

# Market Goat

## *Showmanship*



*S*ome people are natural showmen, but all exhibitors can learn ways to improve their showmanship skills. Showmanship is the one area of livestock exhibition that gives the exhibitor greatest control of the results.

A good showman has a sense for effectively showing an animal. In meat goat showmanship you will be judged on your ability to control and present the goat to bring out its best characteristics.

Meat goat showmanship can teach many valuable lessons to be used in daily life. These lessons include responsibility and learning how to work to reach a goal. This in turn builds character and increases confidence. You can learn outstanding showmanship skills with hours of practice at home. Advanced planning, practice, and hard work are keys to becoming a good show person.



# Show Preparation

## Training

The time needed to train a goat for show depends on the goat, the size and experience of the exhibitor, and the intensity of training. Some goats are easy to gentle and train for show, while other goats are difficult and nearly impossible to train. Most goats can be trained if you spend enough time and effort.

Unlike lambs, goats are shown with a halter, collar, or chain. Halter breaking is an excellent way to start the gentling process, especially if you have several goats. You can make or buy collars, chains, or inexpensive rope halters.

Goats should be caught, haltered, chained, or collared and tied to a fence. Do not tie the goats where they can hurt themselves, and do not leave tied goats unattended.

After your goat begins to gentle, you can start teaching it to lead. Use the collar, chain, or halter to keep the goat's head up while you teach it to lead. It is best to have someone assist you by pushing the goat from behind whenever it stops. Teach the goat to lead with its front shoulder even with your leg. The goat's head should be in front of your body.

The next step in the training process is to lead the goat and properly set it up. Set up the front legs first, then place the hind legs, keeping the body and neck straight and the head in a high, proud position by using the halter, chain, or collar.

You should stand at all times. Do not squat or kneel.

After the training is complete, you should practice showing. Set up your goat and show it while someone else handles it. You must make sure the goat looks good at all times. If the goat responds

properly, return it to the pen and do not overwork it.

Remember, in a major show, you may have only a short time to actually show your goat. If the goat does not show properly when the judge handles it, you may get overlooked.

## Appropriate Dress

Dress neatly and appropriately for show. Leather boots are preferred for safety and appearance. Wear clean jeans or slacks and shirt. Tuck your shirt in and wear a belt. You should be neat in appearance but not overdressed.

Do not wear a hat or cap in the show ring. Proper planning and neat appearance will make a positive impression on the judge.

## Show Time

Your planning, selection, feeding, fitting, training, and grooming all pay off in the show ring. Your skill in exhibiting your goat in showmanship cannot be emphasized enough. It is often the difference between winning and losing.

You must be mentally and physically ready to enter the show

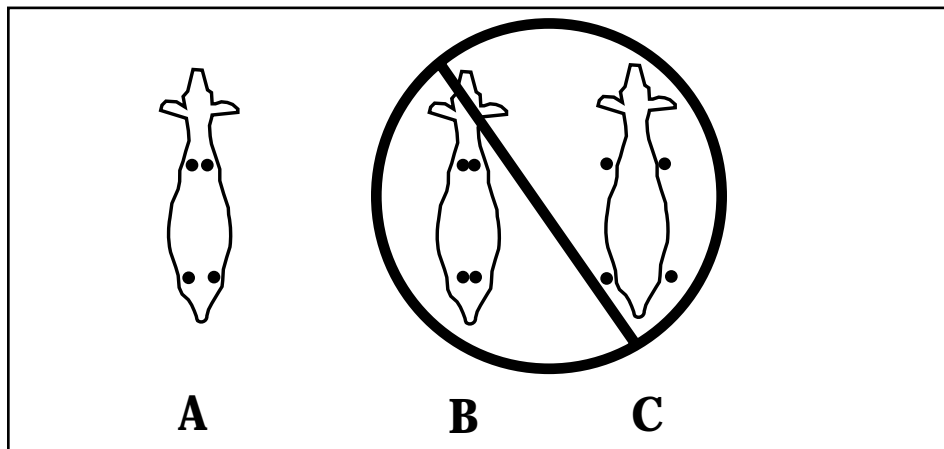
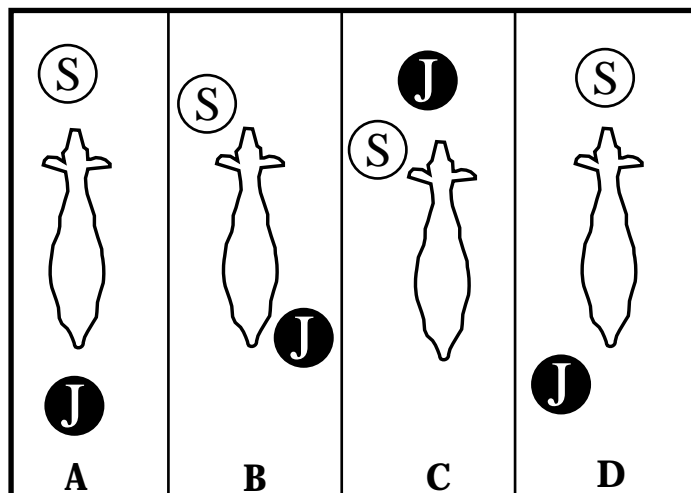


Figure A shows the feet squarely placed beneath the goat. Figures B and C are incorrect.



Provide the judge with a clear view of your goat. "S" stands for showman and "J" stands for judge.

ring for competition. By completing the preparation activities, you should have confidence that you can do an effective job showing your goat.

Before the show, walk over the ring to find the high and low spots on the arena surface. This will help you get the goat set up with the front end uphill rather than in a hole. By setting the goat's front feet uphill you will give the appearance of an extended front end and a longer-patterned animal. When the judging begins, watch the judge if possible and see how he works the goats. You will feel more comfortable and confident if you know what the judge will want you to do.

### In the Ring

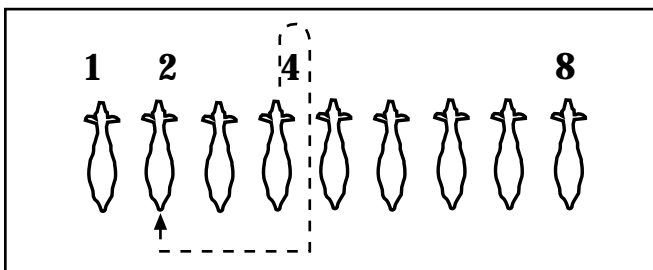
When the appropriate class is called, take your goat to the show ring. Be sure to enter the show ring promptly, leading your goat from the left-hand side of the animal. As the ring steward lines up the goats, set your goat to look its best. Avoid corners of the ring, and leave plenty of space between your goat and others.

Quickly, yet smoothly, set the goat up so all four feet are at the corners of the body and the weight is distributed evenly to all four legs. Keep the body, neck, and head in a straight line with the head up and alert.

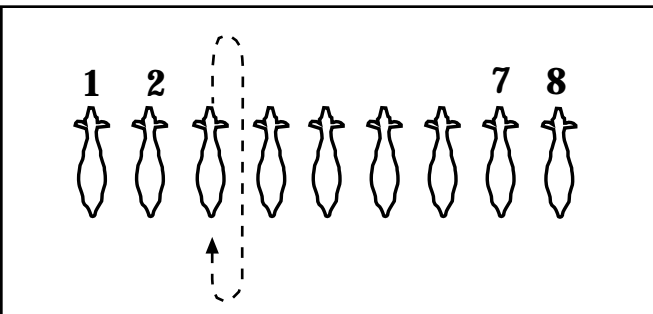
Never place your hand on the goat's back or the base of the neck, because this will hide the judge's view of the goat's top.

To set up, face the goat with your body and hold the head up with your right hand on the collar or lead and your left hand over the head and underneath the jaw.

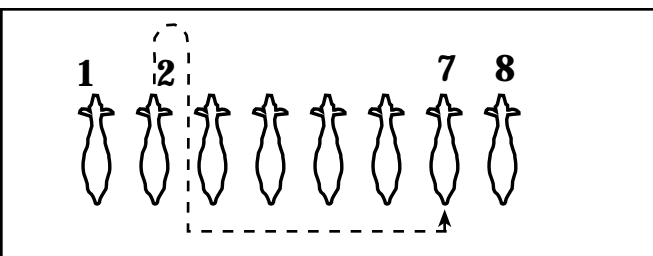
Place your leg in front of the goat, and stay in front while the judge is viewing the goat from the rear. As the judge moves around the right side and to the front of the goat, remain on the left side and then face the judge and step to the side to provide a front view of



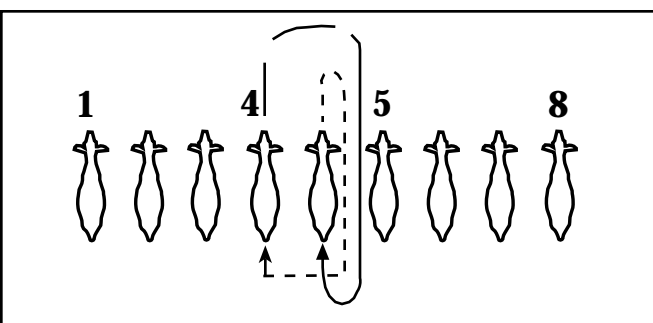
1. How to switch from position 4 to position 2.



2. How to reset up in the same position using position 3.



3. How to go from position 2 to position 7.



4. How to switch from position 4 and 5. 5 would move out first.

the goat. As the judge moves to the left of the goat, move back to the front of the goat to give the judge a full view of the entire animal.

### Handling the Goat

If the judge comes in to handle the goat, be prepared with your leg in front of the goat to keep it from jumping forward, and hold the head straight in line. Do not brace the goat as you would a lamb. This will only tend to make the goat steep out the rump and less desirable in appearance.

As a good showman you must be alert and know where the judge is at all times. Remain calm and

concentrate on showing. Set up your goat and be ready before the judge gets to you. Be careful not to cover your goat with your body and block the judge's view. Always keep your goat between you and the judge.

In large classes it may take some time before the judge handles your goat. Be patient and let your goat relax.

### Finishing the Class

After handling your goat, the judge usually will step back and look at it. Be sure to keep the goat's head up and body, neck, and head in a straight line.

Watch the judge and your goat. It is your responsibility to pay attention to the judge and not miss a decision.

At this point the judge will usually walk the goats and set them up on the profile. Set your goat up as discussed before. Continue to keep it set up, remain

alert, and watch the judge. If your goat is not pulled the first time, keep trying. If your goat is pulled, circle it out of the line and follow the directions of the ring steward while continuing to keep an eye on the judge.

Move your goat with style and at a steady, moderate pace.

Remember to keep showing at all times, because a class is not over until the ribbons are given out. Be courteous to fellow exhibitors. Remain standing at all times, and always have a pleasant facial expression. Be a good sport, a graceful loser, and a humble winner.



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**Publication 2263**

Extension Service of Mississippi State University, cooperating with U.S. Department of Agriculture. Published in furtherance of Acts of Congress, May 8 and June 30, 1914. RONALD A. BROWN, Director

( 250-5-00)