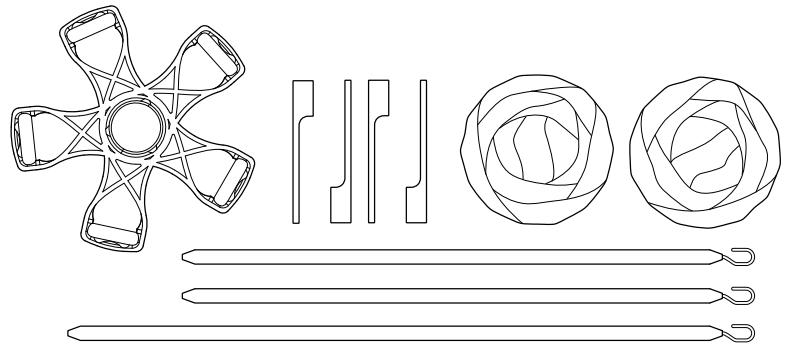


Drop Spindle Starter Kit

- 1 12" (30 cm) Spindle Shafts with Hook Protectors
- 2 10" (25 cm) Spindle Shafts with Hook Protectors
- 1 Medium Geranium Whorl
- 4 TensiTamers
- 2 Balls of Fiber
- 1 Cardboard Box for Use as a Spindle Kate



TERMINOLOGY

TERM	DEFINITION IN THESE MATERIALS
Cop	The cone-shaped accumulation of yarn wound around the shaft of a spindle
Drafting	The process of twisting fiber into yarn
Fiber	Any type of material that can be spun into thread or yarn
Leader	A piece of string tied at the end that can help you get started
Parking	Stopping your spindle from spinning
Plying	Twisting two singles together to make yarn
Pre-drafting	Loosening and pulling apart the fiber to make it easier to draft
Shaft	The stick of the spindle
Single	One individual strand of spun yarn
Skein	Yarn that is wound in a large circle
Staple Length	The average length of each hair of spinnable fiber
TensiTamer	Flexible bit that fits on a shaft to create tension
Whorl	The colorful weighted flywheel that stores the spindle's spin momentum

TO BEGIN

Take a few minutes to get familiar with the items in your kit and the terms listed above.

Watch all of the how-to videos (QR Code is below) before you begin in order to become more familiar with the process.

Assemble your spindle using the whorl and one of the 10" shafts. Put the shaft (hook-end first) through the middle of the whorl, gently wiggling the whorl until it is on the shaft.

Begin spinning with the spindle you just assembled using a smaller amount of fiber so that you can get the hang of it before trying to conquer the full four ounces.

Tip #1: When starting your singles, it's better to get your single extra twisty so that it stays together.

Tip #2: You have two ounces of off-white and two ounces of grayish fiber in this kit, which will allow you to make two singles. These two singles will be plied together to make your yarn.

Tip #3: You can spin either direction on your singles, but make sure you go the same direction on both of them. Otherwise, the fiber will unravel as you ply it together.



Option #1: Spinning with a Leader

SEE ALSO THE VIDEOS

Note: A leader is not required, but some people find it easier to start this way.

Find a piece of string to use as a leader, loop it onto the shaft twice, then put the string through the hook, grab some of your pre-drafted fiber, and pull that through the string (essentially folding it over itself).

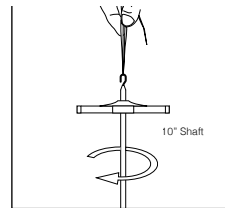
To begin, hold onto the fiber with one hand and spin the shaft away from you with the other hand. Direction is important when plying because you have to make sure the twists twist together. It doesn't matter which direction you spin; you just have to make sure you spin the same direction on both of you singles because you will spin the opposite direction when you are plying them together.

Spin your spindle, let the twist climb up the fiber a bit, and then park it (against your body, under your arm, on the table, etc.). This gives you an opportunity to hold your twist and draft more fiber as you let the twist climb further up. Once you have about 5" to 6" twisted together, you'll want to begin wrapping the fiber around your shaft, leaving about 1.5" (4 cm) of twisted fiber unwrapped.

Unhook the fiber from the hook, put your finger on the leader that is wrapped around the shaft to keep it from slipping, and start wrapping the twisted fiber around the shaft.

Pull more fiber through the hook and begin spinning again, making sure to spin in the same direction as before.

If your fiber starts untwisting a bit, that's okay. Just stop the spindle's backward spin and re-spin it (again making sure that you are spinning in the same direction as before).



Option #2: Spinning without a Leader

SEE ALSO THE VIDEOS

Grab some of the pre-drafted fiber, hook the hook onto a small amount of the fiber, fold it over, hold onto the fiber with one hand and spin the shaft away from you with the other hand. Direction is important when plying because you have to make sure the twists stay together. It doesn't matter which direction you spin; you just have to make sure you spin the same direction on both of your singles because you will spin the opposite direction when you are plying them together.

Spin your spindle, let the twist climb up the fiber a bit, and then park it (against your body, under your arm, on the table, etc.). This gives you an opportunity to hold your twist and draft more fiber as you let the twist climb further up. Once you have about 5" to 6" (13 to 15 cm) twisted together, you'll want to begin wrapping the fiber around your shaft.

Pinch the fiber on the hook tightly and work it gently off the hook. Keep pressure on the fiber and start twisting it around the shaft, leaving about 1.5" (4 cm) of twisted fiber unwrapped.

Hook the fiber around the hook again (we suggest doing this twice to make sure it stays), and spin again, making sure you are spinning in the same direction as before.

Spin the spindle, let the twist climb up the fiber, and draft as you go, parking when necessary. Unhook and wrap the fiber around the shaft again as you accumulate 5" to 6" (13 to 15 cm) more twisted fiber. Continue this process until your shaft is filled with fiber: You have your first cop.

When your first cop is finished, gently pull the whorl off the shaft and place it on the other 10" shaft. Gently push the shaft through the whorl as before.

Grab your other bundle of fiber and begin to spin as before, making sure you spin in the same direction.



Things to Remember

THING	REMEMBER
Connect new fiber	<i>To connect the pre-drafted fiber to the single you are spinning, park the spindle and just set the twisted fiber into the untwisted, and it should grab onto itself. Give it another twist to help it if needed.</i>
Recover if dropped	<i>If you accidentally drop your spindle or fiber, that's okay! You can get the fiber back together using the method above.</i>
Replace if broken	<i>Drop spindles get dropped. Our materials are pretty sturdy, and you shouldn't have any problems, but if you do, please contact us for a replacement.</i>
Rebend hook if bent	<i>If your hook gets bent, you can easily bend it back into place.</i>
Avoid catching fiber	<i>Try to keep the pre-drafted fiber out of the way as you spin so that it doesn't get caught up in the already twisted fiber before you're ready for it.</i>
Change whorl location	<i>You can spin with the whorl on the bottom as well; we recommend you begin with top whorl, as we're illustrating, and then experiment as you gain confidence.</i>



Plying: Let's Make Yarn!

SEE ALSO THE VIDEOS

Now that you have your two singles, it's time to ply them into yarn. For this, you'll need the 12" shaft, the TensiTamers, and the box. The box will have four marks on the front and back to make holes. CAREFULLY use a knife or other sharp object to make holes in the box where indicated. You can use the 12" shaft to make the holes a little bigger as well.

Once you have the four holes, you will need to get both of the cops into the box, which will function as a Spindle Kate.

Gently remove the whorl from the 10" shaft it's on. Take one of your cops and put the hook side through one of the holes you made. Place the other end through the opposite hole. This may require a little force, and the fiber might slide up and down the shaft a bit, but that's not a problem. Repeat this process with the other cop.

Place a TensiTamer—thin end first, then fold over the thick end—on each shaft outside the box. Be careful of the hook when placing them on those ends. The TensiTamer will control how fast or slow the shafts spin in the box. If you need to spin a little faster, pull the TensiTamer away from the box a bit. If you need it to go a little slower, push the TensiTamer closer to the box in order to hold the tension.

Attach your spindle whorl to the 12" shaft as you did before. Grab the end of each single, letting them drape over one another. Line the ends up, hook them over the hook as before, and spin your spindle in the OPPOSITE direction from what you did for your singles: If you spun away from you for the singles, spin toward you for plying, and vice versa.

Keep spinning, and let the twist climb as before, parking when necessary. Once you have about 5" to 6" (13 to 15 cm), pinch it off the hook, hold onto the shaft, and wrap the yarn around the shaft (again, just like before), leaving about 1.5" (4 cm) of twisted fiber unwrapped.

Pull the fiber back through the hook, and continue plying, taking your time to park it, pull the yarn off the hook, and wrap it around the shaft as necessary.

Troubleshoot, as needed:

- You may need to place the box on the ground to give yourself a little bit more room to twist the fiber together. If you do this, be sure to place your foot (or something slightly heavy) on the box to keep it on the ground.
- If the fiber gets hung a bit as you're pulling it out of the box, just gently pull a little harder.

Continue spinning and wrapping until you have spun together all the fiber (both cops should be empty). You made yarn!



Caring for Your Yarn

SEE ALSO THE VIDEOS

You should now have roughly four ounces of yarn on your shafts. The next step is to wind it off. There are a few devices you can use for this—Niddy Noddy, Super Skeiner, etc.—but you don't need those right now.

Gently remove the spindle whorl from the shaft, put your hook protector on, and remove the shafts from the box. You're going to use the box again, this time to help wind the yarn off.

Drop the finished cop into the box (diagonally) and wind the yarn off onto your arm from hand to elbow in the same way you would when rolling up a rope or an extension cord. When this is complete, you will have a skein of yarn.

Take a few small pieces of string and tie them around the yarn—loosely—in a few places to help keep the skein together. Make sure the skein holds the same shape as when you wound it.

After you have all of your yarn wound into a skein, washing it helps set the twist and keep everything together. You will only need a drop of soap (any kind is fine) and luke-warm water. Submerge the skein and squish it around a bit to wash it.

Squeeze the excess water out of the skein, and gently whack it against the side of your sink or tub to help set the twist.

After you wash the yarn, hang it up to air dry. Once it's dry, it's ready for your next project!



Enjoy!

We created the Akerworks Drop Spindle Starter Kit to offer you all the tools, materials, instruction, and inspiration you'll need to create your first skein of glorious handspun. There's nothing as satisfying as knitting or crocheting with yarn you've spun on a drop spindle. We're so excited you're embarking on this journey, and we look forward to being there right alongside you as you learn.

If you have any questions or need any help, please feel free to reach out to us! We're here and happy to help: hello@akerworks.com.

