



Powder River County 4-H Showmanship Guide

Revised 6/2017

Acknowledgement: The information for this guide is based on the Montana 4-H publication 5269 *4-H Showmanship Guidelines*.

Judging Criteria

1. Judging should be based on preparation of animals for show, their apparent training, and the appearance and behavior of the participating showperson.
2. Type of animal should not be considered unless it would affect the way the animal should be fitted and shown.
3. Fine or technical points should not be overemphasized to the extent that they are given more weight than an effective job of presenting a clean animal, nor should minor infractions result in the disqualification of a showperson.

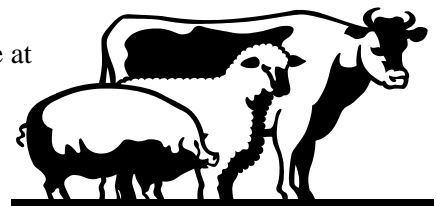
General Guidelines

Competition in livestock showmanship gives you a chance to develop a skill then compete with fellow 4-H members to determine who has best learned the skill.

Showmanship is a skill for showing animals. It is a competitive event and, like sports, requires a lot of practice and learning to become skilled. Grooming and training before showing are very important. Both you and your animal must appear in presentable condition. The style in which you groom animals for a show varies with the breed, species, and personal preference of the owners.

These are a few important things you have to do:

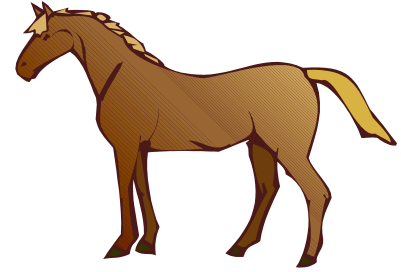
- Wear neat, practical, clean, serviceable clothing. Recommended attire for showmanship is a long sleeved shirt, dark pants, and boots. Long hair should be tied back in a pony-tail or braid.
- Exhibit numbers should be worn on your back or on the front of your shirt.
- A big percentage of showmanship is how well an animal handles, cleanliness and cooperation between the handler and the animal. This takes practice and work long before the fair. It helps to have an animal that is naturally quiet. Being quiet and patient around your animal are very important. The more time and work you put into training the animal, the bigger the returns. By all means, the animal must be clean.
- Trimming and clipping the animal should be done according to the preference of the owner. It makes the animal neater and more presentable. A member should not be penalized for being unable to afford clippers or not having somebody help. The member should seek help and attend training sessions on grooming and the use of grooming equipment.
- Your behavior, attitude, and ability are important. Sportsmanship and temperament are good indicators of a good showperson.
- Proper equipment is a necessity: show sticks and serviceable halters for beef cattle; proper halters for horses; and canes, bats or whips for hogs.
- Be a modest winner and a gracious loser.
- Seven to ten days before the fair, treat the animals as if you were at the show. Use the same water and feed buckets, for example.
- There is nothing wrong with saying “Yes, Sir” or “Yes, Madam” to recognize the judge as an official. If you have questions, ask the ring steward.



HORSES

Grooming Horses

The hair coat should be cleaned, well-brushed and free of dust, dandruff, manure stains, and bots (fly eggs). The hair coat should have a natural luster, so excessive oils from spray cans and other market products will be counted down. Trimming should accentuate the quality of the head and legs.



Feet and Legs: The hair around the fetlock joint is trimmed to give the legs a neater/cleaner appearance. The legs may be clipped from just below the knees and hocks to the hoof head. Run the clippers with the natural lay of the hair. Clipping a couple of weeks before show time will allow the hair to grow enough to eliminate clipper marks and contrasting shades of color.

Head and Neck: The front and edge of the ear should be trimmed, or the inside of the ear may be clipped clean. (The hair inside the ear is there for a purpose). Either method is acceptable. The whiskers and long hair around the muzzle and under the jaw should be trimmed. The horse's mane may be roached or left long. The length and fullness of the mane should complement the horse and should be trained to fall properly on one side or the other of the neck and should be even in length. Thinning the mane is the preferred method of evening the length of the mane, pulling the longest hairs. If shown with a mane, an appropriate bridle path should be clipped. A good rule of thumb is for the length of the bridle path to equal the length of the horse's ear.

Tail: The tail should be neat and clean. Tail length is a personal preference but should be trimmed and thinned to fit the horse. The hair is pulled, working on the longest hairs and mostly on the underside of the tail.

Hooves: The hooves should be clean, properly trimmed, and shaped. No preference will be shown for hoof dressing or coloring.

Tack: Tack should be neat, clean, and properly adjusted. Tack should complement, not detract, from the horse. No preference shall be shown for elaborate, expensive tack.

Showing Horses

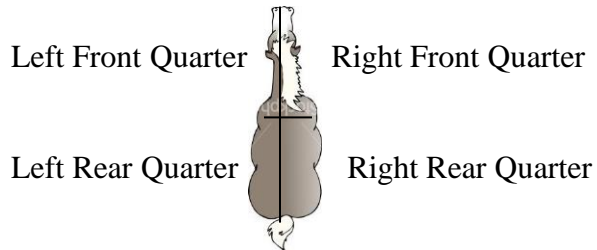
Manners and actions in handling the horse reflect the amount of time and effort you spent in training. An unwilling or unruly horse indicates poor or little training. Work calmly and quietly. Be alert for instructions from the judge or ring steward.

Always lead from the left side with the lead shank held in the right hand about 12 to 18 inches from the halter. Hold the excess shank with the left hand either folded in a figure 8 or hanging free without touching the ground. Walk briskly and business-like with your shoulder just behind the horse's throatlatch and the horse's head about an arm's length to the right of your shoulder.

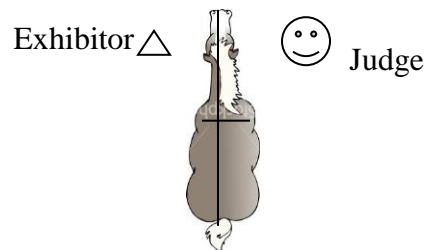
Enter the ring by leading the horse on the left side and circle the ring in a **counterclockwise** direction. Lead at brisk walk, looking at the judge every 5 or 6 steps. Line up in a straight line as directed by the ring steward. Leave at least 10 feet between horses for safety and be sure the horse is standing square on all four feet. Set your horse's feet using the halter (do not change hands on the lead). Do not touch the horse to set it up. Stand so that you can see your horse and the judge. Stand at the front, slightly to one

side of the horse, pointing your toes toward the horse's shoulder. Never stand directly in front of the horse.

You will stand so that your position does not interfere with the judge's view of the horse, using the "Quarter System". In this system, the horse is divided into quarters with a line lengthwise down the horse's back and horizontally at the girth.

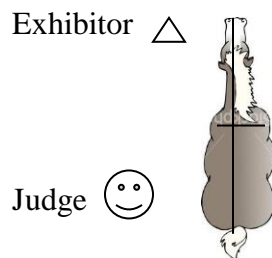


If the judge approaches the horse on either of the front two quarters, you stand on the opposite side of the horse as the judge. For example, if the judge approaches the head of your horse from the right, you should stand on the front and left of your horse.



If the judge approaches from the left front, reverse the procedure. When you change sides, move quickly and smoothly, but don't overdo. Keep the lead rope under the horse's chin and do not change hands on the lead rope.

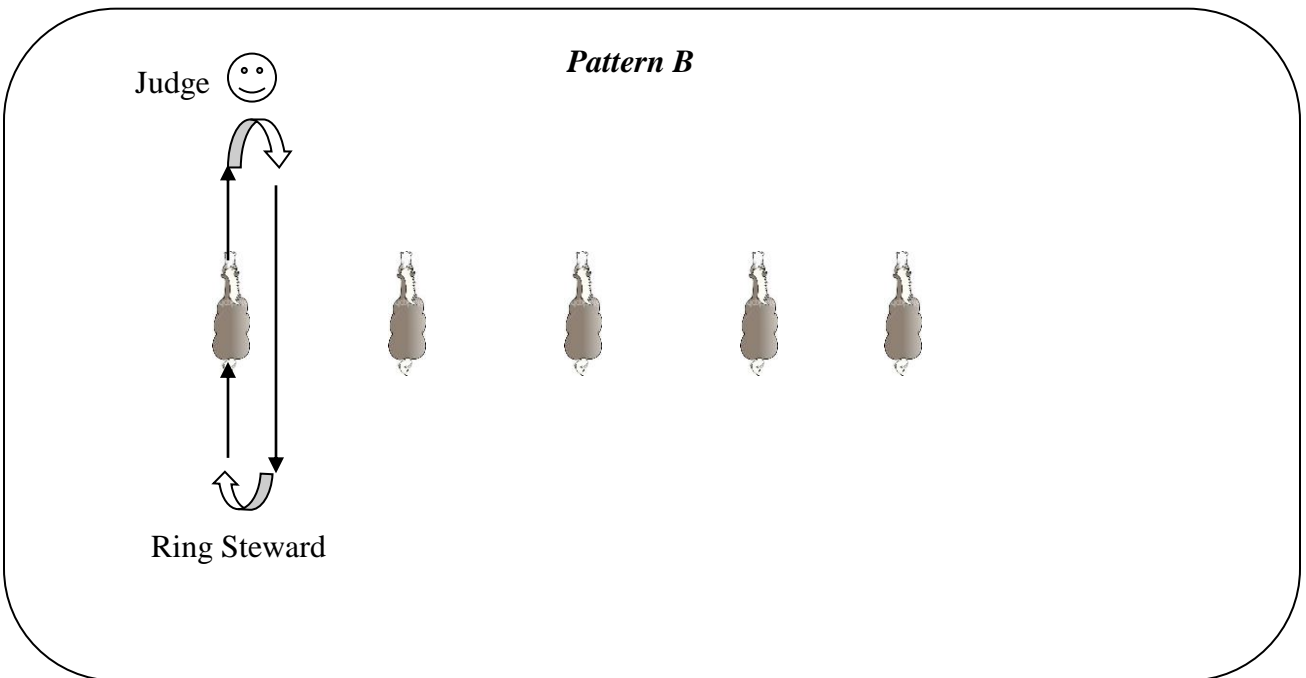
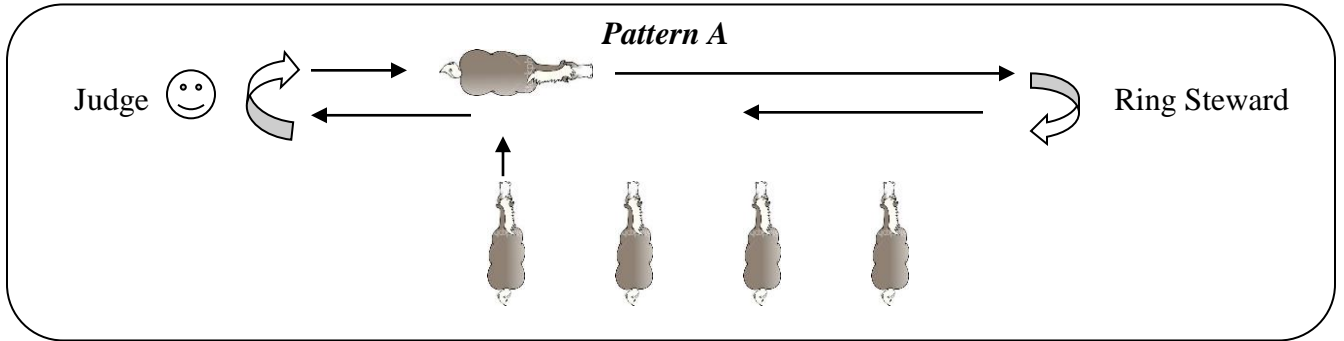
If the judge approaches your horse from one of the rear quarters, you stand on the same side as the judge. The judge still has a clear view of your horse in this position and also can see you. If judge moves from a rear quarter to the front quarter, crossing the girth-line of the horse, you move from the same side as the judge to the opposite side of the judge.



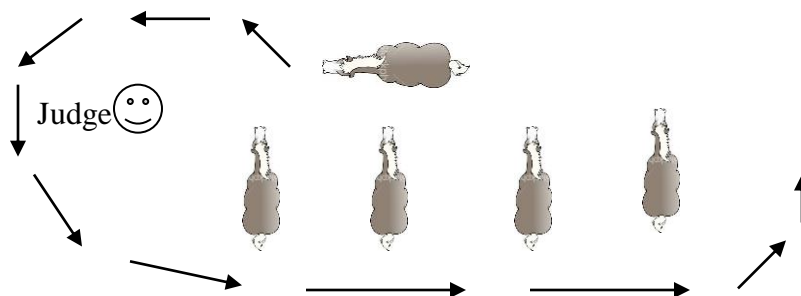
When your horse is in place, step back a foot or so, holding the lead approximately 2 feet from the halter. Do not let the horse go to sleep or cock a foot, but do not throw dirt or wave your hat. This draws attention to yourself. If your horse steps out of position, get it back as quickly as possible. If you have to reposition your horse, back it out of line and reposition it with the least possible disturbance. If your horse becomes uncontrollable, you may ask the ring steward to be dismissed.

Be ready and prompt when called. Unless otherwise instructed, lead to the judge at a brisk walk, then pause, turn your horse away from you so it faces directly away from the judge (always turn your horse to the right unless the turn is less than 90 degrees). Lead straight away at a brisk walk to show how your

horse travels. Look forward, but check over your shoulder once to be sure you are leading in a straight line. When you reach the turning point, stop your horse, hesitate (no longer than 2 seconds), make a right turnabout on the haunches then walk or trot as instructed in a straight line back to the judge. Stop 6 feet from the judge and set your horse up.



Back the horse as directed by the judge by turning to face the horse and back the horse straight back for about 10 feet then lead the horse forward. Changing hands on the lead to back the horse is optional. Pick up the horse's feet as directed by the judge. Answer the judge's questions concerning parts of the horse, feeding, diseases, and unsoundnesses of horses. When dismissed by the judge, lead around the judge. Do not lead between the judge and other horses. Re-enter the lineup from the rear.



If the judge asks you to move your horse to another position in the line, back it out promptly and lead it to the new position. Remember, you always lead from the left side of your horse, regardless of where the judge is positioned. If you must lead in close to another horse, speak to your horse first. If one is led beside your horse, speak to your horse so it will not be surprised.

If the judge touches your horse, smooth the area the judge touched with your hand after the judge steps back (even if it doesn't look like anything changed), then smoothly return to your standing position.

Picking up Feet

Front Feet: Hold the lead rope short enough in your left hand to hold your horse still. Then place your left hand on the shoulder of the horse to steady yourself and have a feeling of the horse. Run your right hand down the horse's left front leg and pick up the foot. Hold it long enough for inspection by the judge; release the foot gently to the ground. When picking up the right front foot, move to the off side of the horse, reverse the positions of your hands and repeat the procedure.

Hind Feet: Stand close to the left side of your horse and hold the lead rope in the left hand tightly enough to hold the horse's head steady. With your left hand holding the lead rope, place your left forearm along your horse's back. Keep your lead rope under your elbow for leverage. Run your right hand down the back of your horse's left hind leg. Begin well up on the hindquarter to relax your horse. Pick up the foot and hold the judge's inspection; release the foot gently to the ground. To pick up the right hind foot, move to the off side, reverse the position of your hands and repeat the procedure on that side.

Note: It is preferred that both front and hind feet be picked up on the near side first before the contestant moves to the off side.

BEEF CATTLE

Grooming Beef Cattle

Decide whether or not to clip the head. If it would look better, clip it. Steers and polled animal usually have their heads clipped. Clip closely and smoothly a week or 10 days before the fair. Blend in at the throatlatch. Trim from the top down until you are experienced. Beginners should always clip with the hair rather than against it. Clip the long guard hairs short to the belly to make the animal look trimmer and taller.

Trim the long hairs off the back of the hocks to emphasize a sound, straight, correct leg. Clip the brisket with the hair to avoid leaving jagged edges. Don't clip to the skin. Blend in at the throatlatch. Begin clipping the tail at the point above the switch where the twist begins to break. Blend the hair on the tailhead into the rest of the body with the use of scissors, comb and clippers.

Trim the long guard hairs on the backline to emphasize straight lines and a level back. Clip deeply enough to straighten the topline and add length to the back, but leave enough hair to still look natural. Feel for the base of the crest as your forward limit.



Decide whether to clip the ears. Study your animal and decide which way would be most attractive. Leave the hair that grows inside the ear.

Wash your animal several times, but always have it dry at showtime. Be sure to use a mild diluted soap. Rinse thoroughly. Never show the animal wet, dirty or full of oil. Dress your animal for the last time early enough for the hair to dry.

Only a comb that fits in your pocket should be taken into the ring. Keep the teeth of the comb toward you.

Showing Beef Cattle

Quiet! Calm! Alert! But show every second! This applies to both you and your animal. Plan ahead; show your animal to its best advantage. Divide your attention between your animal and the judge- nothing else!

You lead into the ring **clockwise** with the lead strap in your right hand and a show stick vertically in your left hand, with the stick 2 to 4 inches off the ground. The showperson never walks backward when leading a beef animal. Always turn the animal to the right when leading or turning. Line up the animals as directed by the judge or ring steward. Don't crowd the exhibitor next to you, but don't leave enough space for another animal when you lead into a side by side position. Animals must remain squarely in line. Angling your animal hurts its appearance.

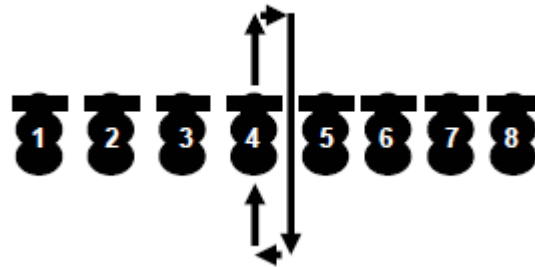
When posing your animal change hands with both the show stick and the lead strap (lead strap in left hand, show stick in right). This change should be done with a minimum of effort, smoothly and quickly. Practice will help perfect this movement. Give the judge a clear view of animal at all times. Safety is of utmost importance. Your place is on the left side of the head and shoulder- never directly in front or on the right side of the head and shoulder.

Never stretch a beef animal. Have all four feet squarely under each corner of the body when standing. Use a show stick for setting all four feet. Keep the back up and the tail head level. Use your show stick to keep the back up. Rub the animal with your show stick when necessary. Never rest your stick on the ground. Keep the head up but never high enough to put the back down. Chain rattling is discouraged.

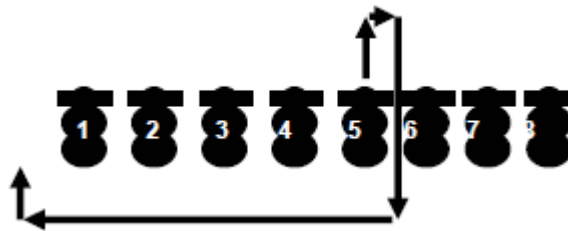
Never attract attention to yourself. It's your animal you are showing. In your most natural way, show your animal and yourself to the best advantage. The judge may ask you questions related to the parts of your animal, feeding, cuts of meat, industry, etc.

When the judge asks you to move out of line or if your animal is out of position, lead the animal forward, turn clockwise and lead back through the line and turn whichever way is necessary to get to your new position in the line (always turn to the right unless the turn is less than 90 degrees).

To reposition your animal in line:



To lead into a new position:



Be quick and quiet in following instructions to move your animal. Be polite. Use a clean, correctly adjusted halter. If it is too high, it squeezes the eyelids, but if it is too low it give a long-faced appearance. A 4-foot lead is long enough, but make sure the lead is on the left of the animal's head. Preferably, let the lead rope or strap hang, but never let it touch the ground.

Keep the hair coat touched up with your comb. Touch up only disturbed hair after handling by the judge. Give the judge an opportunity to step away from the animal before re-grooming.

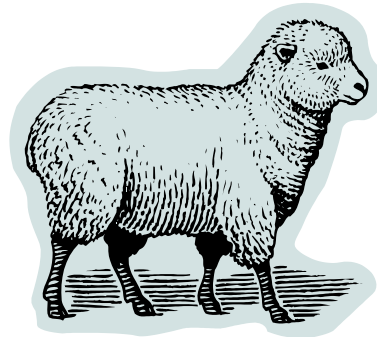
Keep showing until the entire class has been placed, the judge has given reasons and you have left the ring. Be a modest winner and a gracious loser.

SHEEP

Grooming Sheep and Lambs

Trim the feet so they stand correctly. Keep them trimmed. Trim the feet at least 7 days before showing (polish on feet is optional).

Shear market lambs 4 to 6 weeks before the fair. Slick shearing is allowed. Clean by carding and clipping, picking with your fingers. Use a damp cloth to wash the inside of the ears. Do not get water in the ears.



Shorn market lambs may be washed but should be done far enough ahead of the fair to allow the natural lanolin to return to the fleece. Smooth the shear marks, clip and blend in the legs, ears, and other parts of the body.

The wool breeds (Targhee, Rambouillet, and Columbia) are usually never washed. The mutton breeds may be washed, but far enough ahead of the fair to allow the natural lanolin to return. Wool breed breeding sheep are shown unshorn. Mutton breeds may be shown shorn or unshorn.

Avoid a brushed appearance over the fleece. Dampen the fleece before trimming. Clean the feed, hay, burs, dung-locks and sweat-locks out of the fleece. Clip them as a last resort, or blow them free from the wool. Do not color the wool.

Trimming the sheep fleece means pulling up the wool fibers with a wool card, then clipping them smoothly to the body contour with sheep shears. A good job requires several repeats. The more time you spend on it, the better the job. A gunny sack or canvas blanket will keep the fleece clean until show time and help bring out the lanolin. Tie it on snugly, not tightly, with cotton twine.

Last minute jobs: 1) Clean the feet. Wash, if necessary. 2) Clean the bedding from the fleece. Your fingers are the best. Don't forget the belly. 3) Check the dock and hindquarters. Wipe the eyes and muzzle clean and inside the ears.

Showing Sheep and Lambs

Never enter the ring with a halter or blanket on your sheep. Show your animal with its feet squarely under the body, back straight and head level. Keep it under control and never lose your animal. If you do lose your animal, don't panic. The ring steward will assist you.

Enter the ring moving **clockwise**, leading the sheep from the left side unless otherwise instructed by the ring steward. Hold the animal with a firm left hand grip on the skin, not the wool, under the chin. Line the sheep up as directed by the judge or ring steward. Don't crowd the exhibitor next to you; but don't leave enough space for another animal when you lead into a side-by-side position. Keep your animal in line and not at an angle.

To pose the sheep, squat (do not kneel) next to the sheep. Front feet may be best placed by grasping the front leg and setting the leg where you want it, or lift with your hand under the brisket strongly enough to clear the ground with both feet. Hind feet may be placed in either of two ways: 1) By holding the head and pushing or pulling toward or away from the wrong-positioned foot, or 2) By lifting the off-position foot by hand. Keep one hand under the chin and reach under the lamb to place the foot. If you are on the

left side of the lamb, you would keep your left hand under the chin and use your right hand to place the foot.

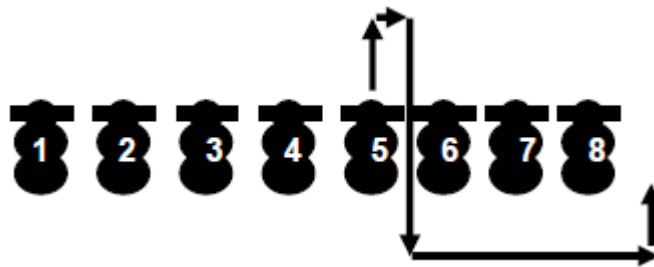
The exhibitor stands next to the head of the sheep, facing the sheep's head, holding the sheep under its chin. Sheep should be posed with feet moderately spread but tucked enough so the back does not sag. Hold the muzzle down to raise a low back or press back on the brisket with your knee. A slight touch to the belly will raise the gut of sway-backed lambs.

The exhibitor should stay on the opposite side of the sheep from the judge. When standing on the left side of the sheep, the left hand should be under the chin. When standing on the right side of the sheep, the right hand should be under the chin. Switch sides briskly, moving in front of the sheep while switching hands under the chin.

If the judge approaches the sheep from the rear, move to the front of the sheep and grasp the sheep's head with both hands. Brace your knee against the sheep's breast as the judge feels your animal. A bending of the holder's knees and a slight downward pull on the sheep's head will control an animal that has been worked with and properly trained for showing.

Training counts when you are asked to move your lamb. Take a firm hold of the skin under the jaw with the left hand. Your animal should be trained to move with a slight tug on the jaw. A touch on the back of the head behind the ears or a touch on the dock with the right hand may help to start your animal. Never indent or pull on the wool. Your right hand should never rest on the back.

When asked to move your sheep, lead it from the side opposite the judge. Move your sheep out of line, turn the sheep by pulling the sheep's head toward you while switching hands under the chin and continue leading the sheep on the side opposite the judge. Lead back through the line, then go behind the line up to your new position in line. This method will also be used if you need to reposition your sheep if it gets out of place in the line-up.



In your most natural way, show yourself and your animal to the best advantage. Be quick, quiet and calm in handling your animal. Be in complete control at all times and follow instructions of the judge. Always know where the judge is at all times and keep your animal set up.

Always repair disturbed fleece after the judge handles your animal. Do this after the judge has finished touching your animal and move away from the animal. A rag may be carried in your pocket to keep the lamb's face clean. A small wool card may be carried to repair fleece disturbance.

When the judge is at a distance, do not overshadow your animal, but don't let the animal rest. However, stay alert and keep your eye on the judge. Keep showing until the entire class has been placed, the judge has given reasons and you have been dismissed from the ring. Be a modest winner and a gracious loser.

SWINE

Grooming Swine

Feed your pig so that it will be in good physical condition and have the desired amount of finish at fair time. Don't make the common mistake of overfeeding so you have an excessively fat animal.

Handle your pig gently and quietly to win its confidence. One to 2 months before the show, take the pig into a small pen or lot and start training it. Use a cane, bat or small whip. If you use a whip, don't hit the pig excessively. Use it quietly. The whipping sound, made by continuous use, distracts the judge. If you use a cane, you may use it with the crook down or up but not to hook the pig.

First, teach it to move forward by gently tapping it over the back. Then teach it to stop by gently resting the cane across the face, or better yet, hold it in front of the face. The pig is taught to turn to the right or left with the cane by gently pressing or tapping the opposite side of the face. Be patient and repeat the training until the pig responds readily.

Wash your pig during warm weather several times beginning at least two weeks before the fair. Use a diluted soap and water solution. During wet weather, don't wash the animal. Use extra brushing or grooming to clean the animal. Pay special attention to cleaning the ears, feet and eyes.

Groom hair to lie in its natural direction. Frequent and thorough brushing will improve the appearance of the hair coat. Use a stiff brush initially to clean the skin and hair but switch to a softer brush for final grooming.

To give the pig a glossy hair coat, you can apply a small amount of transparent oil, such as mineral oil. Never leave a large amount of oil on the pig. The best way to apply oil is to soak a rag with it and rub it over the pig. If you apply too much oil, you can use a dry rag to rub some off. White areas on dark pigs and white pigs can be dusted with a white powder, which gives the pig a nice appearance. Oil or powder should be worked thoroughly into the hair and should be applied lightly. If the judge touches the animal, his hand should not become oily or dusty. Good washing and brushing will lessen or eliminate the need to use oil or powder.



If the pig's hooves are long, trim them to the desired length. This should not be necessary in market hogs. Trim gradually over a period of time to avoid foot injury.

Carry a small brush into the ring in case the pig becomes soiled on the way to the ring or while in the ring. Before entering the ring, be sure your pig is brushed clean of all bedding and dirt, clean the feet of excess mud or manure, and be ready when your class is called.

Showing Swine

Find out from the superintendent when your pig will be shown so that you will be ready to show when the class is called. When in the ring, keep one eye on your pig and the other eye on the judge; and remember, you are showing your pig to the judge. Be ready to show the animal at the judge's discretion.

Exercising your pigs for a *short time*, a couple of hours before they are shown, makes it easier to show them in the ring.

Always try to keep the pig between you and the judge and stay a reasonable distance from the judge. If your pig passes between the judge and another exhibitor, do not cut between the judge and the other exhibitor; instead, walk around behind the judge to catch up with your pig. Keep your pig moving slowly and provide the judge with different views of the pig. Side and rear views are generally most important for evaluating the animal. The pig should be shown in its natural position which is walking slowly. Therefore, don't attempt to place the animal's foot, arch its back or otherwise pose the animal. Avoid pushing, hitting or hooking the animal to make it move or pose.

Try to show your pig with a distance of 10 to 20 feet from the judge. However, if the judge makes a close-up inspection, control your animal so that the judge can do this to his satisfaction. Remain alert and continue showing until the entire class has been placed, the judge has given his reasons, and you have been dismissed from the ring. Be courteous and fair to others in the competition. Present a neat, clean, attentive appearance. Be a modest winner and a gracious loser.

GOATS

Grooming Goats

Goats should show condition and thriftiness- showing normal growth- neither too fat or too thin. Hair should be cleaned and properly groomed. Hooves should be trimmed and shaped to enable the animal to walk and stand naturally. The goat should be neatly disbudded if the animal is not naturally hornless. Clip the entire body if weather has permitted, showing allowance to get a neat coat of hair by show time; neatly trim the tail and ears. Three weeks before show time is good. The goat should have a clean body as free from stains as possible with special attention to legs, feet, tail area, nose and ears. A full shampoo the day before the show is a necessity. Dry in the sunshine thoroughly.



Showing Goats

Enter the ring, leading the animal at a normal walk around the ring in the clockwise direction, walking on the left side, holding the collar with the right hand. Exhibitor should walk as normally and inconspicuously as possible. The goat should lead readily and respond quickly. Lead equipment should consist of a collar or small link chain that fits well (no excess hanging down to slip over the head), but also not so tight as to choke the animal.

As the judge studies the animal, the method of leading is to walk alongside on the side away from the judge. Lead slowly with the animal's head held high enough for impressive style, attractive carriage and graceful walk, but not so high as to change a smooth topline.

Pose and show the goat so it is between the exhibitor and the judge. Switch sides by walking around in front of the goat, not crossing behind the goat. Stand, do not kneel, where you can see both the judge and the animal. Pose the animal with its front feet squarely beneath and its hind feet slightly spread. Do not crowd other exhibitors or leave too much space between when leading to a side-by-side position.

To step the animal ahead, use a slight pull on the collar. If the judge is observing the animal and it moves out of position, replace it as quickly and inconspicuously as possible. Always repair disturbed hair after the judge handles your animal. Do this after the judge has finished touching your animal and moves away from the animal.

When asked to move your goat to a new spot in the line-up, lead it from the side opposite the judge. Move your goat out forward out of line, turn and lead back through the line, then go behind the line up to your new position in line. This method will also be used if you need to reposition your goat if it gets out of place in the line-up.

