

Get the Best from Your ***Majacraft Aura***



Fiberygoodness

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Majacraft Aura

Tips and Tricks to help you get to know your wheel

This tutorial was created to go with the Fiberygoodness live broadcast in which we shared our tips for getting the best out of your Majacraft Aura. This session included the FiberyGoodness Team members Arlene Thayer, Jan Massie, Evanita Montalvo, and Suzy Brown, and our special guests Andrew and Glynis Poad of Majacraft. You can still view this session by following [this link to the recorded version!](#)

You might also find [Suzys video on how to set up your Aura](#) very useful too.

You are probably used to a wheel with one pulley and one drive band. The Aura has two of each. It is not a pure double drive wheel though, it has a wonderful modification on this system in the extra ‘adjuster’ that allows you much more control over your take up and twist, and therefore your spinning. This is a good thing! It makes your wheel perfect for spinning artistic yarns that require you to stop and start and to keep your hands on your fibre. It also makes it a wheel that will allow you to go from one extreme, such as lace weight:



Image credit: Evanita Montalvo

To another extreme, such as super bulky or textured:



There are only two things you need to worry about when spinning, on ANY wheel:

1. Tension and Take up
2. Amount of Twist

These two things, and the relation between them, determine your yarn.

You can adjust for them in several ways; altering your treadling speed, your drafting speed, or the easiest way, by adjusting your wheel.

The Aura Tension: Take up

When I refer to ‘take up’ what I am talking about is the speed at which your yarn is taken onto the bobbin, this can be felt as the strength of the pull against your fingers from the wheel as you spin. On the Aura and Overdrive, adjustments to the black band (the Bobbin drive band) results in changes to the strength with which the yarn is taken up onto the bobbin

When the black band is loose it allows for slippage and reduces the uptake. Ideal for finer yarns. You need as little tension as possible for spinning very fine lace weight yarns.

Loosen your tension by:

1. winding the adjuster knob out so there is no gap
or
2. lowering the entire spinning head

Most of the time you probably only need to make sure your adjuster is all the way in, however if you still get too much pull it might be time to lower the spinning head on your wheel. Please refer to Suzys Aura video for close ups on how to do this. It is quick and easy to achieve, and even if you are not going from thin to thick (or vice versa) extremes in your spinning you should be familiar with how to do this, as your drive band stretches over time or your spin head moves from travelling in the car etc, it is very useful to know how to set it up again the way you like it.

Generally, if you already had your spin head at the right height, you should get plenty of range in the adjustments you can make to your tension with the adjuster knob, found on the right side of the spin head. Think of this knob as being very much like the ‘brake’ on a Scotch Tension wheel or on the Irish Tension bobbin lead wheels too, it functions in much the same way.

When the black band is tight, there is less/no slippage on the bobbin drive and the uptake will be stronger and faster (for the given groove the black band is in). You can tighten it by:

1. Adjusting the tension knob to increase the gap between the adjuster block and the wheel

or

2. Raising the spinning head

If you are spinning very thick or textured yarns you will most likely want to increase the tension and take up. When spinning bulky it is easy to end up over twisting the yarn because it is so thick, increasing the speed at which it gets onto your bobbin will reduce the time when it can pick up more twist, so make sure you have enough tension to help you do this. If you are finding you want to ‘push’ the yarn onto the bobbin you may find increasing your tension will give you a lower twist yarn and easier spinning.



For general spinning tension, you shouldn't need to raise or lower the spin head frequently, but you do need to have it at a suitable height to allow the range of adjustment you want with the adjuster knob. Various combinations of spin head

height together with the use of the tension adjuster should give you all the variables you need to spin anything from lace to super bulky. In practice you can probably leave your spinning head in one position and get all the adjustment you need with the adjuster knob and pulley groove choice, only moving the head up or down for the more extreme yarn variations.



The Green Belt: Adjusting the Amount of Twist

The Aura has a number of grooves in the pulleys, these give you adjustment options for controlling the amount of twist that is going into your yarn.

Twist is controlled by how long you allow it to build up in the yarn before feeding it onto the bobbin.

If your yarn is getting over-twisted (when it kinks up too much, or just gets ‘hard’) then you need to increase the speed with which it is going onto your bobbin, or decrease the amount of twist that can build up in during the time it takes to move from your hand to the bobbin.

If it is falling apart with not enough twist, or being pulled out of your hands and breaking before it can gather enough twist, then you need to increase the amount of twist and let more twist build up in the yarn between your hands and the bobbin.

The Aura has a flyer drive band as well as a bobbin drive, so you can better control the speed at which your yarn gets onto the bobbin as well as how strongly it is pulled onto it by the bobbin. Remember that as on any wheel, adjustments relate to the different speeds of the flyer and the bobbin, so what you are doing is changing that difference to alter the amount of twist that can be built up on the yarn.

(Using the Whorls on the flyer drive (Green band) to control twist.

The smaller whorl causes the flyer to rotate faster around the bobbin core and so more twist in your yarn.

The larger whorl will rotate the flyer more slowly around the bobbin so there will be less twist added to your yarn.

The middle whorl will give you a medium speed.

Using the Tension (Bobbin drive) in combination with the speed (Flyer drive) will get you the yarn you want.

Lace: Requires a slower take up and time for twist to enter the fiber
Green band in the middle or smallest groove
Black band should have plenty of ‘play’ in the smaller groove
No, or just a small gap between the adjustor and the wheel

To spin fine and lacey you need the least amount of tension on the black band, so if you cannot get it light enough you can move the entire head lower to further reduce the tension on the black band.



(Above image courtesy Evanita Montalvo)

Bulky - requires a faster and stronger take up with less twist

Black band tight and on the larger groove

Green band in the medium or largest groove

Use your adjuster as required to increase the pull strength and make sure your super bulky yarn is wound onto the bobbin before it can build up too much extra twist.

If you cannot get enough tension on the black band even with the adjustor wound out you can raise the entire spin head to increase that tension.

Medium weight and thickness yarns will require settings in between the two extremes of Bulky and Lace, most usually the middle whorl for the green belt



and the larger one for the black belt, with plenty of adjustment variations on that using your adjuster knob. If it is not getting enough take up, or too much, despite adjusting the tension with the adjuster knob all the way in or out, you should alert the height of the head to find your own 'sweet spot' to spin at.

Tips and Tricks (Wheel Hacks)

What follows are some tips and tricks shared during the fiberygoodness.com broadcast that you might find useful to try out.



Tubing on the guide! If you are spinning a lot of very textured yarns or coils and beehives you might want to try sliding some light plastic tubing over the yarn guide on the flyer arm of your Aura or Overdrive flyer. Warming the tube in hot water or in your hands will help make it easy to slide on. The tube is smooth and wider than the wire guide so will prevent fibre building up and catching on that angle around the guide. Please keep in mind that this will alter the carefully balanced Majacraft flyer! However for the purposes of spinning bulky yarns with a slower flyer speed required it will not make a big difference to the balance.

Tilting your head for long draw and Nply.

Because your Aura has the adjustable spinning position, you can easily move your orifice to the left or right to allow yourself greater movement. For spinning long draw this means you can get a longer draw (draft) by moving the head to a position away from your hand so you can draft away from it much further than if you had it in the upright position. This will create less arm strain as you do not need to draw your arm so far backwards to get the same amount of yarn.

You can also do this (probably in the opposite direction!) for Nplying, again allowing yourself more room to pull out the 'loop' of your chain.

Velcro dot on flyer

If you like to stop and start your spinning and are wondering how to stop your fibre unravelling as soon as you let go of it, try sticking a small velcro 'dot' to the front of your flyer - just the rough part is all you need. Then when you stop spinning just sit the end of your yarn across it and it will hold it right there for you till you come back to recommence filling your bobbin!

Spinning the flyer on and off

Did you know you can spin your flyer on and off without having to rotate it? Just hold it steady with the thread ready to take up, treadle the wheel and let the shaft turn inside the thread to tighten up the flyer! Hold the pulley at the back and tweak the flyer to finish tightening. Do the opposite to spin the flyer off, you keep holding the flyer so there is now no chance of it dropping onto the floor (or worse, a treadle!) when it comes loose.

Controlling the Spinning Direction

This is easy on all Majacraft double treadle wheels. Just remember that when you want to spin to the right (Z direction) you start with your right foot up. To spin to the left (S direct) start treading with your left foot up.

Using your Stylus Kit

Remember that when using this Stylus on the Aura you need to remove the Black Band completely, and tilt the head to whichever side is more comfortable for you.

The following is a list of the official Majacraft Accessories to make your spinning life fun and easy, all of which we discussed during our live broadcast and all available in our [FiberyGoodness Majacraft Store](#)

Lace kit (fast whorl, lace flyer, lace bobbin)

Overdrive (Spinning Head, Overdrive Flyer, 32oz/1kg Overdrive Bobbin)

Aura Flyer (Standard on the Aura with Pigtail/Delta orrifice)

Stylus Kit (Stylus and notched bobbin)

Jumbo Bobbins (Standard with the Aura)

Ceramic Guides (Standard with the Overdrive)



We hope you have enjoyed this document and found useful information that helps you get the most out of your Aura!

Many thanks for the tips and tricks contained here which have been discovered and compiled by the Fiberygoodness team:

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Jan Massie

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Suzy Brown