How to Remove Pilling from a Patagonia Sweater

Three things in life are certain: death, taxes,...

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INTRODUCTION

Three things in life are certain: death, taxes, and sweater pilling.

Those little fuzz balls are mostly cosmetic and don't affect the performance of your garment, but they can make your favorite sweater look more worn out than it really is. Removing pilling helps restore a cleaner look and can reduce further pilling down the road.

This guide will show you how to safely de-pill your Patagonia® sweater so it stays soft, cozy, and ready for whatever comes next!

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TOOLS:

Sweater Stone (1)
Electric Fabric Shaver (1)

Step 1 — What is pilling?





- Pilling is a natural process where loose fibers on the surface of a garment tangle together, forming small balls or "pills."
- It’s especially common on knit fabrics and garments made from short fibers like wool.
- Pilling happens the most in high-friction areas such as elbows, wrists, underarms or beneath a backpack.
- While pilling doesn’t affect the performance of the garment, it can make it look worn or unkempt.

⚠ Avoiding picking pills off by hand, this can pull out more fibers and worsen the issue.

Step 2 — Garments that tend to pill

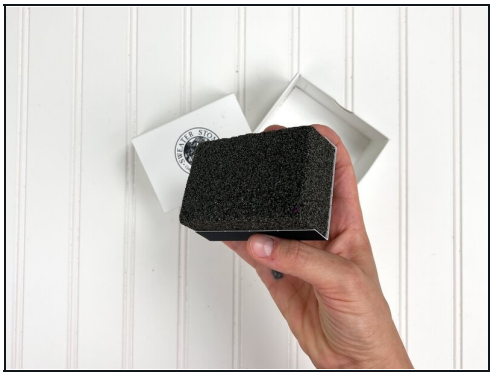




- Some Patagonia® products that are prone to pilling include:
  - The Better Sweater®, a knit fleece made from recycled materials
  - Knit sweaters made of recycled wool or cashmere

Step 3 — Tools to remove pilling







- **Sweater Stone** - Recommended by Patagonia® for being natural and sustainable, the Sweater Stone is a pumice stone with a porous surface that gently removes pills without damaging the fabric.
- **Electric Fabric Shaver** - A great investment for long-term garment care, there are many styles of electric shavers available. Most come with adjustable guards to match different fabric pile heights.

Step 4 — Using a sweater stone



- Lay your sweater flat on a clean surface. Focus on one pilled area at a time.
- Hold the Sweater Stone in one and hand and use the other hand to create tension in the fabric.
- Moving with the grain of the knit, brush the fabric in one direction.
- Repeat in the opposite direction. To prevent snags, don't brush back and forth.

ⓘ The stone will lift pills and may leave behind black dust. This is normal. Shake out the sweater and wipe off any dust or lint.

Step 5 — Using an electric fabric shaver



- Lay your sweater flat on a clean surface. Focus on one pilled area at a time.
- Set the shaver guard to match the pile height of your garment. For the Better Sweater®, you can remove the guard entirely.
- Turn on the shaver, press lightly into the fabric, and move in back-and-forth or circular motions.

ⓘ Pills will collect in the shaver's lint cartridge, which you can empty as needed.

Step 6 — Results



- Compare a de-pilled sleeve to one that hasn't been treated. You'll see a noticeable difference in texture and appearance.
- When done correctly, de-pilling doesn't harm the garment. Both the Sweater Stone and electric shavers are designed to remove only the loose surface fibers. Just be sure to be gentle and follow the above instructions.