” twist and I didn’t want to fight it. I feared for an unbalanced yarn, but the cat fiber helped to control the balance.

I would use this for summer items, as the ramie is similar to linen and will help cool the warmer cat fur fibers.
Ramie Blend

Coppurr

Ramie

75/25 Blend
Silk Blend-Bombyx

Fibers: 75% Cat-Logan- (domestic long hair), 25% Bombyx Silk

Preparation: Hand carded to blend, spun from tips of sections.
Silk cut to 1.25” lengths to match the staple length of the cat fiber.

Spinning Technique: Short forward draw

Spun: ZZ
Plied: S
TPI: 6-7
WPI: 17
Angle of Twist: 270
Weight: 2.9 grams
Yardage: 10 yards
Bradford Count: 2/6s

The Master Spinner’s Level 2 workbook (Vallance, 2012) lists the many characteristics of silk and I felt these attributes would improve the cat fur by adding strength and luster. Bombyx silk was used because of its bright white color and will lighten the already dark fibers. Tussah silk can halo and the cat fiber will do that on its own. The fiber, when blended and spun, drapes beautifully and is very lightweight due to the addition of silk. When bunched up in the hand you can feel its warmth. Adding silk was also a way to extend the small amount of fiber and make it go further.

I first tried a sample of 50% cat 50% Bombyx silk blend, weighing out half a gram of each fiber. I found that the silk overwhelmed the cat fiber both in volume and color. I
wanted the cat fur to be dominant with the silk lending its qualities to an already beautiful fiber. I tried again and was much happier with half the amount of silk.

Logan’s fiber is approximately 1.25” long. The silk was cut to the same length. Half of the cat fiber was loaded onto cotton hand cards. The silk was sandwiched in between the remaining cat fiber.

I used cotton cards because of the fineness of the cat and silk fibers and to avoid nep or noils that could occur. Blending was accomplished with a minimum of seven passes.
After the fibers were blended and aligned, they were removed from the hand cards and separated into smaller pieces for easier drafting and to help keep them from tangling.

I spun from the tip ends using a 14.5:1 whorl and a 1” draft on a Schacht Matchless wheel. This was spun with a ZZ twist and plied in the S direction. The yarn was wound onto a niddy noddy and tied in four places, then soaked in 120F water and Dawn soap for 10 minutes. After two rinses in the same temperature water it was blotted dry between two towels. I placed the skein over my hands and gently snapped it to set the twist. To prevent stretching the skein was placed on a mesh rack to dry overnight.
The resulting yarn was a smooth and compact worsted yarn. The knitted sample shows the lace very well, but the halo prevents you from seeing the cables. The yarn bloomed just from handling. There is good stitch definition in the crocheted areas. It is next to the skin soft. The down side of this fiber is the amount of it. Even though Logan is a large boy, it would take a long time to gather enough fiber to make a project requiring much yardage.
Logan

Photo courtesy of Logan’s owner: Dorothy Bozich
Silk Blend (Bombyx)

Logan

Silk

75/25 Blend
Silk Noils Blend

**Fibers:** 65% Cat (Dorothy) 35% Silk Noils

**Preparation:** Hand carded to blend, spun from tips of sections.

**Spinning Technique:** Short forward draw

**Number of Plies:** 2

**Spun:** ZZ

**Plied:** S

**TPI:** 3.5-4

**WPI:** 11

**Angle of Twist:** 250

**Weight:** 4.85 grams

**Yardage:** 10 yards

**Bradford Count:** 2/3s

I really enjoyed spinning this. The silk adds texture, giving the yarn a tweedy look. It adds warmth and makes the yarn denser. The yarn halo is due to the cat fiber, but doesn’t overwhelm the stitch definition. As I was spinning I picked out anything that felt a little rough or that was too large and may shed. This would be a good choice for hats, scarves, cowls and mittens. It is next to the skin soft. If enough fiber could be collected, I would make a sweater from this.
Soy Blend

**Fibers:** 60% Cat (King) 40% Soy

**Preparation:** Hand carded to blend, spun from tips of sections.

Soy cut to match staple length of cat.

**Spinning Technique:** Short forward draw

**Number of Plies:** 2

**Spun:** ZZ

**Plied:** S

**TPI:** 4.5-6.5

**WPI:** 17

**Angle of Twist:** 30°

**Weight:** 4.05 grams

**Yardage:** 10 yards

**Bradford Count:** 2/4s

The soy contributes strength, softness and luster to the blend. It lightened both the hand and the color creating a yarn that drapes gracefully. It tamed the halo allowing the stitch definition to be the focus of any future project. As with yarn containing linen, this would be suitable for summer projects such as shawls, stoles and wraps. A summer top comes to mind if enough fiber could be collected.

(After spending most of his life in the shelter, King finally found his forever home).
Wool Blend

Fibers: 60% Cat-Lilly-Himalayan 40% Merino top (commercial prep) (unwashed)

Preparation: Hand carded to blend, spun from tips of sections.  
Merino cut to ¾” lengths to match staple length of cat.

Spinning Technique: Short forward draw

Number of Plies: 2 
Spun: ZZ 
Plied: S 
TPI: 6 
WPI: 13 

Angle of Twist: 27° 
Weight: 3.45 grams 
Yardage: 10 yards 
Bradford Count: 2/5s

A blend of 80% cat and 20% wool was not enough to bring any noticeable wool 
qualities to the yarn. After blending 70% cat and 30% wool, I decided on a blend of 60% 
cat and 40% wool. The yarn is soft and elastic and drapes well. Wool adds durability, 
resilience and resists felting and compression. The sample has a little halo and the stitch 
definition is distinct. It also shows the variation in color of Lilly’s fur.

Unfortunately, Lilly has passed on so there is no more fiber available to recreate this 
exact blend. I would use what little I have to either knit or crochet squares to combine 
with others to make a blanket or afghan. It will be a great memory of her.
Wool Blend

Lilly

Merino

60/40 Blend

87
Percentage Dyed

**Fibers:** 100% Cat (Russian Siberian-Cleo)

**Preparation:** Hand carded to blend, spun from tips of sections.

**Spinning Technique:** Short forward draw

**Number of Plies:** 2

**Spun:** ZZ

**Plied:** S

**TPI:** 5

**WPI:** 18

**Angle of Twist:** 270

**Weight:** 3.45 grams

**Yardage:** 10 yards

**Bradford Count:** 2/5s

This was a sheared fleece that was stored for a long time in a plastic bag. By the time I received it, it was pretty well felted. It contained many mats, rendering the majority of it useless. I spent several evenings gently carding the useable fibers. The cut ends are not as sharp as the others that I have spun. I was surprised that the yarn was not prickly.

The fiber was dyed with Jacquard acid dyes following the instructions on page D-10 of the *Master Spinners Level Four* workbook (Green, 2012).

A mix of 75% Royal Blue and 25% yellow sun were used to make a dye solution resulting in a green blue color with a depth of shade of 2. The measurement calculations are listed below.
Percentage Dyed

The following measurements were used to dye the cat fur.

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Percentage Dyed

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<td>Total Stock Solution</td>
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Percentage Dyed
Rainbow Dyed

Fibers: 100% Cat (Toonces)

Preparation: Hand carded individual strips to keep colors separate

Spinning Technique: Short forward draw

Number of Plies: 2

Spun: ZZ

Plied: S

TPI: 5

WPI: 15

Angle of Twist: 270

Weight: 3.95 grams

Yardage: 10 yards

Bradford Count: 2/4s

I followed the directions on page D-15 of the Master Spinners Level 4 workbook (Green, 2012).

I chose a fiber with a lot of color variation for interest.
A crock pot was filled half way with water. Soap and vinegar were added, followed by the fur, which had been spread thinly into tulle and separated by pins so as not to felt.

Jacquard acid dyes in the colors of red, blue and yellow were cautiously sprinkled over the fiber.
After cooling it was rinsed, dried and then removed from the tulle.

Each section was carefully hand carded to retain the colors and then spun. I was surprised at how dull the color was after being spun. When the swatch was washed and blocked, the haloing completely obscured the barber pole effect of the two ply colors. Only the tips show color. This method of dyeing maybe better suited to a fiber that would bloom less or only using one color of dye as the detail is lost in the final product.
Rainbow Dyed
Conclusion

Spinning fiber in the grease was easiest to draft. Fiber that was shorn rather than combed left many short fibers on my lap and after spinning, the yarn continued to shed. Second cuts were not easy to pick out and contributed to uneven spinning. The cut ends of some of these were very sharp and actually penetrated my skin when drafting. A few of the raw fibers caused reactions of sneezing and itchy eyes. The very same fiber, once washed, did not have the same effect. Several of the fleeces were very fluffy and had much static electricity after being washed, making it very fly away. It also wanted to stick to my hands. A light misting with water tamed the wayward fibers, allowing for trouble-free drafting. As with sheep’s wool, the decision to wash, scour or spin in the grease will depend on the condition of the fleece and the intended spinning method. It is possible to spin cat fur, but size of the animal, length of fur and how often they shed will determine the amount of fur available for your desired project. Blending with another fiber will enlarge the amount and add different characteristics to obtain your objective yarn.

Methods of collecting and storing yarn are of the utmost importance. Storing the fiber in a plastic bag could render it useless once it felts from the abrasion of the bag itself.

Spinning cat fur with consistency is very challenging. It is very different from spinning fibers such as wool or silk. As soon as I started to get the feel of drafting, I ran out of fiber. Because of the small amounts of fiber available to me, there was no practicing and no second chance to re-spin exercises that I was not happy with. Each cat’s fiber was very different than the other.
Worsted spun yarn will trap the shorter fibers, lessening the amount of shedding and pilling that will occur with a woolen spun yarn.

Blending cat fur is a good way to extend the fiber to get enough for a project. Each cat’s fiber is different from the other. Sampling is a must if you are trying to achieve specific results. It is possible and even enjoyable to spin cat fur.
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