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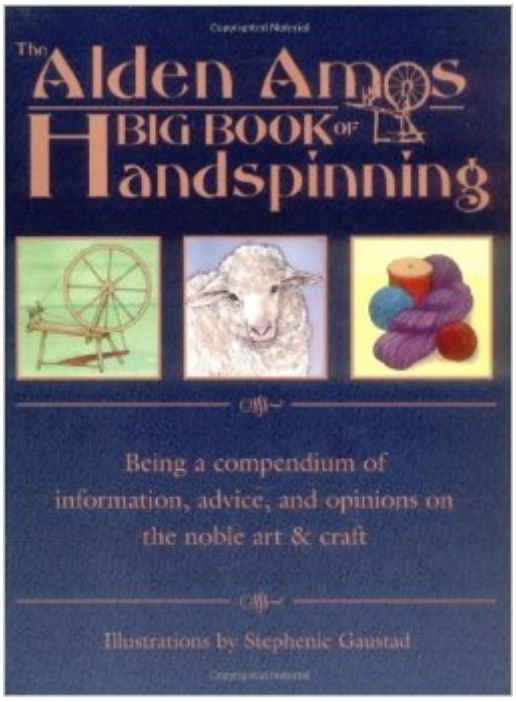
The Alden Amos Big Book Of Handspinning: Being A Compendium Of Information, Advice, And Opinions On The Noble Art & Craft



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Synopsis

Alden Amos shares his deep knowledge of wheel mechanics, spinning fibers, wheel construction, and yarn, as well as a wealth of spinning history and traditions. Every aspect of handspinning is explored, including dissolving lanolin, washing fleece, rotating wheel position, and choosing types of wool. Also discussed are various hand positions, which can result in everything from smooth, fine thread to funky, bulky yarn.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book should be read with a critical eye. Some of the information in it is flat-out wrong. One example (not the only one by far, but a potentially disastrous one) is that Mr. Amos recommends winding off a drop spindle by hanging it from the ceiling and then routing the yarn down to a chair and through the top rail of the back, so that the yarn pulls off the end of the spindle. Please do not do this. Every time the yarn comes off the spindle tip, a twist will be added or removed, depending on how you've wound the yarn. This is the same principle that a Great Wheel works on. On some yarns, the extra or reduced twist won't matter. On others, it can either unspin it until it drifts apart, or twist it until it starts kinking. At the very least, winding off the end is inviting tangles and frustration. Drop spindles are best wound off from the side.Besides incorrect information, there are also a number of omissions in the book. My personal favorite (again, not the only example by far) is when Mr. Amos is discussing umbrella swifts. He states that plans to build one are included later in the book. The book has no plans for any yarn swift, umbrella or otherwise.The book is poorly laid out. Information on equipment is spread between 3 or 4 places at least. Similar with discussion of twist

and related properties. On the other hand, the break between chapter 4 (Determining Character of Yarn) and chapter 5 (Accurate Measurements) seems completely arbitrary. Mr. Amos also has an annoying, and perhaps unethical, habit of plugging his own products -- without noting that they are his. He also often goes out of his way to avoid mentioning a competitor by name (i.e.

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