



JOURNEY TO THE RING

Your guide to preparing for show ring success



Holstein Canada remains a strong supporter of youth and Young Leader programs and activities. We are pleased to provide this resource to enhance show preparation and showmanship skills throughout Canada and around the world.

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PART ONE

Preparing to Lead

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Show day seems a long way off when you first begin preparing your calf for the big event. Time and effort, over several months, will produce a contented, but alert animal ready to take on the competition. You will feel relaxed and confident as you lead your calf into the ring *because you are prepared!*

A Note on Ethics:

As an exhibitor, it is your responsibility to act ethically and use good animal husbandry practices at shows.

This ensures we are presenting a positive image to spectators, while also maintaining a fair playing field for all exhibitors. The same rules apply to every exhibitor, at every show across Canada, regardless of the size of the show.

For more details on show ethics, and to view the rules, regulations and penalties, visit www.holstein.ca

Membership-Programs→Judging Programs→Show Rules & Regulations



As part of the ethics standards, measuring topline hair has become a common practice at shows across Canada. Be sure to keep hair trimmed at or below the maximum height limit of 1.5" to avoid penalty or disqualification.

>> Selecting Your Calf

The first thing to do is choose a calf that best suits you. Consider both the age of the animal and your size before making the final selection. Stand beside an animal six or seven months older than calves you are choosing, to get a better feel for how big your calf will be at show time and if you can still comfortably handle an animal that size. Remember the show is six or seven months away!



From a group of calves eligible for the same age class, select a calf that

- is stylish with good head carriage and balance of parts
- exhibits dairy character, a long neck, and flat bone
- walks freely on a correct set of feet & legs with good depth of heel, and strength of pastern
- has a strong, well-blended shoulder
- is well-grown for its age
- has deep, open rib
- has a long, wide rump with correct slope from hips to pins
- is strong across the topline with an uphill walk

**Avoid over-conditioned or small heifers that lack style.*



The best show-type individual is selected from this group of calves eligible for the same age class.

>> Caring for Your Calf



Calves are grouped according to size in a clean, dry bedded pen – shavings are a great option for helping to prevent stains.

Group your heifers according to size and condition. You may have to change your heifer's grouping as she grows; keeping her competitive and hungry for food helps her to keep growing.

Your calf should have fresh air and freedom to move. Regular exercise is very important.

Keep the calf's pen clean and avoid wet, soft bedding packs.

Practise good husbandry. Always provide fresh water and feed from a clean manger or eating area.

Feed to maintain growth, but constantly monitor the calf's weight so she doesn't become over-conditioned, too fat, or too thin.

Early-cut grass hay is superior to alfalfa. Avoid excessive amounts of lush pasture, green feed, and silage as these pass through the system too quickly.

Feed limited amounts of beet pulp at home to get your calf used to the taste.

The conditioning of a calf can be controlled by monitoring her grain/energy intake (e.g. corn, barley, protein supplement). However, avoid sudden changes to the diet and feeding times.

To improve a shallow bodied heifer, provide lots of good quality grass hay, and to improve an extremely *deep-bellied* heifer, *regulate* her water intake to twice a day.



These heifers are fed grain and free-choice hay from a clean manger.

>> Training Your Calf

Every calf should be trained to lead at a very early age.

After selecting your calf, dedicate some time each week to training. Practice makes perfect.

To start, use a soft rope halter until the animal follows freely without tugging.

Always treat the animal kindly and gently, rewarding good behaviour by petting or stroking.

This calf is tied with a soft rope halter at a comfortable level. The slip knot can be easily undone, and the calf cannot jump over the partition.



Too low!



Just right!



Too high!

Begin training by tying the calf's head at normal head carriage for approximately 20 minutes daily. Use a soft rope halter with about 6-8 inches of rope that won't tighten under the jaw. Use a slip knot that can be easily undone, and tie the knot at a different place than the pressure point where it's tied.

Secure the calf to something solid that she can't jump over, and make sure she is standing on a firm even surface. To prevent accidents, stay close to the calf for the first few times she is tied.

Once the animal can be controlled on the walk, introduce a leather halter and chain lead strap.

Aim to train the calf daily as show day approaches.

Teach her to walk at a steady show ring pace with desirable head carriage, also training her to place her feet both quickly and naturally. Remember – the back foot closest to the judge is always slightly back!

Accustom your animal to sudden noises and distractions.

Have someone approach and touch the calf in the same manner as a judge. By feeling the hide and walking around the calf, she shouldn't shy as easily.

Train the animal to respond quickly to halter commands, fitting any show ring situation. You don't want to be fussing with her on show day.



Training your calf takes a lot of practice. While the heifer seen here is displaying good head carriage and being trained to walk at a show ring pace, you will note that her hind legs are placed incorrectly in relation to the person acting as the judge. Remember, taking advice and tips from people with more experience can be very helpful in training your animals for success in the show ring.

>> Clipping at Home

Clipping is an art and begins well before show day.

Tie your calf at a natural, comfortable level – basically the same height it will show at. (See page 5)

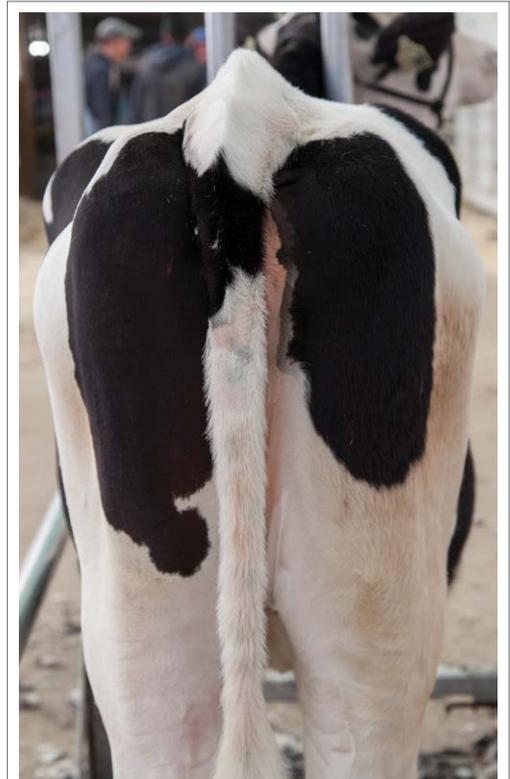
Six weeks before show day, begin preparing your calf to be show-ready.

Washing and rinsing the calf regularly will help her hair to grow, while brushing the topline hair down while wet will allow it to dry straight.

On your clean calf, clip the head, neck, brisket, front and rear legs, and the body, leaving the hair across her topline from neck to tail, and the hair on her belly.

Begin to train the topline hair by using a hair dryer/blower and a brush to stand up the clean, dry hair.

When clipping your calf, you want to use a set of blades that will clip the hair short enough to accentuate her features, without getting too close to her skin. Blades such as an *84 Stewart* or *505 Aesculap* are good options.



Compare the clipped left side to the unclipped right side.

A Note on Clipper Blade Care

Clipper blades should be sharp, clean and lubricated with clipper oil before you start, with more oil added often while you clip.

When you are done, the blades should be brushed off and oiled again before putting them away. Store clippers in a separate container to avoid breaking blades or damaging cords.

If your animal is housed in a sand or peat moss bedded facility, your clipper blades will need to be sharpened more frequently than if the calf is housed in straw bedding.

Take good care of your clippers!

>> Health

Animal health is of utmost importance when talking about exhibiting animals at a show. Show animals are taken from their herds into a new environment where they are in close proximity to other animals from other herds, and exposed to a variety of illnesses that may be circulating throughout the show barns. This makes the animals – particularly the younger heifers and calves – far more susceptible to contracting disease, increasing the chances of introducing new diseases to your herd at home.

Prior to EVERY show, be sure to assess your animal and ensure that she is healthy, with her vaccinations up to date. Animals heading to a show should be free of visible signs of infections and/or disease. Common infections to watch for are: Ringworm, warts, lice, pneumonia and dysentery or diarrhea.

Having your vet check out anything you are unsure about is a great way to ensure you are protecting the health of your animal, your herd, and in turn, the other animals at the show.

>> Identification

As we work towards more stringent traceability measures on our farms, we must ensure that all animals moving on and off the farm are properly tagged. All animals exhibited at shows across the country are required to be tagged with nationally approved tags, inscribed with the animal's lifetime identification number, in each ear. Animals will not be allowed into the show ring without the correct tags in place.

If a show animal is missing one or both tags, replacement tags must be ordered and fixed in the ears PRIOR to arriving at the show.

Many shows will also require the animal's registration papers at check-in to verify the identity of the animal. Be sure to take either an original or a copy of these papers with you to the show.

An animal with a tattoo number identified on her registration paper must also have that number tattooed in her ear.



Ringworm is a very contagious skin disease. Animals with active ringworm should NOT be taken to a show.



All animals moving on and off of the farm, including for show purposes, MUST have their proper nationally approved tags in each ear.

>> Caring for Feet

Hoof and foot care is often overlooked. Proper maintenance and trimming has a lasting influence on the animal's mobility and longevity.

Trimming should be done right after selecting your calf and again six weeks before the show.

A professional hoof trimmer provides a good service in making your animal look her best on show day, and hoof trimming also plays an important role in animal health and preventative medicine. Trimming makes a big difference!



The photo on the left shows the long, untrimmed hoof, while the photo on the right shows the correctly trimmed hoof.

>> Organizing Your Show Equipment

If well cared for, show equipment will carry you through many show seasons.

A show box (appropriate in size to the number of animals shown) is convenient to store equipment at the show. It also helps to keep your area of the barn neat and tidy.

Adopt a colour, and paint all equipment with a lead-free paint.

Clean, repair and take inventory of your equipment after each use. Replace any supplies running low, such as soap, spray, etc., to be ready for the next show.

At the end of the year, all equipment should be cleaned, painted, and stored.

Clean your show halters after every show. By using saddle soap or leather preservative, you'll keep your halters in top condition for many, many years.



Show Equipment Checklist

- strawboard, if needed
- broom
- shovel
- 5-tine fork
- 3-tine fork
- shavings fork, if needed
- rake
- hose for washing, 4-6 metres, with nozzle
- nylon halter for washing
- soft animal soap or liquid detergent
- basic tool set (hammer, wrench, vice-grips, screwdriver, nails)
- signs and cable to hang signs
- fan
- thermometer
- fly spray
- clippers, blades, oil
- scissors
- hairspray
- finishing oil (i.e. Final Bloom)
- touch up sprays
- powerful hair blower with narrow nozzle
- water pails
- feed buckets
- 1st cut hay
- 2nd cut hay
- grain
- beet pulp
- baleage
- wash pails
- wash brushes
- grooming brushes and hair brush
- neck chains and two-way ties
- show halters
- extra rope halters
- extension cords
- paper towels
- registration and health papers

>> Transporting Your Calf

Arrange for transportation well in advance.

Spread some sand on the trailer floor for traction and shavings or straw to keep the floor and animal clean.

It's always a good idea to have another person around to help with the loading and unloading.

Many truckers will prefer to have the animals loose, particularly for long trips. In this case, divide them in pens according to size.

Check the animal periodically while in transit. Long hauls require stops to feed and water.

Always check and double-check that the door is locked securely.

If crossing borders, ensure that registration and health papers accompany the animal.

Give the animal a bit of slack when she is coming off the trailer – she likes to see where she is headed.



The trailer is parked in an area with sure footing, and two people assist in leading this calf onto a clean and well-bedded trailer.

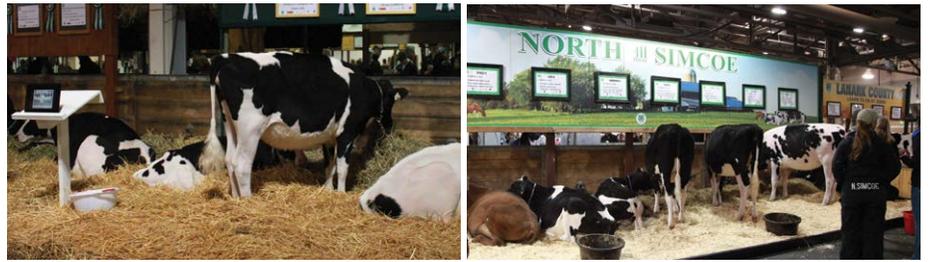


Coming off the trailer, the animal is given a little slack as she likes to see where she is going.

>> Arriving at the Show

Prior to going to the show, determine what the show allows for the bedding packs. Some shows allow straw packs, while others only allow the use of shavings.

If possible, have the bedding ready before your cattle arrive at the show.



The photo on the left is a well-prepared straw pack that has been packed down with a fork and edged with a strawboard, while the photo on the right shows a tidy shavings pack with a bedding keeper to keep the pack together at the back.

To make a straw pack about seven to eight feet in length:

1. Shake and pack about 12 inches of straw, leaving no chunks.
2. Distribute and pack shavings so they filter through and allow some absorbency; this also binds the straw together.
3. Put down a second layer of straw, and pack it down.
4. Work in another layer of shavings.
5. Edge with a fork and push in any loose straw.
6. Level the edges with a strawboard, and use a fork to pack down the edges.

To make a shavings pack:

1. Ensure you have some sort of bedding keeper to hold your pack together.
2. Begin your pack with a base of wood chips – this will add some bulk and stability to the pack, and reduce the amount of wood shavings you will need.
3. On top of the wood chips, add at least two bags of shavings per calf.
4. Spread the shavings out evenly and pat them down.

Make your animal comfortable, and accustom it to show surroundings as quickly as possible.

Tie calves approximately three feet apart.

A rope halter or neck chain with a two-way tie works best for tying your calf at the show. Give the rope about 18-24 inches of play.



When you arrive at the show...

- Give the calf hay.
- Follow with water every 8 to 12 hours. It may need time to adjust to the taste difference. Use a pail or bucket and hose for watering to prevent the spread of disease.
- Feed and water at normal, regular intervals.
- Allow time for rest.



The Jersey is tied by a neck chain with a two-way tie, while the Holstein calf has been tied up with a rope halter.



This Jersey calf is fed hay at the show.

>> Washing Your Calf

Always wash your animal on a surface with good footing. If needed, spread some sand on the ground or floor to prevent slipping.

Wash your calf several times at home, and, if necessary, treat it for lice, mange, scale, and scab. Regular washings condition the calf to be relaxed when sprayed with water at the show.

Tie the calf fairly tightly at a comfortable level so she doesn't dance around.

Use a nylon wash halter, but not the same one as used to tie the animal in the row.

 **Your washing supplies include:**

- a pail
- soft animal soap
- stiff bristled brush
- medium bristled brush
- soft bristled brush
- wire brush for hooves
- flexible hose with a nozzle



Washing supplies include (l to r) soft animal soap; stiff bristled brush; wire brush for hooves and a pail.



On good footing, and tied at a comfortable level, this calf is soaked all over.



The ears are protected to prevent water from entering them, which could cause them to hang limp.



Shampoo is applied to the calf

Washing your animal is hard work, but very important.

1. Soak the calf all over.
2. When spraying water near the head, it's important to cover each ear with your hand. This prevents water from entering the ears which could cause them to hang limp.
3. When getting underneath and wetting the belly, keep one hand on the calf. Not only does this steady her, but she knows where you are.
4. Apply animal shampoo directly onto the calf. Brush it in, or work from a pail of soapy water.



All soap is rinsed from the calf's body.



A soft cloth is used to clean all dirt and wax from the inside of the ear. A nylon wash halter, different from the one used in the row, is used when washing the calf.

5. Use a stiff wash brush to scrub the animal thoroughly including the brisket, front legs, and all the way under the belly.
6. Use a wire brush to clean the feet, staying below the hoof hairline.
7. Because soap left in the hair causes dandruff and dullness, rinse the entire animal thoroughly.
8. Remove excess water from the hair with a soft brush.
9. Use a soft cloth to clean all dirt and wax from the inside of the ears.
10. Blanket the animal long enough to warm her up if the area is cold, damp or drafty.

If the animal gets dirty, after she has been washed, spot wash with a bucket and brush.

>> Clipping at the Show



The calf's head is tied at a comfortable level for clipping.

Just a day or two before the show, begin the final clip job on your clean, dry calf.

Tie your calf at a natural, comfortable level – basically the same height it will show at.

Before beginning, stand back and take a good look, analyzing any faults that can be corrected through clipping.

PART ONE *Preparing to Lead*

As with clipping at home, use clippers that will clip the hair short enough to accent the animal's features, without getting too close to the skin.

Start at the back of the calf. Clip the tail from approximately two hand lengths above the end of the tailbone. Clip all around to the base of the tailhead.



Equipment used by an advanced clipper includes:

- Soft, long-bristled brush
- Small topline brush
- Small rechargeable clippers
- Powerful hair dryer
- Clipper oil
- Large animal clippers
- Small set of clippers with fine blades



Equipment used by an advanced clipper includes (l to r) powerful hair blower; clipper oil; rechargeable clippers; small set of clippers with fine blades; topline brush; large animal clippers with different sets of blades; and soft, long-bristled brush.



The tail is clipped from approximately two hand lengths above the tailbone.



The tail is clipped all around to the base of the tailhead.

Leave the switch at the bottom and the hairs on the end of the tailhead as this adds to the calf's length and angularity.

When clipping the legs use clippers with a fine set of blades to make the legs look as refined as possible.

When clipping the rear legs, for safety's sake, keep one hand on the calf to steady her.

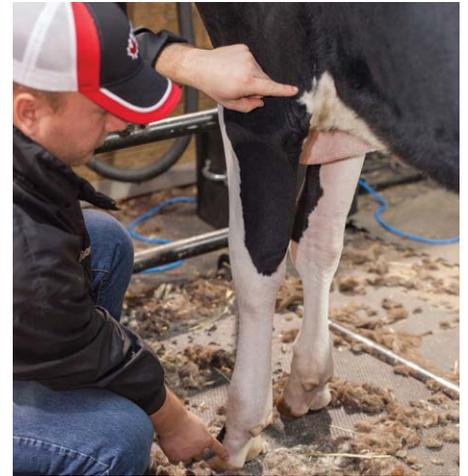
Clipping against the hair, take all the hair off up to the vein in the leg. Make sure all hair from the hocks down, is taken off—including around the dew claws.



This fitter gently clips the hind leg, and keeps one hand on the calf to steady her.



On the rear leg, all hair is clipped off up to the vein, and removed on the inside of each leg.



All hair is clipped, on the outside and inside, from the hoof to elbow.

Trim all hair on the inside of the legs.

Blend the hair on the lower thigh where it goes from long to short hair.

On front legs, clip all the hair inside and outside from the hoof to the elbow. This exposes any veins, and adds to the animal's dairyness and refinement.

All hair between the front legs to the brisket is clipped.

Clip from the point of front leg up to the point of shoulder.

It's a good idea to have someone assist by holding the head. To project dairy quality and refinement, all hair on the neck and head is clipped, including the ears and muzzle.



An imaginary line from the point of shoulder to the top of the shoulder blade provides a reference point for the clipper.

By leaving a little bit of hair on the top of the neck, the neck blends naturally into the shoulder.

Most calves need a little bit of hair left in the heart and chest areas. If a calf is a little weak in the heart region, the hair is brushed back and only the ends are taken off.



A little hair is left on the top of the neck to naturally blend it into the shoulder.



The hairs are brushed back and only the ends are taken off on this calf displaying a little weakness in the heart region.



A brush and blower are used to stand the hair on the topline. Notice the proper blower angle.

Nationally approved identification tags must **NOT** be removed from the ears.

Clip from the point of the shoulder to the top of the shoulder blade.

To avoid making a definite line, a good clipping practice is to place one finger under the right corner of the blades to maintain the correct angle.

Continue clipping up to the shoulder, but don't round it off.

Clip the body all over. Working backwards, clip over the thurls and pins to give a wider, cleaner look.

Now that the rest of the calf has been clipped, move to the topline.

Use a brush and blower, to pull the hair up from the body.

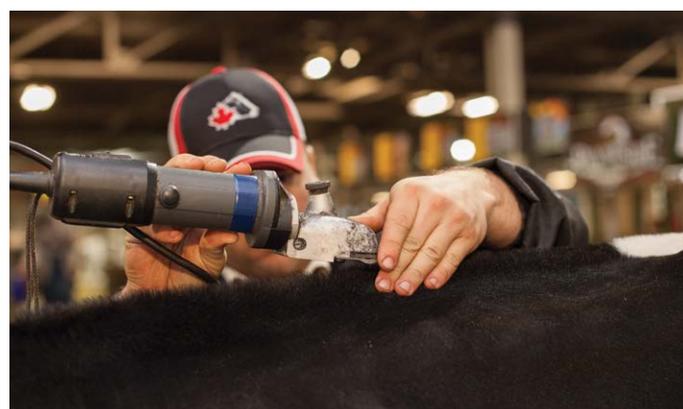
Next, slowly pare down the hair on the topline to make the calf look angular.

Using the clippers, start in the middle of the loin and clip backwards to form a wedge.

With one finger under the clipper blades to level them, and to keep them on the proper angle (parallel to the bone), clip the standing hair.

To clip the top of the shoulder, hold the clippers at an angle and trim the standing hair. This gives the shoulder a wedgy, sharp appearance.

With the sides trimmed, level the topline.



To make this calf look angular, the fitter pares down the hair on the topline. He uses his free hand as a guide.



To give the calf an angular appearance, hair is blended from the top of the shoulder into the neck.

Take any extra hair off by holding the clippers lightly in your fingers. Use your free hand as a guide, and to balance the clippers.

Every calf is different, but by taking the hair close to the bone in high spots, and leaving hair in low spots, the topline can be made to look completely level.

Using both hands on the clippers, with one finger beneath the blades, blend the topline into the body. Blow the hair up on the topline for a final time.

A hairspray-type product can be used to set the hair.



Using the clippers, the body is blended into the topline.



Good clipping takes hours and hours of practice. To achieve this picture-perfect product, all parts must blend into each other. No noticeable marks are left on the calf after clipping.

>> Filling Your Calf

The filling process is often overlooked and comes from practicing at shows.

Study your animal and decide how much fill it needs on show day.

Three different kinds of hay are used to fill your calf. These include:

1. 1st-cut coarse hay
2. 1st-cut finer, grassy hay
3. 2nd-cut legume type hay

Other feed you may use to help fill your calf (depending on the animal):

1. Beet pulp
2. baleage
3. grain



The extremely deep ribbed calf on the left requires a late fill, while the shallow bodied calf on the right needs an early fill.

Give the shallow calf, needing an early fill, some 1st-cut hay and a pail of water early in the morning. Two hours before the show, give it more 1st-cut hay. Follow with 2nd-cut hay, in small amounts, and beet pulp. An hour before the show, finish with at least one pail of water.

Early in the morning, give the calf needing a late fill, coarse 1st-cut hay in small amounts, and about

half a pail of water. Approximately 2-3 hours ahead of showing, give it a little beet pulp. About 15-20 minutes prior to entering the ring, offer the calf a pail of water.

Add small amounts of grain when the calf tires of beet pulp. A word of caution – too much grain could make the calf sick.

>> Last-Minute Preparation

Teamwork is especially important when readying your calf for the ring.

Trim any stray topline hairs with small rechargeable trimmers, or offset scissors. A soft, long-bristled brush is used to rid the body of loose hair.

Use powder or whitening spray on the hocks and knees to whiten and cover stains.

Put a small amount of baby oil on a cloth, and rub very lightly over the black spots, or spray lightly with a finishing spray, like *Final Bloom*.

Wipe the nose, check that the leather halter fits properly, check that the inside of the ears are wiped clean, fluff out the switch and check the belly for any straw or hay.

Spray lightly with fly spray, if needed.

Give your calf a little drink of water.

You are relaxed and confident to lead your calf into the ring – *after all, you are prepared!*

Teamwork is important during the last few minutes before entering the ring. The switch is fluffed and the hair is stood on the topline.



Stray hairs are trimmed to level the topline.

The calf is alert and content because her last-minute grooming hasn't exceeded 15 minutes.

Last-minute preparation supplies include (l to r): soft, long-bristled brush; black re-touching spray; spray conditioner; hair spray adhesive; finishing oil; paper towels; and topline brush.





PART TWO

Showmanship - Leading to Win

18	LEADING TO WIN
29	SHOWMANSHIP DISCRIMINATIONS
30	JUDGES SHARE SECRETS FOR SUCCESS

Showmanship is a complete package—the combination of months of hard work prior to show day and a lot of little details in the ring.

Good competitors use both cow sense and common sense!

Like most competitors, you'd like to win in the show ring. The key to showmanship is showing your animal to her best advantage with natural ease and without extreme effort.

Showmanship is a complete package of little things done right, while correcting faults as best as possible. Showmanship is an art and talent; it is about being relaxed and calm.

The time you spend showing is the culmination of efforts made long before you enter the ring. Your calf has been halter broken and well-trained through hours of repetitive handling. She is accustomed to other people touching her and remains calm during distractions.



This competitor shows a calf that is a size she can comfortably handle. No one is penalized for a calf that is too big as long as they can handle the animal.

An effort should be made to ensure that the calf is not in heat on achievement day. While this is detrimental to the competitor, it also disrupts the entire class. This should be managed at home before the show. However, the judge shouldn't be too critical as many calves are not owned by 4-H members. It may be impossible to have the calf right for all shows held close together.



Heading into the ring:

- The calf has been washed thoroughly at home and again at the show so her hide is shiny and the white is clean.
- The ears and eartags are clean.
- The feet are clean and well-shaped.
- The muzzle is wiped free of hay and beet pulp before entering the ring.
- Your animal is freshly clipped.
- The calf has been filled well at the show, but not to excess. She should feel comfortable and settled in the ring.

As a keen competitor, you:

- Wear appropriate, clean, white clothes and hard-soled shoes.
- Exhibit good posture.
- Do not chew gum or tobacco.
- Keep your hair neat and tidy.

Foremost in showmanship is a good-fitting halter, which enhances the appearance of an animal's head.

A halter that is too big detracts from a desirable head. The chain should be attached to the halter with the clasp pointed out.

With a properly-fitted halter, your hand or part of the hand is under the chain, but fingers are not through the ring.



This shows a poor-fitting halter, which is also held incorrectly. The loops in the lead-strap are held in a figure eight shape. The loop at the top of the eight is in the calf's eye.



The lead-strap is wrapped in a tight loop; it may even be taped together. This does not display the accepted use of the lead-strap.



With this properly-fitted halter, the hand is under the chain, but not through the ring. Approximately three loops in a short lead-strap are manageable.



The halter is held correctly.

Approximately three loops in a short lead-strap can be held easily in one hand. Do not use a figure eight, as the loop at the top of the eight could poke the animal's eye. Also, you can easily reach back and set your animal's tailhead, and then regain the loop.



This competitor has the hand on the point of the calf's shoulder to steady her.



This competitor holds the calf's throat at the turn of the jaw, which gives the animal a more dairy appearance. However, this is done only after all other faults have been corrected.

Walking into the ring, walk briskly using your left hand to lead the calf. You walk fluidly in unison with your well-trained animal.

If holding the throat gives a more dairy appearance to the animal, it should be held when entering the ring. Hold the throat at the turn of the jaw. However, if the calf doesn't need the throat held, don't do it.

If you are unlucky and have a calf with a bad disposition,

you will receive credit if you bring her under control and settled down during the class.

In showmanship classes, when the last calf is in the ring, turn around and start showing your calf.

The left hand should always be used to lead the calf—never the right hand unless an injury or accident prevents this.



Competitors walk forward into the ring.



Moving around the ring, there is good spacing between calves.

Ensure approximately five feet is between you and the animal ahead.

Also, allow approximately five feet between you and the ring boards, so both you and the judge can maneuver easily. This allows the judge to view your animal from both sides.

Tip #1: Moving out of line and getting too far into the ring is a serious fault.



This competitor is grandstanding by moving out of line and closer into the ring toward the judge.

When the judge is in the middle of the ring and you are asked to stop, set up your calf and minimize her faults as quickly as possible. Straighten the topline and set the tail between the pins. Correcting feet placement from the halter without using your own feet is recommended; your feet should **never** be used to fix back foot placement. Pinch the loin or other applicable spot, if necessary—do whatever it takes to make the animal look her very best. When correcting faults, be sure you are correcting in the right place and that the calf actually needs correction.

Then, if holding the throat gives a more dairy appearance to the animal, it should be held whenever the judge is looking. The exception is when the judge is on the showperson side of the calf on the outside of the ring. In this case, place your hand on the point of shoulder to help steady the calf and give more control when switching the calf's feet. Correcting animal faults or maintaining animal control should not be compromised for the sake of holding the throat. If an animal does not need the throat held, leave your right hand on her point of shoulder for control.

If the animal steps out of balance or is not straight in line, place the right hand on the point of shoulder to steady and control her. Reposition the feet, if needed.



DON'T...

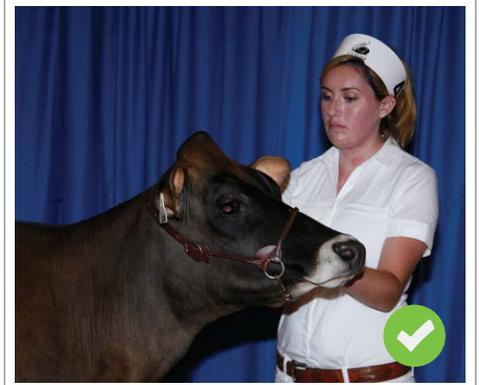
- Walk backward slowly into the ring
- Sidestep
- Display a tense behaviour; your calf can feel a tense hand on the halter
- Project a "no-care" attitude
- Show with a long, stiff arm
- Keep your elbow up
- Crouch
- Position yourself too far ahead of the calf
- Hold the calf improperly with the hand and lead-strap up in the air
- Hold the calf's head too high
- Twist the calf's head
- Tuck the lead-strap through the exhibitor's belt loop
- Have loops of lead-strap taped together
- Carry a cell phone in a pocket or on the belt



The throat is being held by this competitor, which gives a more dairy appearance to the animal. This should be done only after all animal faults have been corrected.



The throat is not being held.



This calf shows good head carriage.



This competitor pinches the calf's topline in the correct location. For this animal, it is the loin that requires attention.

Prior to the show, ask your parents or another knowledgeable person if and where the topline on your calf needs pinching. If it's the loin, know where it is located on the animal. In attempting to straighten the topline, many competitors pinch an area too far forward or too far back.

Tip #2: Remember one good or bad look at an animal can change a judge's view or opinion in a second.

Occasionally, a calf will sag through its front end, especially behind the shoulders. Use your hard-soled shoes to gently touch the calf's front foot so she slightly raises it and places it underneath her body. Just shifting the calf's weight slightly will tighten up the entire front end.

Tip #3: The competitor who should win is the one that an owner would hire to show his animals in conformation classes.



Be mindful that the judge observes and assesses a number of things during your individual look:

- ☑ Correct spacing (five feet, approximately) between your calf and the one ahead
- ☑ Staying to outside of ring (five feet, approximately). While you do not want to hug the outside of the ring, you do not want to crowd in closer to the judge.
- ☑ Clean and neat white attire with hard-soled shoes
- ☑ Confidence
- ☑ On the move, good positioning in relation to the calf, allowing the flexibility to start and stop; basically, anything can be done from this position
- ☑ A properly-fitted halter with the hand or part of the hand under the chain, but fingers not through the ring. Approximately, three loops in a short lead-strap is manageable.
- ☑ A well-presented calf with no hay or straw underneath her belly or in her mouth; no visible manure stains; and no black or brown spray in the tail
- ☑ The calf is handling well
- ☑ A calf with the appropriate head carriage, based on her physical characteristics
- ☑ You and the calf moving in unison
- ☑ The calf's head tipped slightly when the hide is felt
- ☑ The calf set up quickly when stopped
- ☑ The calf's head straightened when the judge moves to the rear
- ☑ From behind, the calf straight from poll to tailhead

When the judge motions for a stop to walk around the calf, ideally lead her into an attractive, standing position.

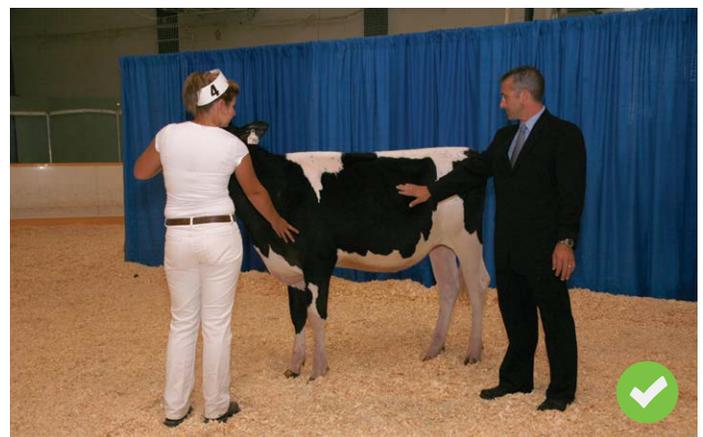
As the judge moves around your animal, go ahead one short step. This gives the appearance of a long-bodied calf. A calf's hind feet should be four to eight inches apart. Competitors should know the best procedure to accomplish this.



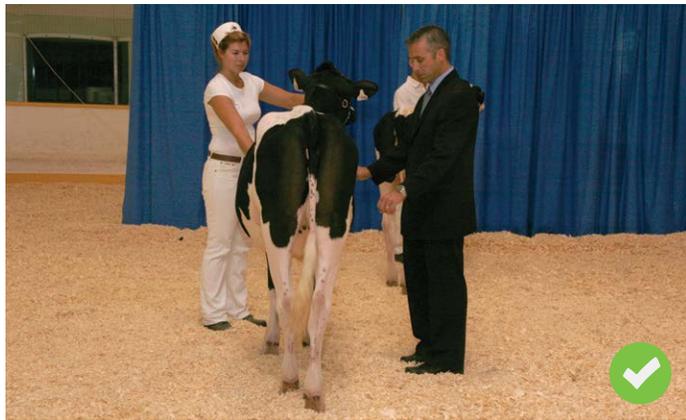
The first competitor is the ideal distance from the outside of the ring. The second competitor stands too close to the boards for the judge to move around the calf to view her from the other side.



When the judge first approaches the competitor, the calf's head should be tipped slightly toward the judge.



When the judge nears the calf, the competitor puts her hand on the calf's shoulder to steady the animal.



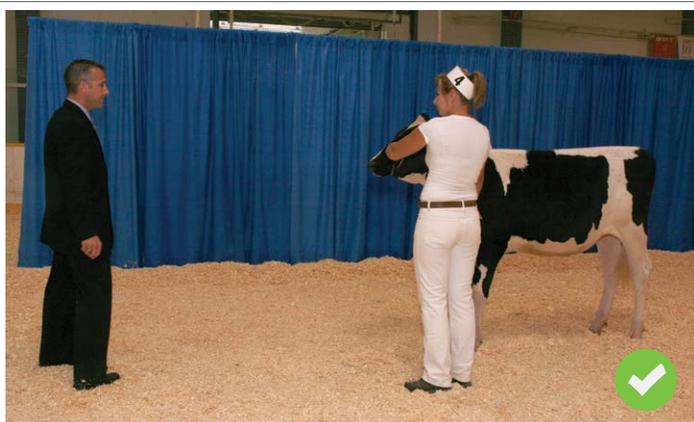
The competitor stands in the ideal position with the calf's feet placed correctly. The calf's head is turned slightly toward the judge as he handles the hide.



The competitor has ensured that the calf's spine is straight— nose to tail. The competitor also pinches the loin (because this calf requires this adjustment) when the judge observes the calf from the rear.

Give the judge a front-end view of your calf when he walks around the front of the calf. The competitor's right hand should be placed on the point of shoulder when the judge is viewing the animal from the front – this help's steady the animal and allows the judge to view down the side of the animal.

When the judge returns to the other side, or to the centre of the ring, move ahead another short step. This should be done smoothly, and not be over-exaggerated.



The competitor allows the judge to get a full-end view of the calf. Right hand drops to the point of shoulder when judge is in front.

Tip #4: Never touch the calf's rear feet



If asked to move ahead by the judge, pass briskly on the inside of the ring.

Respond promptly, if motioned to move ahead when circling the ring. Move up quickly on the inside. An animal of manageable size is quite often easier to handle, especially in this situation.

When pulled into line from the outside of the ring, walk briskly the same way as you entered the ring – this should be done at a quick pace, remembering to not go so fast that it disrupts the appearance of the calf.

Upon reaching the lineup, turn, and lead the calf into place, setting her up to advantage. Adjustments are made to the loin, crops, and tail setting, as necessary.

Use the halter to move the animal ahead or back, if rear feet require repositioning.

Maintain a uniform lineup with the front feet of the animals in line. Keep your animal alert, and be aware of the judge's location at all times.

The first calf in the lineup should have her left (outside) hind leg back. The last calf should have her right (outside) hind leg back.

For all other placings, the feet should be solidly positioned to show the calf's least amount of faults and to display her to her very best advantage. Legs being parallel or slightly apart from second place down the line is acceptable as showmanship is all about making the calf look her best while maintaining good control.



The competitor's hand is on the calf's shoulder. The left (outside) hind leg is back. The competitor lightly uses her own foot to correct the front feet of the calf.



The positioning of the feet on the first and last calves is correct. All other calves in line have their feet placed solidly under their bodies, displaying them to best advantage.

As the judge moves behind and down a lineup, keep your animal straight with good spacing between her and others.

The competitor should place the right hand on the point of shoulder to steady the calf.



The judge is behind the lineup. The competitors with their hands on the animals' shoulders, do not need to hold the throat the entire time. However, the first placed competitor may want to hold the throat, if needed, as this animal is in full view of spectators.



All calves are standing solidly on their feet. There is good spacing between calves.

Tip #5: Correcting animal faults or maintaining animal control should never be compromised for the sake of holding the throat. And, if an animal doesn't need the throat held, leave your right hand on her point of shoulder for control.

The practice of moving calves up or down the line is not recommended in showmanship classes unless the competitors are very close. However, if you are asked, or you must correct how your animal is standing, use the following procedure:

- Take the halter in the left hand, walk forward, continue clockwise around the calf, and back through the hole.
- Go around the calf and, upon reaching the lineup, turn and walk backward as you lead into position.
- Calves in line should move to make room for your animal.

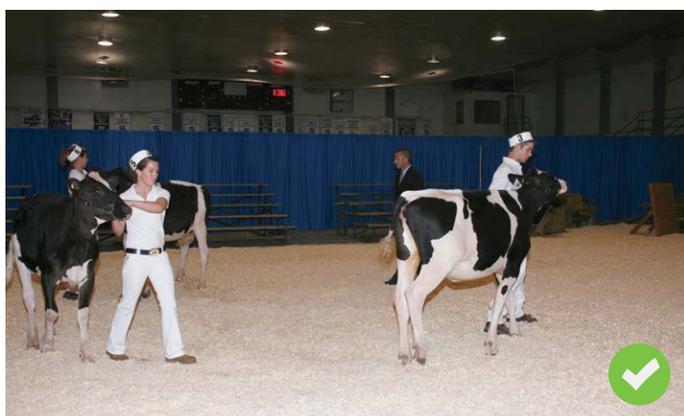
An alternate, permissible method of changing position, if easily managed, is backing your animal out of line. This should be practised at home.

If you are first or last and your calf is out of line, lead the calf forward giving yourself enough room to circle before turning and walking backward to lead your animal into her original position.

If asked by the judge to move out of line at the top of the class so he can get a better look at the animal, lead the calf forward. When coming into view of the judge, or asked to stop, turn and walk backward while the judge is looking, until he indicates for you to move on.

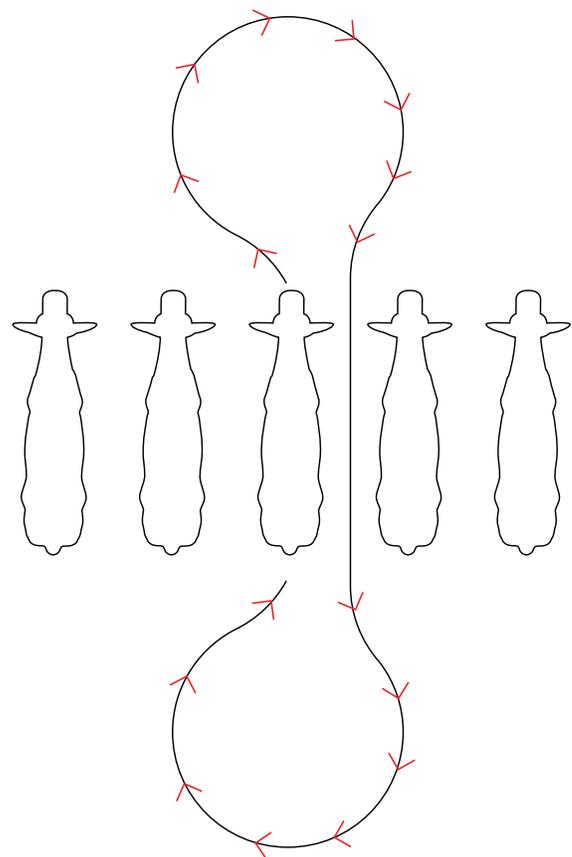


If the judge desires a better look at the top animals in a lineup, he has the option of pulling out a few for closer inspection. Moving counter-clockwise off the top of the class, the competitors walk backward to display their calves to the judge.



After the judge has viewed the top animals and motioned for competitors to return to the lineup, competitors turn and walk forward back into line.

Ideal pattern for moving up or down in line



You will be very seriously discriminated against if you move excessively in and out of line without instruction from the judge.



DON'T...

- continuously circle with your animal without instruction from the judge
- leave big spaces in the lineup
- crowd animals too tightly side by side

When the judge is moving down the front of the lineup, stand to the side where, with minimal movement, you can observe the judge easily. This allows the judge to view the front end of your animal.



Each competitor places the right hand on the calf's shoulder as the judge is about to walk down the front of the lineup. Competitors move fluidly to the side to give the judge a front-end view of the animal. The calf's nose slightly follows the judge.



Walking forward, competitors lead their calves out of line.

The calf's head slightly follows the judge.

After the judge has moved by and has observed the front end of your animal, you should hold the throat, if needed. If the judge takes one last look back down the lineup, he expects to see a nice lineup of heads and necks.

After the judge motions for you to circle from a lineup, walk ahead with the lead- shank in the left hand until the judge focuses attention back to the moving animals. Then turn and walk backward.

When the judge indicates for you to move into line, move briskly into the designated spot.

You could be requested to lead counter-clockwise off the top of the line in conformation or showmanship classes. If this happens, walk backward with the left hand holding the halter. The right hand should be used to hold the throat (if needed) or placed on the point of shoulder to steady the calf.

When motioned, turn forward and walk quickly back to line.

Leave at least five feet between your calf and the calf ahead when you are asked to move from one lineup to another second lineup ahead.

Turn around and walk backward into line so the judge can see your animal, once the previous animal is in line.

Good showmanship isn't tough. It's actually quite easy if you follow these pointers.

1. Most importantly, remain relaxed, and know your heifer's faults and how to correct them before coming into the ring.
2. Never presume the outcome if involved in a championship class. The judge has the option to change placings in showmanship.
3. A contestant should not be upset if an animal, causing a problem, is asked to stand to the side or leave the ring. This is done for the safety of other competitors and calves.
4. Don't let up until you've left the ring. For the judge and spectators, it's very disheartening to see competitors let themselves and their animals fall apart after final placement.
5. Have fun!

It is left to the discretion of the judge whether he wants top championship competitors to switch calves—this would only be done in very close situations and in head-to-tail positions.

>> **Attributes of Top Competitors**

COMPETITORS:

- appear relaxed—not robotic-like
- are competitive, but not overconfident
- remain calm and cool, regardless of the situation
- possess good posture, indicating they are confident in their skills
- know the faults of animals they show and have the ability to correct them
- choose the appropriate-size animal to complement their size
- select a halter that fits the animal and that they are comfortable using
- move neither too slow or too fast as they don't want to create any distraction
- keep the animal moving in the ring as much as possible—rather than standing.
Most cattle look better in motion.
- look professional in appearance and clothing

>> Showmanship Discriminations

SLIGHT	MODERATE	SERIOUS
<p>COMPETITOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has too long or too short a lead-strap • uses a tie or tape to keep lead-strap rolled • wears inappropriate footwear with pants tucked in boots • is inappropriately dressed • has inappropriate size of calf for competitor 	<p>COMPETITOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has poorly-fitted halter • holds halter incorrectly • not in correct position to calf • spends too much time looking at calf • concentrates too much on watching judge • doesn't see or obey signals • leaves insufficient spacing between calves on the move • allows insufficient spacing between calves in line • crowds in line • has stiff, outstretched arm • sidesteps when leading calf • is uptight and not relaxed • exhibits poor posture 	<p>COMPETITOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not display calf to best advantage • is late for class • chews gum or tobacco • carries or talks on a cell phone • displays poor sportsmanship • walks slowly backward into ring • projects lack of interest • has fingers in ring of halter • has hand and lead-strap above calf's head • has arm and/or elbow up • crouches • does not walk quickly into line • does not allow sufficient space for animal changing position • uses own feet to reposition calf's rear feet • walks wrong way around calf • fusses with calf to an extreme • moves excessively in line • is too close to the outside of the ring • fixes the calf in the incorrect spot (i.e. pinches loin in wrong spot) • is too far into the ring
<p>CALF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • head not turned slightly when the judge feels the hide • is not kept alert • older heifer is in heat 	<p>CALF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feet not trimmed • feet not reversed • throat not held, if required • switch not brushed and fluffed • muzzle is not wiped clean • is not straight, head-to-tail 	<p>CALF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is not well washed, including ears, tags, and feet • not trained • not clipped recently • nose in air • rear feet not positioned correctly • dirt or manure visible; black or brown spray in the tail • has hay/straw on stomach or in its mouth

>> Judges Share Secrets for Success

Competitors:

- remain professional at all times, regardless of the situation, in and out of the ring. They respect other peers, participants, spectators, and judges.
- are on time for every class
- continually follow the judge's requests and directions
- act relaxed and confident, but look like they want to win
- respect the ring steward, as well as ring custodians
- work the ring well and allow adequate spacing between animals to show an individual animal to her best advantage
- ideally, spend as much time as possible walking the animal; she always looks better on the move
- ensure the animal looks comfortable when standing, with her feet solidly underneath her body
- position the animal so the judge can see her at all times
- walk the animal into the ideal position in line. After adjusting the topline, front feet, etc., they don't fidget with her unless she moves and needs repositioning.
- refrain from talking to the judge, unless asked a specific question. However, a 4-H member should know the name, age, and sire of the heifer.
- never give up! Someone is always watching. Show your animals to their best advantage for the entire time in the ring.
- always make time for photography requests; world-wide exposure is great for everyone.

Tip #6: Don't become discouraged if you are not pulled first. Every moment is a second chance to turn it all around.



This competitor firmly holds his animal with the left hand. He uses his right hand to correct the animal's faults, to steady her, and to ensure that his exhibit looks her very best at all times for the judge.



These mature competitors have studied their entries before entering the ring and have identified what weaknesses need protecting. If needed, they know exactly where to pinch toplines. They can also discern when to stop fidgeting with their exhibit and be ready for the judge's inspection.

Tip #7: Look natural and remain relaxed—don't move like a robot!

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