

How to Show a Dairy Goat

By an eHow Contributing Writer

Whether you're a junior competitor showing your dairy goat for the first time, an amateur goat enthusiast or a professional breeder, taking your goat to show is an exciting way to evaluate the quality of your animal and test your showmanship skills. Preparing yourself and your dairy goat for the show ring takes time; but with a positive attitude, regular training and good planning anyone can show their goat. Read on to learn more.

Difficulty: Moderate
Instructions

Things You'll Need:

- Chain collar
- Clippers
- Baby wipes
- Show catalog
- Class list
- Hoof trimming supplies

1. Step 1

Locate a dairy goat show in your area. The American Dairy Goat Association has a complete online schedule of shows available on the web. Many regional goat clubs and organizations such as 4-H and FFA also hold dairy goat shows.

2. Step 2

Contact the show's chairperson to request a show booklet and to ask about show specifics such as registration dates and breed requirements. Most dairy goat shows will require your goat to be registered with either the ADGA, the AGS or the CGS.

3. Step 3

Prepare all paper work several weeks before the show. Some shows require you to pre-register weeks before the show. To pre-register send the show secretary a completed entry form, a copy of your goat's registration papers and a check before the entry deadline. Read over all the show's rules and regulations carefully before entering.

4. Step 4

Start training your goat to lead at least six weeks before the show if not earlier. Place a chain or nylon collar around your goat's neck, leaving two inches of room so the collar rest looses about the neck. Lift the collar up and under your goat's jaw and ask your goat to walk forward, just a few steps at first, by applying pressure under her chin. Repeat this exercise everyday and soon your goat will be walking quietly with you and not fussing.

5. Step 5

Practice squaring up your goat. You want your goat to stand with her head high, back straight, front legs squarely under her shoulder and hindlegs aligned evenly with her hips. You should be able to walk your goat, halt her and quickly square her up without a lot of commotion before you enter a show ring. Every time you handle your goat practice leading, pick up her legs, touch around her utters, and ask her to square up. Though diary goats aren't judged on your showmanship abilities, being able to show off your goat to her best advantage plays a large role in your goat's performance and placing in the ring.

6. Step 6

Clip your goat before the show. You want to do a complete body clip three weeks before the show. This will give any trace lines ample time to grow out and you will have plenty of time to double-check for any spots your might have missed. Touch up around your goat's head and lower legs two or three days before the show.

7. Step 7

Trim your goat's hooves a week before the show.

8. Step 8

Assemble an outfit for yourself for the show ring. It should be neat, clean and tidy. A white shirt with dark pants, polished leather boots and a matching belt are always a safe way to go.

9. Step 9

Wash your goat the morning of the show or the evening before. Clean under her tail with baby wipes and around her hooves before entering the ring. Replace her regular collar with a chain-link collar, the type used on dogs.

10. Step 10

Check in with the show secretary the morning of the show and pick up a revised show schedule and class list. You may also have to present your dairy goat to a veterinarian for a quick health inspection.

11. Step 11

Enter the ring tracking left. Keep your goat between you and the judge at all times, while maintaining a safe distance from other goats. Watch a few classes go before yours. Most judges will have one pattern-enter left, walk one complete circle, line up head to tail-and they will stick to that routine it for most of the day. Watching other classes going before you will give you a better idea of what to expect and what the judge favors.