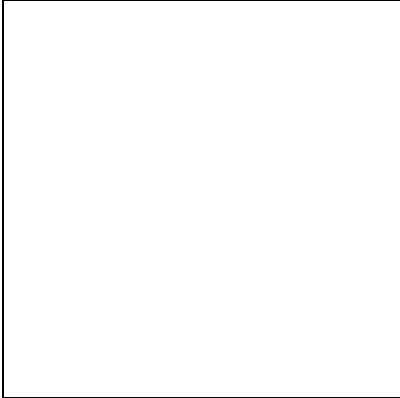


# How to Purchase a Dairy Goat

By [GreenGables](#).



A healthy MiniNubian Dairy Goat

Finding the perfect goat for your family and farm takes a little forethought and planning, but is very rewarding. This article will walk you through purchasing a good dairy goat.

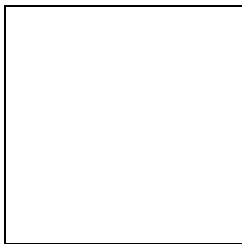
Difficulty: Easy

Instructions

## Things You'll Need:

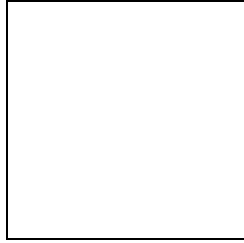
- Local ads, internet access, breeders directories
- Telephone or email or mail service

### 1. Step 1



Before you begin to look for the perfect goat, you should be sure that you have a safe place for your goats to live. A shelter from wind and rain, and an area for them to go outside. If you plan on them getting the majority of their food from grazing/browsing, you will need to be sure you have an adequate area fenced for pasture. If you do not have enough pasture, you can feed high quality hay. Also remember that goats are herd animals so you need to have at least 2.

### 2. Step 2



When looking for a goat, you will need to know what you want in a goat. Do you want one just for a pet or do you plan on milking, breeding or showing? Or a combination of all of them! This will help you make better choices and ask better questions.

### 3. Step 3

Looking for the perfect goat can be a daunting task. Find a reputable breeder of the kind of goat you are looking for. Here are a few ways to find breeders: Look through the breeders/member directories of the registries that recognize the breed goat you want.

Search the web. Many breeders have websites and there are lots of places online where goats are advertised.

Ask friends and family if they know of good goat breeders.

Look in your local papers for ads.

Check and feed stores, pet stores etc for ads.

### 4. Step 4

Once you find a few breeders in your area, you can find out more about if they are reputable breeders that you would feel comfortable buying from. A good breeder will be willing to answer your questions about their goats, the breed they raise and how to care for them. They will likely have recommendations of places where you can get more information as well.

### 5. Step 5

If at all possible, visit the farm in person. It is much easier to evaluate the goats in person. Check for shiny coats, bright alert eyes and that overall healthy glow.

Note any runny eyes or noses, diarrhea, abscesses, overgrown feet, lice etc. The goats should not be overly thin or extremely overweight.

### 6. Step 6

If you want a goat for pet, milking, breeding, showing or anything else where you have to handle them a lot, you will want to get a friendly goat. If the goats all run away when the gate is opened or they sulk in corners rather than coming up for petting, these goats may not be right for you. Goats that have been bottle-fed are

often more friendly, but not all are and dam raised kids can also be very friendly. This is one thing that you can really only judge by visiting in person.

#### 7. Step 7

If you have small children, you will want to be sure to get a goat that has been disbudded or is polled. (i.e. does not have any horns). Goats with horns can get stuck a lot more easily, and can accidentally hurt people and each other. If you do get goats with horns, make sure they all have horns as a hornless goat in a horned herd is at a severe disadvantage.

#### 8. Step 8

Ask about health practices...

What wormer do they use? and how often?

Do they test for CAE, CL, Johnes or at least have prevention measures in place?

If they do not care about any of these things, they are probably NOT a good place to buy your goats. You do not want to end up with problems down the road.

#### 9. Step 9

Once you find a few breeders you can trust, you can look at the animals they have for sale, or get on a list to purchase kids (baby goats) in the future. Many breeders have a waiting list for kids. You will want to evaluate the parents and grandparents of the goat you are getting, especially if you plan on breeding.

#### 10. Step 10

Evaluate the conformation of the goats for sale. Studying up on this ahead of time will help you a lot. It takes practice and experience, so if you can, get an experienced opinion on the goat. Especially if you plan on breeding or showing the goat. If this goat is just for a pet, all you really need, is to be sure that they have sound feet and legs and don't have any serious conformation issues that could cause them health problems.

#### 11. Step 11

When purchasing a doe for milk production, ask about past milk records, parents and grandparents milk production. Also find out if the doe is easy or hard to milk. If it is a kid, find out if her dam or granddam were easy to milk. Does the doe you are buying stand well for milking? There is nothing more frustrating than to have a goat that will NOT let you milk her and keeps stepping in the milk.

#### 12. Step 12

For breeding and milking animals, it is important to look back a few generations in the pedigree. Are the animals that your goat came from high quality animals that have passed on good genetics, or are there issues there that could manifest in the offspring of your goats?

### 13. Step 13

Once you have found the right goats for your family, you get to bring them home. For smaller breeds of goats and goat kids, you can often use medium to large dog carriers. For adults, you will need something a little larger. The bed of a pickup with a topper is ideal for hauling goats. The back of a van or SUV can work well with a tarp down with a little hay/straw and a separation in place to keep them from climbing over the back seat. Stock trailers can also work well for hauling goats, but are usually not real fuel efficient unless you are hauling a lot of goats.

### 14. Step 14

Keep your new goat(s) separated from the rest of your herd for several weeks to be sure that they do not have any viruses. The stress of travel can make them sick, so keeping them separated from your herd can help protect your animals. I always like to give ProBios or yogurt to any goats who have gone through the stress of travel.