

## Chapter 15

# Preparing Your Animal for Show

Whether you are showing dairy, meat, pygmy, or utility goats, the keys to preparing your animals for showing are *patience* and *time*.

### Washing and Clipping

Brushing your show animal regularly makes the hair soft and shiny for show time. It removes old, loose hair and stimulates shiny, new hair to grow. All dairy and meat goats should be clipped approximately 7 to 14 days before the show. You want to show off the clean structure of your animal and this gives enough time for clipper marks to not show on the hair coat. Be careful in sunny weather, as some goats are more susceptible to sunburn after they are clipped. If you have never clipped before, practice on an animal that is not going to the show. Most animals do not like to be clipped, so it is better to start at the back and let them get used to the noise of the clippers. Also, trim up your animal's feet if necessary. You do not want to do this right before the show in case you trim too much and cause some lameness.

Approximately one to two days before the show, wash your animal with a mild soap and clip the hair from the udder of your dairy does. You are now ready to go to your show. Make a list of things you need in your show box. At the very least, include the following:

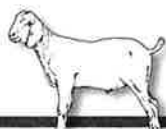
1. Clippers
2. Shampoo
3. Appropriate clothing

4. All animal information, including birth date, sire, dam, and if showing milking animals, date of freshening, number of kids, milk production, and DHI records if available
5. Forks, brooms, and cleaning equipment for the barn

### Showing Your Animal

All goats need to be taught to use a lead and to be set up. This training needs to start several months before showing. First, get your animal used to wearing a collar or a halter, making sure they fit correctly. Setting up your animal or posing your animal for the judge is done by putting its feet directly under its body. If it is a lactating doe, place her rear legs slightly back to show off her udder and her udder attachments. However, do not place them so far back that they look unnatural. Working with your animal a few minutes every day and getting it used to leading and setting up pays off at the show. Remember, the more you work with your animal, the better it will be at show time. Over time, your animals will learn what you want them to do in the show ring. All it takes is practice!

When showing your goat, be well groomed and wear the proper clothing: clothes all white for showing dairy goats, but otherwise, neat jeans or slacks and a button-down or polo shirt; shirt tucked in; no hat; and no brushes or combs in your back pockets. Proper shoes should be worn; do not wear sandals or flip flops into the show ring as there is the chance of your



foot getting stepped on by an animal. On the day of the show, clean the animal's feet, under the tail, inside the ears, and wipe the eyes and nose.

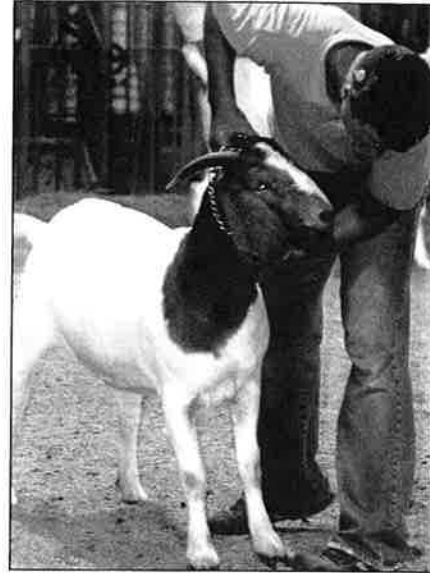
You can show your animals in either animal placing classes or showmanship classes. In animal placing classes, the animal is judged against other animals in its class, based on its conformation. In showmanship, the handler, not the animal, is being judged. Your appearance and knowing how to show your animal are what counts. Being successful in showmanship requires that you work with your animal. Follow these tips for showing your animal:

1. Examine the appropriate scorecard for your type of goat.
2. Wear appropriate clothing.
3. Provide a clean appearance of yourself and your animal.
4. Lead your animal from the left side.



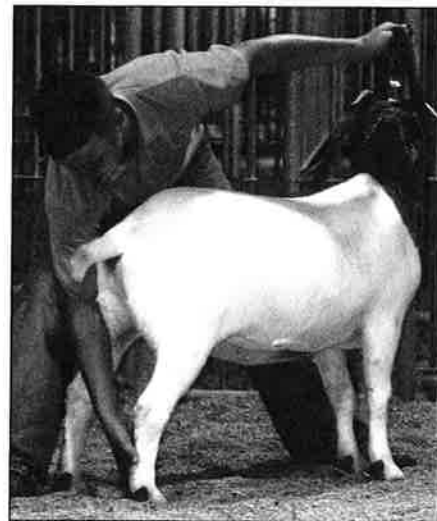
Ohio State University Extension. Special thanks to Lisa Van Horn.

5. Always keep one eye on your goat and one eye on the judge.
6. Keep the animal between you and the judge; if you need to switch sides, go in front of the animal, not behind.
7. Always keep the goat's head up, with its body, neck, and head in a straight line.



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8. Keep enough distance between yourself and the animal in front of you, but do not keep too much space.
9. When you go to set up your animal, make sure its front feet are not in a hole; preferably the front feet are elevated.



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10. As you are presenting your animal to the judge while it is standing still, never pick its front feet off of the ground. Similarly, pushing on the goat's shoulder while pulling its head (i.e., bracing) is discouraged.

