



WOOL BALANCE STANDARD

May 2019

Wool Balance is a manufacturer's designation given to products that meet the suitability, performance and safety requirements of Esteam Cleaning Systems for Wool care solutions. The designation has a trademark and will be indicated by a logo on the label.

Suitability Requirements

Industry experts have developed standards and a consensus as to requirements for products to be considered suitable for use on wool. Wool Balance accepts those standards including the following:

- No optical brighteners
- No oxidizers
- No reducing agents
- The pH of ready-to-use solutions will generally be between 3.0 and 8.0. Total alkalinity or acidity should not be excessive.
- The standard revolves around products being safer for wool. However, dye stability is a variable that requires testing and use of special procedures and products. Use of Wool Balance products does not guarantee that there will be no dye stability issues.

Performance Requirements

Products selected to carry the Wool Balance logo must not only be suitable for use on wool but perform their respective functions at the highest levels. Ingredients that do not contribute to the performance will not be included.

- No artificial dyes which, especially in concentrated form, could discolor face yarns if misused or in the event of an accident
- No strong fragrances. Fragrances can create residue issues and also can result in covering up an issue without solving the source of the problem. A rug purist would appreciate the natural odor of wool and not some masking fragrance.
- Formulas should leave no soil attracting residue when used according to the label directions. Cleaning solution should be free-rinsing. For example, we decided not to approve shampoos whose primary key ingredient is sodium laurel sulfate. While this surfactant does not result in a re-soiling residue, it is a residue that is hard to rinse out. Sodium laurel sulfate is anionic in nature and has a long history of use in cleaning carpets and rugs. It is no longer necessary as there are excellent non-ionic surfactants which provide foam for lubrication, rinse easily and provide superior cleaning on oils.
- Fiber protectors must be effective against the most serious soiling threat to wool rugs. This is damage from organic and synthetic dyes found in many foods and beverages. Professional cleaning can remove dry soils and oily soils. Dye stains are a greater challenge. So, Wool Balance protectors must have a great stain resistance. Approved Wool Balance protectors will have acid dye resistors to limit staining of wool.