

PDCA Showmanship Guidelines

Appearance of Exhibitor & Equipment

Apparel

- Wear white pants, a white collared shirt, and a belt.
- Wear hard-toe, hard-sole shoes or boots. No sneakers.
- Wear pants over boots. Do not tuck pants inside boots.
- Wear a properly fitting show harness to display your backtag number.
- Be neat and clean in overall appearance.
- Minimize accessories or anything that draws attention to you instead of your animal.

Behavior

- Maintain good posture and move confidently.
- Strike a balance where you appear to be relaxed and enjoying yourself, while maintaining a competitive intensity and interest.
- Exhibit good sportsmanship before, during and after the show.
- Be comfortable with the animal you are showing, demonstrating you have worked with your animal many times before.
- Be ringside before your class begins and enter promptly when your class is called. Do not be late.
- A showman should never strike their animal, and should adhere to all PDCA Code of Ethics guidelines.

Knowledge

- Know important facts about the animal that could aid the judge in making their placing decision, such as her birthdate, calving date and lactation number.
- Know the animal's faults and how to move your animal in ways that minimize their appearance.

Halter

- Use a leather dairy show halter that is clean and shined.
- Fit the halter with nose band midway between the animal's eyes and nose.
- Have snap of the halter's chain open to the outside, so the clasp is facing you and not into the animal's jaw.
- Your left hand or part of the hand is under the chain and around the ring, but fingers are not through the ring. Hold the lead strap in the left or right hand (which ever gives you the most control) using approximately three small loops (not tightly coiled or looped and fastened) so that the lead strap does not rub the animal's eye or is visible from the right side.

Appearance of Animal

Cleanliness

- Animal is clean (including hooves, tail, and inside ears) and dry.
- White spots are as white as possible, demonstrating the animal was washed regularly.
- Muzzle is wiped clean.

Condition

- Animal is in good health and condition – neither too fat or too thin.
- Hooves are trimmed.
- Animal is dehorned.

Grooming

- Animal is completely clipped within a few days of show.
- Varying clipped hair lengths are well-blended.
- Topline hair is blown up on heifers.
- Tail switch is brushed and fluffed.

Behavior

- Animal is well-trained to lead and poses quickly.
- Animal is alert, but calm when touched or around distractions.
- Animal responds well to your desired actions.
- Animal is size appropriate for the exhibitor.

Showing Animal to its Best Advantage

Entering the Showring

- Enter the ring walking forward on the animal's left side with the halter in the left hand while pulling throat with your right hand.
- Position your body to keep slightly ahead of the animal's nose, away from the animal's shoulder.
- The left arm should be comfortably positioned; not too straight and the elbow should not be too high.
- As the judge is evaluating the class, present the animal in her best form; maintaining a fluid motion, awareness of where the judge is and control of your animal.

Circling in the Showring

- Walk at a smooth even pace - not too fast or too slow. Try to walk in step with your animal, so when she steps with her left front leg, you step with your left foot, and vice versa.
- Never cross your feet to walk sideways. You should always be walking forward or backwards as appropriate.
- Hold the animal's head up at a comfortable level, where she looks her best, never with nose in air. The nose should be pointed slightly toward the center of the showring.
- Keep approximately 3 to 5 feet behind the animal in front of you and 5 feet between you and the outside of the ring.
- Keep in an even line with the other animals in front and in back of you while circling. Do not let your animal move too far inward or outward compared to the others.
- When on parade always provide the judge with a side profile of your animal.
- Your attention should be focused, keeping one eye on your animal and one eye on the judge. Spend about half the time looking at your animal and the other half watching the judge. You must also maintain awareness of everything going on in the showring.
- Stop and set up your animal appropriately upon request of the judge.
- Whenever stopped in the ring, the animal should be posed with front feet square. Rear legs should be positioned differently for heifers and milking cows.
 - Heifers - position the rear leg nearest the judge back.
 - Cows - position the rear leg nearest the judge forward.
- Respond to questions from the judge confidently, and instructions from the judge quickly.
- If your animal lays down in the ring during the class, gently get her to stand up, quickly wipe off any loose or hanging material using two to three strokes of your hand, and continue to show her.
- Recognize your animal's faults and try to minimize their appearance.
 - If the animal carries extra flesh on her neck, pull the animal's throat with your right hand to make her appear cleaner in the neck.

- If the animal arches her topline, pinch it down to make her appear straighter across her top.
- If the animal weakens in her loin, slightly push her weight back using halter pressure.
- If the animal puts her tail up, tuck the tailhead down.
- If you are asked by the judge to switch animals with another exhibitor, do so in a timely fashion, which may include a *quick* assessment of the animal you are taking control of to evaluate her major strengths and weaknesses. When taking your own animal back you should not inspect your animal. You should only make sure the animal is set up correctly.

Entering the Lineup

- Enter the lineup in the order you were called.
- Turn and walk forward smoothly into line, never running with your animal.
- When walking into line, showmen should take care not to obstruct the judge's view of other animals still on parade.
- When you approach the line, turn around and walk backwards into line. Then set up your animal in the desired, posed position.
- Keep your animals topline straight from head to tail, perpendicular to the designated line.
- Line up with other animals in an even line, leaving no more than one foot between animals. Be careful not to bump other animals.
- Keep a straight line by lining up the shoulder of your animal with the shoulder of the animal in front of you in the lineup.

Posing in the Lineup

- Setting up your animal should be completed in one or two steps without too much overworking and movement.
- Legs should be comfortably beneath the animal. Do not get her legs too far under her body (appearing scrunched) or too far back and out from under her (appearing stretched out).
- Front feet should be lined up evenly. To move her front feet, use halter pressure, and a slight touch with your foot if needed.
- Train animal to back up by touching her shoulder combined with halter pressure, so when rear legs need repositioning, do so without using your feet. You should never use your feet to help position your animal's rear legs.
- When showing a heifer, your position in the lineup determines how the animal's rear legs should be positioned. Once your animal is set up properly, you should not switch the position of her rear legs, even if the judge walks back and forth.
 - The first person in line should set their animal up as if the judge was on the leadsperson side of the animal.
 - The last person in line sets their animal up as if the judge were opposite the leadsperson.
 - The rest of the class sets their animal up so they looked balanced with one rear leg forward.
- If you have a cow, you must move her rear legs each time the judge changes sides in the lineup.
- When the judge comes to the front of the animal, turn to face the judge presenting the front end of the animal for inspection. Do not cover up the person next to you, and do not move to the left side of the animal.
- After the judge motions for you to circle out from the lineup, keep showing your animal while the judge makes his final assessment. Once the judge has moved his attention further down the line, you can walk forward again when pulling her into the final line-up.