

Handling Your Lamb

Here are some easy steps to take to move your lamb, set it up, and brace it.



Leading your lamb

Step 1 - Moving Your Lamb

To move the lamb, stand on its left side, grasp it under its chin with your left hand and put your right hand on its dock. Guide the lamb with your left hand and move it by pressing on its dock with your right hand. Never work your lamb for long periods of time or it will become restless and stubborn.

Note: Basic handling techniques are covered in our Beginner's Sheep Resource. This resource focuses on Showing and Trimming.



Setting a front leg

Step 2 - Setting Your Lamb Up

In the show ring, the lamb should stand quietly with the front and hind legs set squarely under the four corners of the animal. The head should be held up. Always work on the side of the lamb opposite to the judge. In general, you will be working on the left side (from the rear of the lamb) of your lamb. Occasionally you will have to move your lamb on the right side. Set the lamb by moving its feet into proper position. Practice this often for short periods of time.



Setting a back leg



Bracing a lamb

Step 3 - Bracing a Lamb

Bracing is a term that means having the lamb hold its back rigid when someone presses on it. Stand in front of your lamb and cup its chin in your hands. Pull downward with your hands and apply enough backward pressure to cause the lamb to arch or bend its back. Do not choke the lamb or grasp so hard that you hurt the animal, remember you want this to be an experience that doesn't scare the lamb.

The show person should put their knee against the brisket (the breast) to prevent the lamb from bolting when the judge handles the lamb.

Washing Your Lamb

Assemble all of your supplies in the washing area. Make sure there is proper drainage. You will use a hose to loosen and remove loose dirt from the lamb's fleece, legs and feet. If you have access to warm water, this will work best as it will help remove lanolin (the natural oil in wool) that can hold dirt particularly on the belly areas. Start at the neck and gently work your way down the animal so the water runs down and drains away. Be careful to not get soap or water into the lamb's eyes or ears. Go slowly and let the lamb get used to the water.

Once it is all wet, use either livestock shampoo or mild dish soap like Sunlight or Dawn. Create a lather using your hands or a stiff brush, rubbing gently, but firmly in circular scrubbing motions. Pay special attention to the belly, under the legs and the crotch. Use a cloth to wash the lamb's face.

