

4-H Market Steer Handbook: Showmanship

Following are some suggestions that should be considered before entering the show ring and showing the steer.

1. Know when the class is scheduled in which your steer will be exhibited. Check the show schedule the night before. Locate your steer's numbers and your name and class number.
2. Get to the "line up" area on time. The class that your steer is in will be "called" or announced 15 to 20 minutes before the actual class will be shown.
3. Before you leave for the "line up" area, be sure that the steer's halter is properly adjusted. The "nose" strap should be adjusted relatively high across the nose.
4. Be sure that you are dressed in clean jeans and shirt and are wearing leather shoes to protect your feet (no athletic shoes). You should have your show stick and a brush or comb with you. It is recommended that no hats or caps be worn.
5. As you prepare to enter the show ring, remember that your job is to present the steer at its best advantage at all times. Draw the judge's attention to your steer rather than to yourself.
6. Walk into the ring on the left side of the steer with lead strap neatly in your right hand. Lead strap should be shortened to allow you to control the steer. An excessive lead strap can cause problems.
7. When leading the steer, always carry the show stick in a vertical position in your left hand. Give the steer about 2 feet of the lead strap. If the steer is held closer, the steer will fight and if given more than the two feet, he will be hard to manage.
8. Pull your calf in line and keep a minimum of 3 feet of space between your steer and the next one. This space will allow you to show your steer and the judge to see your steer.
9. When setting up your calf, change the lead strap to your left hand and use the show stick with your right. Set up the calf as quickly and quietly as possible. Set the animal up with one leg squarely under each corner of his body. Keep the steer's back level and straight and his head up.
10. Always know where the judge and the ring men are in the ring. Be alert. Move promptly when told.
11. In moving your steer out the line and moving into another position, there are three general situations you are likely to encounter:
 - a. The first is when you are pulled in very close to the rail. In this situation, the only thing you can do is back your steer out of the line and lead him to the new position.
 - b. The second is when you are near the center of the line and have plenty of room between your steer's head and the rail. When told to move, pull your steer forward toward the rail, turn to the right and move back through the space the steer just vacated. When you have moved to the center of the ring, you may move into the position the judge and/or ring assistant have indicated.
 - c. The third situation is when you are

standing near one end of the line and have adequate room between your steer's head and the rail. When instructed to move, simply pull your steer forward, circle the end of the line and pull your steer back into the position the judge has instructed.

12. Watch the steer in front and behind you. Do not walk too closely to the steer in front of you.
13. When the judge signals the line of steers to move, circle the show ring in a clockwise direction.

When leading your steer into the ring, follow the instructions of the ring steward. In most shows, you will be asked to head your calf toward the rail. Pull your calf in line and try to keep 3 feet between your steer and the one you line up on. This space will allow you to show and the judge an opportunity to see your steer.

Keep your eye on the judge. Be careful and do not run your steer up on the one in front of you. If the steer in front of you stops, tap him gently on the rear with your show stick until he moves forward. When you stop, set the calf up quickly.

14. When the judge walks up to check your steer, rub the show stick slightly under his stomach. This will tend to quiet the steer when the judge moves to the front of your animal, switch your show stick to your left hand and the lead strap to your right hand and step back on the left side of your steer so the judge can view the animal.
15. When in the show ring, be courteous and quiet and deliberate in your movements. Do not become excited when you show because the steer can sense this and it tends to excite him. Be a good sport.

16. Be careful to not over show. The basic purpose of showing is to exhibit your steer for the best appearance. A show by the exhibitor will draw attention away from the steer.
17. Keep your mind on your work. Do not let your steer stand.
18. Remember, never stop showing until the judge has made his final decision on the class.

You may be requested by the judge or ring assistants to move your steer to another location in the line. If in this situation, pull your steer forward toward the rail, turn to the right and move back through the space the steer just left. When you have moved the steer out toward the center of the ring, you may move to any position the judge or ring assistants have indicated.

Exhibitors will be asked to "walk" the steers and line up "head to tail" so the judge can see your steer from the side. Leave three (3) feet between your steer and the steer in front of you.