

Preparing Your Show Calf!

Being successful with show calves takes a lot of time and commitment. Winning showmanship and market classes begin the day you bring the calf home. Read the following tips and use what will be beneficial to your program.

No pain – No gain!

HALTER BREAKING:

Begin by putting a rope halter on your calf and let him drag it for a week. Give the calf one day to drag the rope, then begin tying him up. It is important that while the calf is dragging the rope you tie him up. Dragging the rope will teach him to stop when there is tension on the rope. When tying up your calf, *NEVER* leave him alone. If he should tangle himself up or flip himself over, you need to be there to untie him before he strangles himself. If you do this every day for one week, usually the calf is broke enough to quit fighting the rope and will stand calmly.

WINTER CARE:

Once your calf has become used to the halter and can be tied up without fighting the rope, the calf needs to be tied up at least two times a week. It is important to be consistent with your routine. If you quit working with your animal, they tend to forget what they have learned and you have to start the process all over. The next step is to teach your animal to lead. The best way to teach a calf to lead is to tie him up in a different location than the corral. Be sure that that you have control of him before you take him out of the corral area. If you are nervous about how the animal will perform, get some one to help. Avoid letting the calf break away from you. Once he learns that he can get free, he will continue to try each time you bring him out of the corral. We have found that by taking them out of the corral to be tied up helps them adjust to different surroundings and helps to wean them from their comfort zone. If you do this at least twice a week, they will be leading before you know it. Another good experience for your livestock is to take them in the livestock trailer once a month to weight them. This process helps them get used to jumping in and out of the trailer, as well as adjusting to a new environment. It helps them be more comfortable about traveling and accept new surrounding come show day.

The formula for healthy hair is simple; comb and clip. A good rule of thumb is to clip the calf once a month and comb it every time you tie it up. It will keep the hair growing healthy and help better your clipping skills. Follow the directions below when you are clipping your calf.

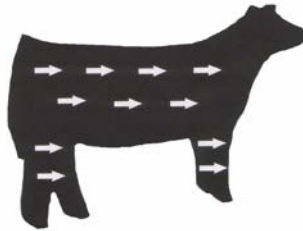
WASHING – SUMMER MONTHS

For best results the steer must be washed and blown dry daily. Before you begin washing, blow all dirt and dust out of your calf's hair. When washing daily do not use shampoo more than one time a week. Conditioner should be used daily to help keep the hair healthy and manageable. A good conditioner to use is Mane and Tail. Once your calf is washed, comb it in the following directions:

First:



Second:



Third:



By following this process you will find your calves hair much more manageable come show day.

DRYING – ALL YEAR ROUND

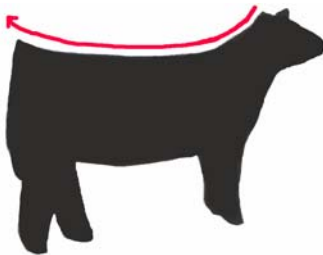
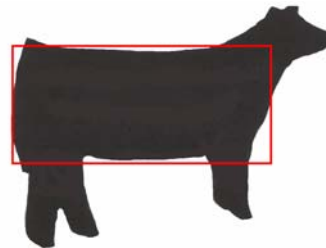
Once you have properly combed the hair, you will need to blow it dry in the same direction as you combed it in the third procedure of STEP 1.

Special Tip: On show day if your calf is first dried with the blower then left to air dry three hours before you begin fitting or clipping, the hair will look and manage much better.



SHAVING – ALL YEAR ROUND

The phrase to remember is “Rectangle & Square.” You want your calf to look like a rectangle from his side profile (in figure to right) and a square from the front and rear view. When you look at the profile of your calf you want to see smooth lines from front to back. To achieve this you start by spraying the entire body of the calf with Sullivans Pink Oil and lightly blow it in. Begin by clipping the high spots on your calf and clip the hair to the lowest length. Then create your line by blending into the rest of the low points. The hair on the head of the calf should be completely shaved off, along with the bottom of the neck. (to do this go against the natural direction of it’s hair). Continue down between the front legs trimming all the hair off. At the back of the front legs you need to blend from the brisket to the stomach, and then shave the hair completely off the sheath of your calf. On the back of the rear quarter of the calf you will shave **with** the grain of the hair to smooth and square it off. The tail will be shaved from the top of the twist straight up to the tail head to make it look square. On the top of the tail head, back and neck, we want to make it look as wide as possible. From the calf’s side profile we want to make it look like a ski jump, shown in the figure to the left. This is done by taking the high points and shaving them down and blending into the low points.



FITTING – SHOWDAY

For best results you may want to purchase and use:

Sullivan's Pink Oil, Sullivan's Clear Prime Time Adhesive, Sullivan's Clear Mousse, Sullivan's Black Touch-up and Sullivan's Hocus Pocus. Other brands may be used, but Sullivan's has proven to be the best. To receive a catalog or order a product, visit sullivanssupply.com.

Once your calf has **completely** dried you may begin to fit him for show.

First: Spray the entire body of the calf with pink oil and lightly blow it in with your dryer. This will soften and moisturize the hair.

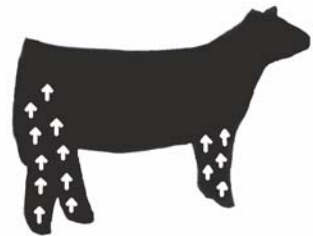
Second: Spray Sullivan's Clear Mousse over the entire body of the calf, excluding the legs. Once sprayed on you will brush it in with a brush. Once completely brushed, you will then use the blow dryer to blow it into the hair. For best results blow the hair in the same direction as before (shown in figure to the right.) The mousse must be blown in for twenty minutes or more. The longer it is blown the fluffier the hair will become, **that's the secret.**

Third: Use the Sullivan's Prime Time Adhesive to bone the calf's legs or in other words pull the hair up. Start at the hoof of the animal and spray the adhesive on the leg then comb it up, so on and so on until you reach the middle of the calf's rear end.

Fourth: You will square the legs up with clippers once the leg hair is combed up. The trimming the leg hair is similar to the trimming the body. Take down the high points and square them up, then blend into the low points.

Fifth: Use the Sullivan's Prime Time Adhesive to hold up the hair on the tail head to make the ski jump appearance mentioned before. Once it pulled up don't forget to trim it up with the clippers.

Sixth: Just before you enter the ring you will use a light spray of prime time to help hold up the hair in the show ring.



BREAKING DOWN AFTER SHOWDAY

After the show it is important to wash out the adhesives from the calf's hair, so that you can repeat the same process the next day. First, use the Sullivan's Hocus Pocus to loosen the adhesive so that it can be washed out. The steer must be washed head to toe, start with the legs and work up. That will let the steer get used to the water, so you don't give him a shock from hot to cold. Be sure to let the steer cool down before you wash him. This time you will use soap and conditioner to get all the junk out that we put in. Then we start at STEP 1 again.