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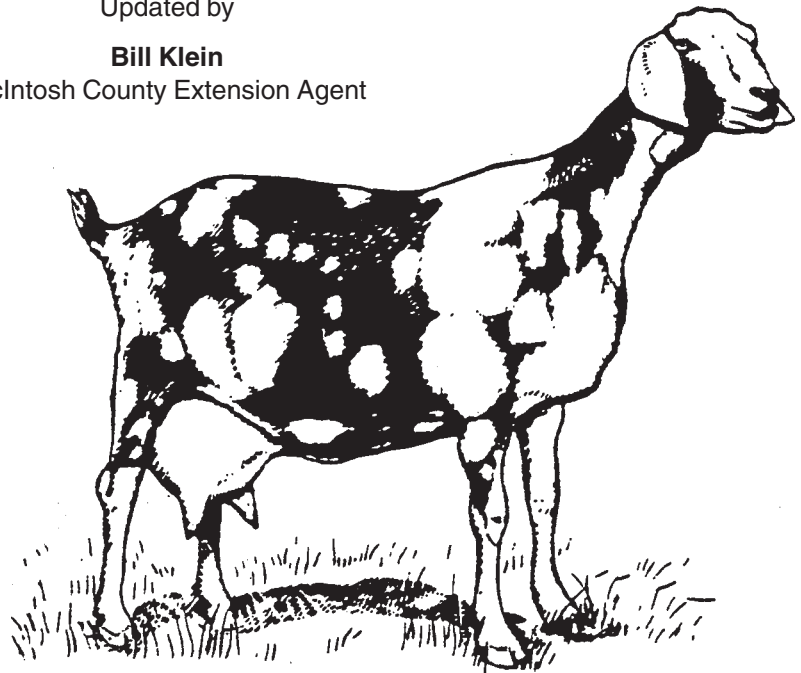


# Goat Showmanship Manual

Updated by

**Bill Klein**

McIntosh County Extension Agent



**NDSU**  
**Extension Service**  
North Dakota State University  
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## Why Show?

A goat show can be an interesting and educational experience. Goat shows can be a positive learning experience for the exhibitor. It can help develop sportsmanship, management skills, the ability to display an animal to its best advantage, and an appreciation of good livestock.

## Getting Ready

There are many things that need to be done once you decide to enter a goat show.

The first decision involves selecting your animals for show. Be selective. Look for animals in your herd that are correct in conformation and in good condition. Select strong and healthy animals. They are better able to withstand the stress of travel and the show.

Read the show rules carefully, fill out the entry form completely, and send it to the specified person before the deadline. If you have questions about the show, contact the show officials. It is a good idea to keep a copy of your entry so that you have a record of the animals entered and their classes. Check the health rules for the show and work with your veterinarian to make sure that you meet the rules.

Take some time to review the parts of the goat. The judge's placings and reasons will be more meaningful if you are familiar with the points on the goat scorecard.



## Fitting

Plan to have your animals groomed and ready to go before the show. There are always some last minute details, but it helps if the time-consuming portions of the job have been done at home.

Trim hooves one to two weeks before the show.

Dairy goats can be clipped from a few days up to two weeks before a show. A number 10 blade is commonly used for clipping the body, while a shorter

blade (number 20 or number 40) can be used on the udder. The entire body can be clipped. Move the clippers against the hair including whiskers, beard, and hair inside the ears and around the tops of the hooves. The hair on the tail is squared off below the last bone in the tail, leaving a triangular tuft of hair at the end of the tail. It is easier, and usually safer, to clip the udder when it is full of milk.

Shear meat goats at least one week to 10 days before the show. This will allow clipper tracks to even out and the pink skin to become less apparent. While shearing, the clippers need to run parallel to the length of the body rather than vertically. Hair below the knees and hocks should not be shorn, and bob the hair at the end of the tail. Small animal clippers may be needed to clip closely around the eyes, ears, pasterns or delicate areas on the goat.

Angora goats, unlike dairy goats are not clipped and they may or may not be washed. Washing removes the natural oils in the mohair.

Bathing goats with a mild shampoo before clipping them helps keep clipper blades sharp. They should be rinsed well after clipping to remove loose hair and dandruff. Newly clipped goats, especially those with light skin, are apt to sunburn and should be provided with shade or a lightweight coat until the hair grows out a little and the skin becomes less sensitive. Newly clipped goats are also sensitive to draft and chills and need to be covered while not in the show ring.

Practicing with your goats at home can result in better behaved animals in the ring. Let your animal become accustomed to other people. Have others run their hand over the neck, withers, back, sides and udder similar to what a judge would do in the show ring.

Chain collars are usually preferred for showing, although narrow leather collars are also used. Fit collars so that you can control your animal's movements in the ring. It is ideal to work with your animal ahead of time until they lead readily and respond quickly to signals. They should move forward with a slight pull on the collar and stop when you pull slightly up and back. Getting your animals used to wearing a collar and teaching them to lead and be tolerant of strangers is important.

Angora goats may be shown without a collar. The animal is shown by holding one horn and placing the other hand on the loose skin under the chin. The fleece should never be grabbed or held to control the animal, younger exhibitors may wish to use the collar.

Horned dairy and meat goats should be dehorned, and goats with large horn spurs should have them removed or neatly trimmed before the show. However, Angora goats should remain horned as dehorning is usually discouraged for this breed.

Ear and tail web tattoos need to be legible in order for an animal to receive credit for championship wins in American Dairy Goat Association (ADGA) sanctioned shows. Readable tattoos are often required in 4-H shows, as well. Animals can be re-tattooed as needed, if the original tattoo can no longer be read. Check with your association for rules and fees.

## ***What to Take to the Show***

Goats are easily transported. They need to be protected from inclement weather. Young animals will travel better if they are separated from adults. Don't forget the registration and health papers. They are usually required before you can participate in a show.

A tack box, especially one that locks, is a convenient way to carry the many small items that are needed at the show. You can make a checklist of items or follow the suggestions below.

### ***Feed and Bedding***

Some shows will have a supply of hay and straw for sale. Check ahead of time for availability before you decide to bring your own. Some exhibitors prefer to bring their own hay to avoid change in the animals diet.

#### **You may need:**

hay	grain feeders
straw	water buckets
grain	bottles and nipples (if taking kids)
hay feeders	salt or trace minerals

## ***Equipment***

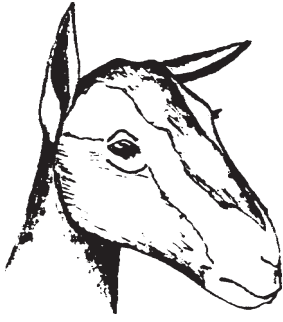
Equipment that may prove useful includes:

- clippers (for touch-ups)
- hoof trimmers
- extra collars
- tie ropes
- livestock shampoo
- short hose (for bathing)
- wash bucket
- towels (to dry animals)
- clean cloths (for cleanups)
- brushes
- portable milking stand
- paper towels
- udder wash
- teat dip
- milk pail
- goat coats (for young and chilly times)
- first aid items; antibiotics, disinfectants, bandages, fly spray
- herd signs (above your pens)
- pitchfork
- rake
- broom
- pliers
- hammer and nails
- scissors
- staple gun
- extension cord



## ***What to Do at the Show***

Unload and settle goats into pens with bedding. Feed and water as soon as they arrive at the show. Provide special care if they have been traveling very far or if the weather is unpleasant. Once the animals are bedded down, take your registration and health papers and check in with the show superintendent. Some shows require health checks before unloading. Your goats may have to be checked by the show veterinarian. They have the authority to dismiss animals from the show if they are sick or appear to have a potential health problem for other exhibitor's animals.



Extra space should be available adjacent to your animals for your equipment and feed. Exhibitors are responsible for care of their animals throughout the show, including clean bedding, feed,

and fresh water, as needed. It usually takes goats a while to settle down into the show routine, especially if they have not been shown before. Walking your goats around the ring before the show starts helps them feel more relaxed when it is time for their class.

Your goats may need to be bathed at the show prior to their classes. Bathe goats during the warm part of the day. Thoroughly dry the animal to prevent added stress from chilling. If the weather is cold or unpleasant, goats can be brushed and spot cleaned with a damp rag, instead of bathing. Most goats will benefit from a final touch-up cleaning with a damp cloth just prior to being shown. This is a good time to double check areas that are hard to keep clean, such as hooves, inside the ears, around the eyes and nose and under the tail.

## *Showing*

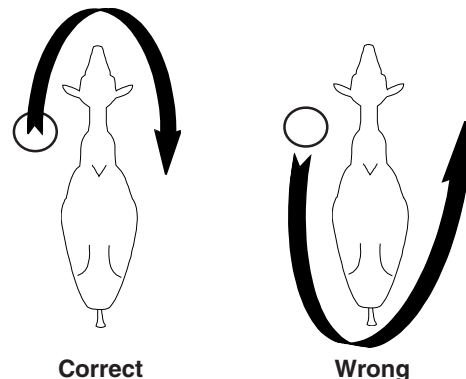
In some shows there is a preset milk-out time which is usually 12 hours before the show starts. Then all does are shown at the same length of time after milking. If not, show your animals with the amount of milk in the udder that looks the best. Letting the udder overflow can weaken udder attachments, stress milk-producing tissue, make it difficult for the judge to determine udder texture. It usually lowers your show placing.

Exhibitors need to wear appropriate clothes to show their animals, such as clean jeans or slacks and a white shirt or blouse. Check your dress code for the show you are attending. Bring goats to the ringside a few minutes before the start of their class. Be ready to enter the ring as soon as the class is called. You will need to know the birth date of each of your animals, the freshening date and number of lactations for milkers.

Watch the class ahead of you to better understand the judge's procedure and preferred method of lining up animals. When it is your turn to enter the ring, lead slowly and gracefully in a clockwise direction. Leave about three feet between your goat and that of other exhibitors when walking around the ring. Leave about two feet between animals when lined up head to tail or side by side. Watch the judge and at the same time be aware of what your goat is doing.

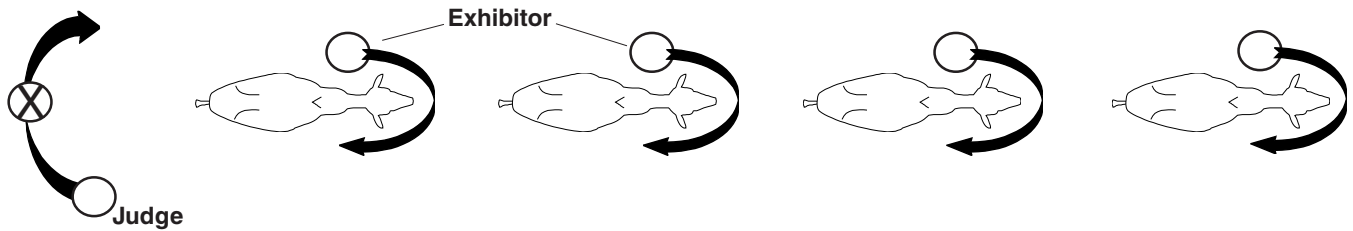
Keep your goat between you and the judge at all times. If you need to change sides, move around the goat's head and change hands on the collar. Keep the collar high on the goat's neck. Hold it in your hand at the top of the neck just behind the ears. This gives you better control over the animal's movements and keeps the head up high enough so that the animal has an attractive carriage.

The goats will be walked around the ring a few times. The judge will ask the exhibitors to form a line with their animals, usually side by side. Set your goat up in line, pose the feet squarely under the body with the hind feet slightly spread. It is usually easiest to set up the hind feet first. Hands can be used as much as need be, however, judges do not like the exhibitor to fuss with the goat. You can move the back feet where you want them by pressing back on the opposite shoulder or by picking up the leg between the hock and pastern and setting it down in the desired position. Goats do not always respond to the shoulder press, or they bunch up in the ring. In these cases, use your hands to set up the animal.

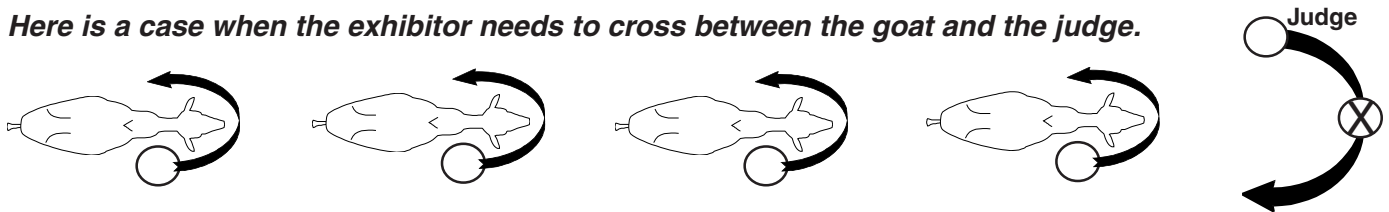


***Cross in the front, never in the rear***

**These illustrations show the exhibitors movements as the judge moves to view from a different side. The exhibitor should cross when the judge is at point. (X)**



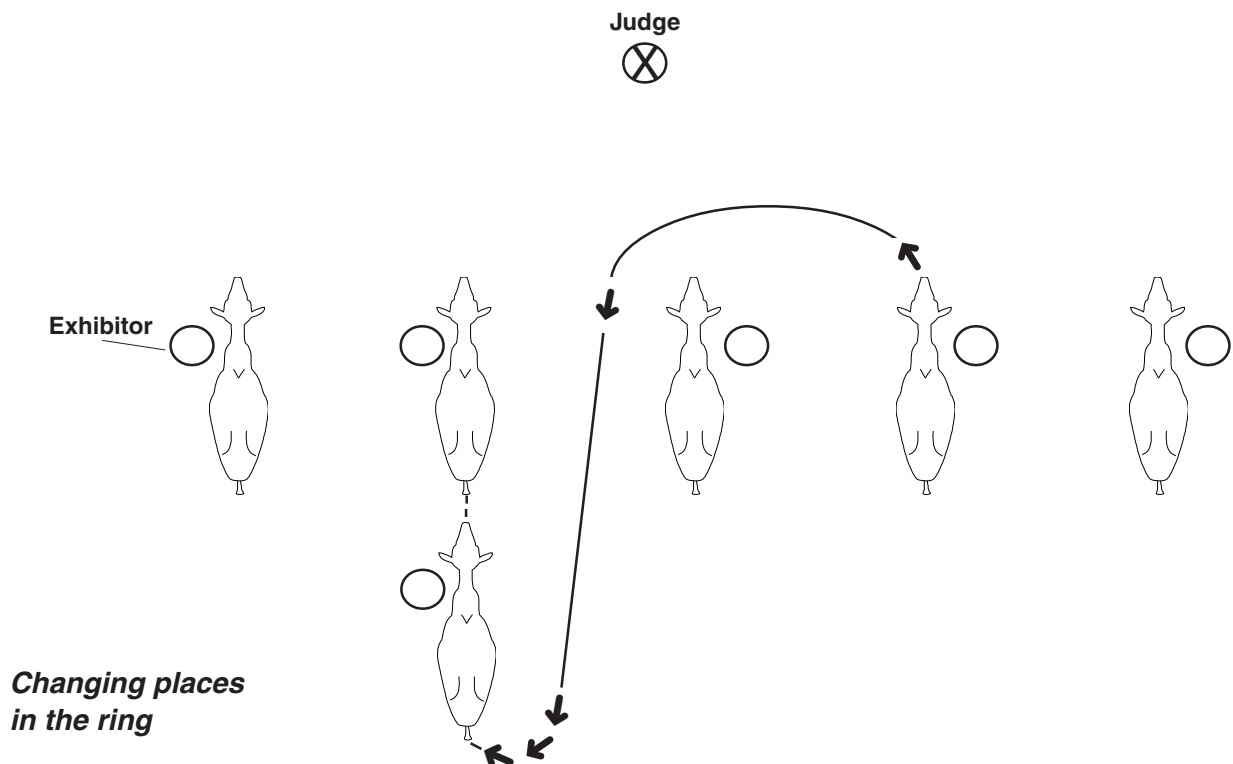
**Here is a case when the exhibitor needs to cross between the goat and the judge.**



Always keep the goat between you and the judge except when needing to cross the goat. Do not cross at the rear of the goat. You can use either hand on the collar, depending on where the judge is standing.

Once your goat is set up, let it be. Keep your hands off the animal as much as possible. Do not draw the judge's attention away from the animal to you. Some exhibitors prefer to squat beside their goat while they are waiting in line. Keep your knees off the ground. Be sure to stand when the judge approaches your animal.

When a judge asks you to change places in a head to tail sequence, lead the animal out of line and up or down the line on the side of the judge. If the judge asks you to change places in a side by side sequence, lead your goat forward out of the line, up or down the line to the place indicated and back through the line. Make a U-turn or turn clockwise to get back into position. Do not back your goat into a different position unless the distance is short.



Be ready to restrain your goat if necessary while it is being examined by the judge. This can be done in two ways:

1. Put your knee in front of the shoulder so it can't move forward.
2. Grasp a front leg between the knee and the pastern and flex the leg back against the chest.

Watch the judge closely, and respond quickly when the judge indicates the placings in the final line up. Be aware of show procedures; first and second place winners in each class are usually expected to remain at ringside to compete for champion. In ADGA sanctioned shows, the judge will check tattoos and the show secretary will check registration papers for all breed champions before they leave the ring.

Conformation of the animal is not considered in showmanship classes. The animal is evaluated on how it is groomed and shown. The secret of good showmanship is to control your animal in such a manner that the judge sees it at its best but never notices you. The judge looks for exhibitors that recognize the conformation weaknesses of their animals and show them effectively to overcome those weaknesses. Exhibitors may be asked by the judge to trade animals to show how well they can handle a different animal.

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## ***Acknowledgements***

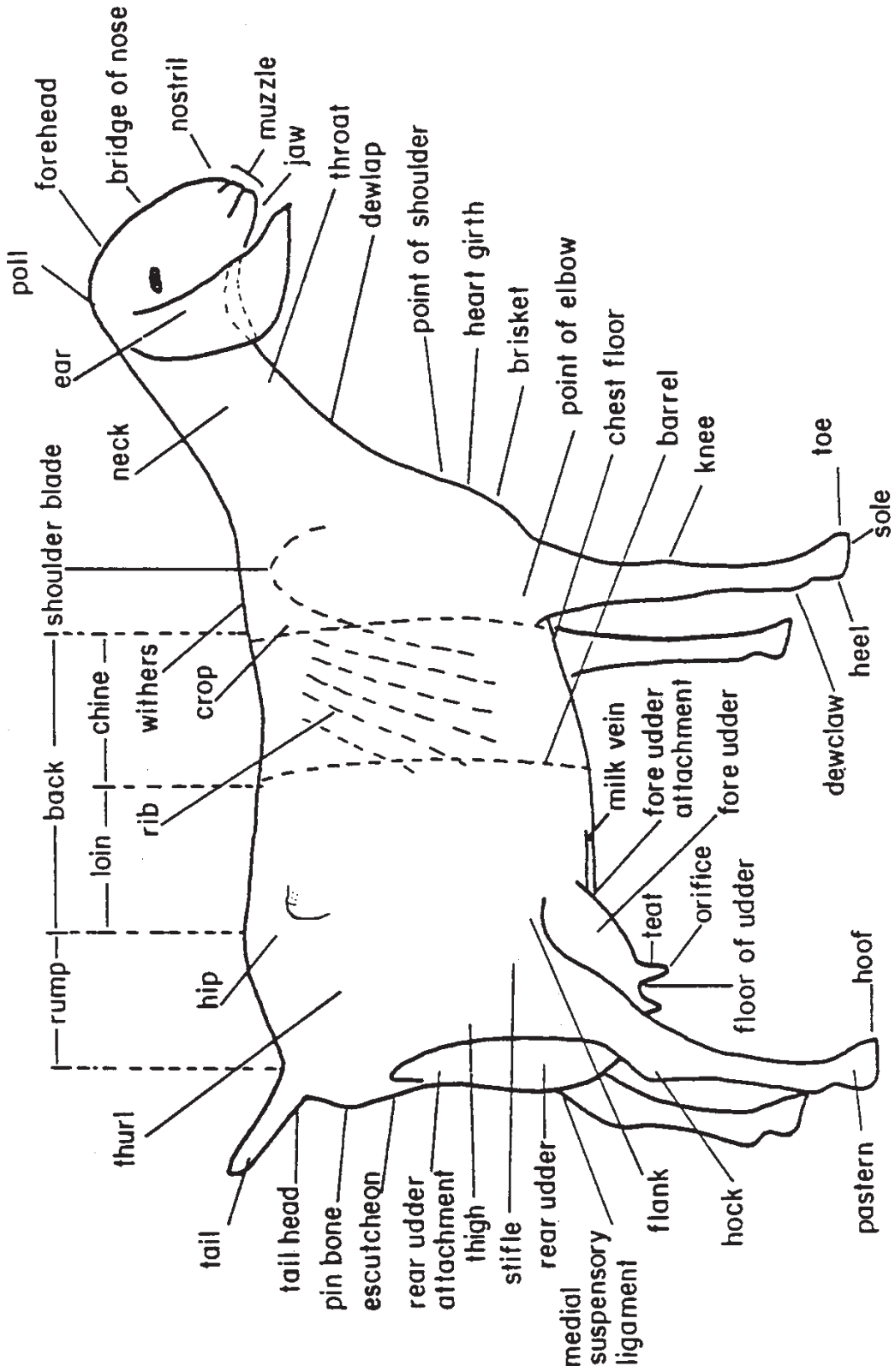
*Adapted from materials prepared by Wayne Hankel, the University of Minnesota, USDA Extension Service (George F.W. Haenlein and Donald L. Ace), American Dairy Goat Association, Linda Brown, Valley City and Peg Beuchler, Sawyer, Karl Hoppe, NDSU Extension Service Area Livestock Specialist.*

## ***Guidelines***



Although every show is different, the following will make shows more enjoyable and worthwhile:

- Cooperate with the show officials to the best of your ability.
- Learn the rules of the show and follow them.
- Be concerned about the comfort and health of your animal. Keep your pens and animals neat and clean at all times. Provide adequate feed and water at all times.
- Be prepared and willing to answer questions from show visitors about your goats and goats in general.
- Handle your goats with dignity, pride and gentleness, both inside and outside of the show ring. Stay calm with troublesome animals; abusiveness is not allowed.
- Be courteous to the other exhibitors and the judge.
- Restrict conversation in the ring except to respond to the judge or show officials.
- Be gracious about accepting the judge's opinion.
- Show your animals the whole time you are in the ring, until the judge has given reasons and the class has been dismissed.
- If you have questions about the judging, wait until after the show is over to visit with the judge.
- Smile and enjoy yourself — it's part of showmanship.
- Remember that the placings at a show are one judge's opinion of how a certain group of animals compare with each other on a certain day. Placings of the same animals may be different at another time or place.



# Goat Showmanship Score Card

## *Based on Usual Order of Consideration*

<b>1. APPEARANCE OF ANIMAL</b>	40
<b>Condition and thriftiness</b> showing normal growth, neither too fat nor too thin.	10
<b>Hair</b> clean and properly groomed.	
<b>Hoofs</b> trimmed and shaped to enable animal to walk and stand naturally.	10
<b>Neatly disbudded</b> if the animal is not naturally hornless (Dairy Goats).	
<b>Clipping</b> entire body if weather has permitted, showing allowance to get a neat coat of hair by show time; neatly trimmed tail and ears (Dairy Goats).	10
<b>Cleanliness</b> as shown by a clean body as free from stains as possible, with special attention to legs, feet, tail area, nose and ears.	10
<b>2. APPEARANCE OF EXHIBITOR</b>	10
Clothes and person neat and clean.	
<b>3. SHOWING ANIMAL IN THE RING</b>	50
<b>Leading</b> enter, leading the animal at a normal walk around the ring in a clockwise direction, walking on the left side, holding the collar with the right hand. Exhibitor should walk as normally and inconspicuously as possible.	
<b>Goat should lead readily</b> and respond quickly.	
<b>Lead equipment</b> consists of a collar or small link chain, properly fitted (Optional-Angoras).	10
<b>As the judge studies the animal</b> , the preferred method of leading is to walk alongside on the side away from the judge.	
<b>Lead slowly</b> with animal's head held high enough for impressive style, attractive carriage and graceful walk.	
<b>Pose and show</b> an animal so it is between the exhibitor and the judge as much as possible. Avoid exaggerated positions, such as crossing behind the goat.	
<b>Stand or squat</b> where both judge and animal may be observed.	
<b>Pose animal</b> with front feet squarely beneath and hind feet slightly spread. Where possible, face animal upstage with the front feet on a slight incline. Neither crowd other exhibitors nor leave too much space when leading into a side-by-side position.	
<b>When judge changes placing</b> , lead animal forward out of line, down or up to the place directed then back through the line, finally turning clockwise to get into position.	15
<b>To step animal ahead</b> use slight pull. If the animal steps badly out of place, return it to position by leading it forward and making a circle back through your position in the line.	
<b>When judge is observing the animal</b> , if it moves out of position, replace it as quickly and inconspicuously as possible.	
<b>Be natural.</b> Over showing, undue fussing and maneuvering are objectionable.	
<b>Show animal to best advantage</b> , recognizing the conformation faults of the animal you are leading and striving to help overcome them.	15
<b>Poise, alertness and courteous attitude</b> are all desired in the show ring. Exhibitors should keep an eye on their animals and be aware of the position of the judge at all times, but should not stare at the judge. Persons or things outside the ring should not distract the attention of the exhibitor. Respond rapidly to requests from judges or officials, and be courteous and sportsmanlike at all times, respect the rights of other exhibitors. The best exhibitors will show the animals, not themselves, and will continue exhibiting until after the judge has given reasons and has dismissed the class.	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	100



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