



Fitting and Showing Your 4-H Pig

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service • Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

The show ring is filled with the fun and excitement of friendly competition. Showing your pig lets you compare your pigs with those of other 4-H members. It is a pleasure to drive a well-trained and groomed pig into a show ring.

Livestock judges like to observe and handle well-mannered pigs. However, it is difficult to judge unruly pigs. Also, it is discouraging to show a pig that refuses to do what you want it to do. Here are some things you should do:

1. **Practice driving your pig every day for about a month before the show.** Teach your pig to go where you want it to go when you tap it lightly with a lightweight cane or whip. A fenced grass lot is an excellent place to practice driving your pig.
 2. **Brush your pig daily for 2 months before the show.** Brush the hair back and down so it lies naturally. Brushing also adds “bloom” to the hair and makes the pig gentle.
 3. **Wash your pig once or twice the last month before the show and the day before the show, using a stiff brush and a mild soap.** White pigs may need extra washings, and it may be necessary to bleach them. Be careful not to get water inside the pig’s ear.
 4. **If your pig’s hooves are too long, you may want to consider trimming two to three weeks before the show.** Usually this is not necessary, but if it is, ask an experienced person to show you how to do it. If you trim too closely, you may cause the pig to be lame or tender-footed on show day.
 5. **Clip the hair on the tail from the switch to the base of the tail a few days before the show.** Be sure to leave three to four inches of switch on the end of the tail.
 6. **Clip off all the long hair from under the ear and around the edge a few days before show time.**
 7. **If it is a winter show and the pigs have very long hair, you may want to clip the underline to make the pig appear trim in the middle.**
3. **Plan transportation for your pig before show day.** Do not haul your pig in an open truck or trailer in severely cold or hot weather. In summer haul it at night or very early in the morning, while it is cool.
 4. **Take enough feed to last the entire show.** Do not change feed at the show.
 5. **Take some bedding (straw or shavings) to the show if bedding is not provided.**
 6. **Take a small feed trough or pan, a water bucket, and a small shovel to clean pens.**
 7. **Take a property box with the necessary equipment for fitting and showing your pig.**
This should include:
 - a. soap
 - b. brush
 - c. cane or whip
 - d. work clothes and boots or overshoes to use when washing your pig
 - e. water hose
 - f. soft cloth
 - g. oil or powder if coat dressing is allowed (It is not allowed in some states or certain shows in other states)

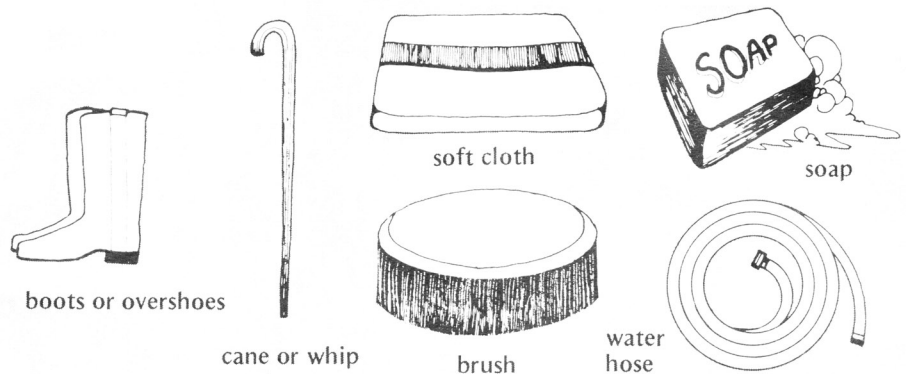
Thing to do at the Show

1. Check with your 4-H Extension Educator, Volunteer Leader, or Show Superintendent for pen assignments.
2. Put bedding in the pen for your pig.
3. Follow instructions on weighing, paint branding, and ear tagging.
4. Feed lightly at the show. Your pig should not appear gaunt or shrunken, but too much feeding will cause it to appear wasty in the middle.
5. Feed and water your pig outside the pen if possible. If not, stay with in the pen to prevent the water trough from being turned over and causing wet bedding.
6. Exercise your pig daily while at the show.
7. Wash your pig in time for it to dry before show time.
8. Brush the hair back and down.
9. Brush all straw or shavings off the pig before entering the show ring.

Thing To Do Before Going to Show

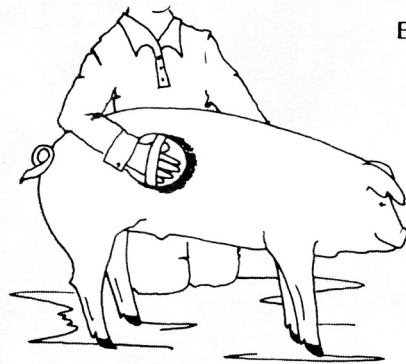
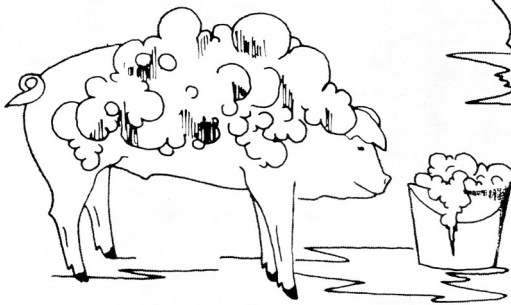
1. **Know when and where the show is going to take place.**
2. **Read the show catalog and know the health requirements.** Have your health papers, if required, in order before show day.

A well equipped property box includes these items:



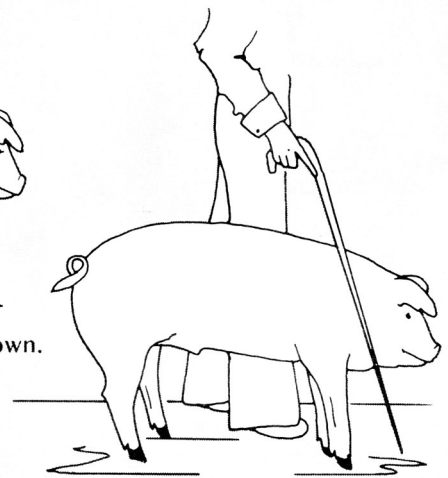
These are some of the things to be done at the show:

Wash your pig in time to dry before show time.



Brush the hair back and down.

Exercise your pig daily while at the show.



In some shows, powdering white pigs and oiling black, red, or spotted pigs are allowed. In other shows, such as terminal shows where the pigs are sent immediately to slaughter, oiling and powdering may be forbidden. The oil or powder makes it difficult to scald the pigs properly.

A clean, well-brushed pig with the natural look can be a very attractive pig. However, if you go to a show that allows the use of powder and oil and you decide to use it, follow these recommendations:

1. Dust white or white crossbred pigs with white talcum powder and then brush the pig lightly to work the powder into the hair.
2. On black, red, or spotted pigs, oil with a light coat of commercially prepared show oil or a mixture of half mineral oil and half alcohol. A sprayer or a soft cloth can be used to apply the oil. After applying, use a soft, clean cloth to remove excess oil.

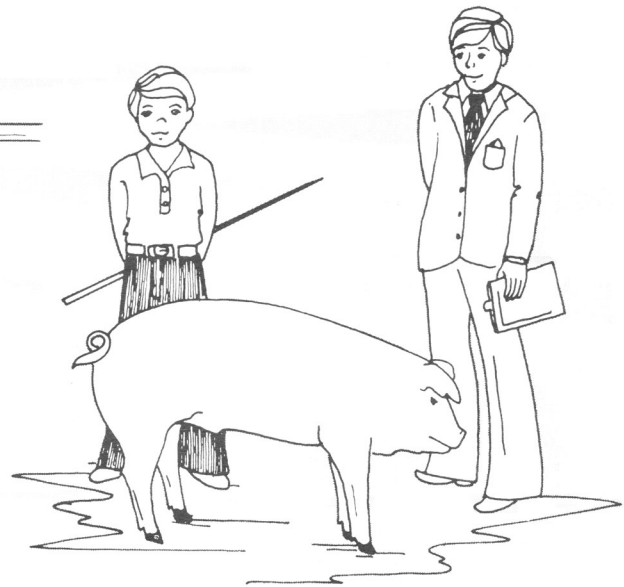
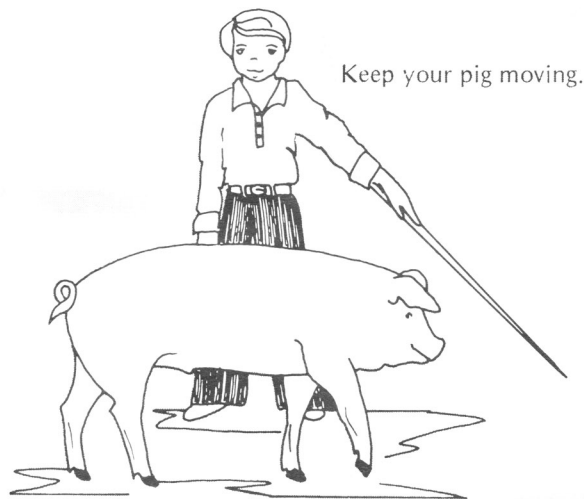
In the Show Ring

1. Keep your eyes on the judge and on your pig at all times.
2. Keep your pig between you and the judge.
3. Drive your pig slowly about the show ring. Do not let it stand if the judge is watching.
4. Keep your pig out in the open. Do not let it crowd in the corner with a large group of other pigs. Also, do not crowd the pig close to the judge.
5. Do not let your pig get into an awkward position.
6. Use a small whip, cane, or show stick while in the show ring.
7. Do not beat your pig on the back or rump with your cane or brush.
8. Do not lean on your pig's back or knee him in the ham area.
9. Keep a hand free when showing the pig.

These are some things to do in the show ring:



Dress neatly for the show ring.



Keep your pig in view of the judge.

10. When the judge is looking at your pig, do not point at the pig's strong points or wave your hand at the judge.
11. Stop your pig if the judge wishes to handle him.
12. Be well groomed and neat when showing your pig. Wear clean clothes in the ring.
13. Be a good sport. Be respectful to the judge and fellow 4-H members. Do your best and win or lose with pride.

Things to do (Activities)

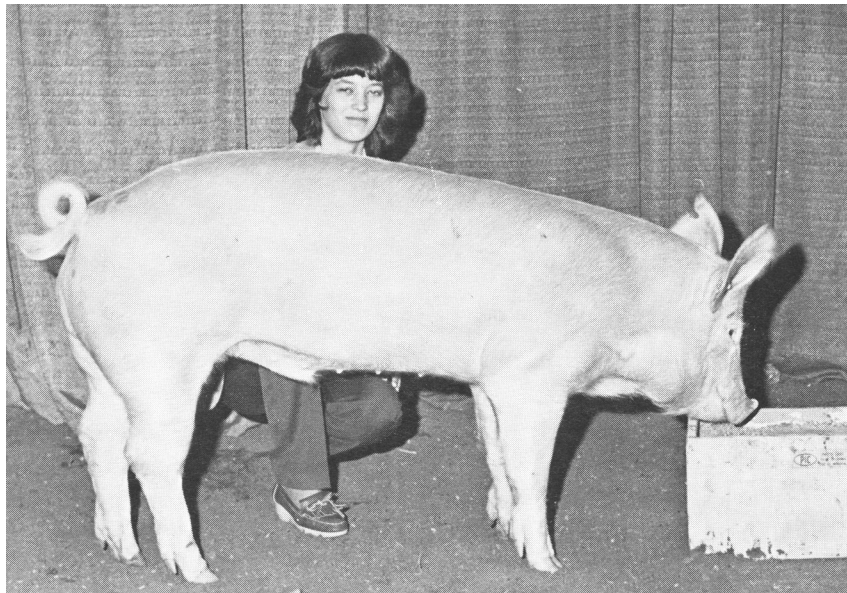
1. Go to swine field days and judging clinics in your area.
2. Go to swine shows in your area.
3. Try to attend a breed association swine type conference. Most breed associations hold one or more swine conferences during the winter season.
4. Visit a purebred breeder's swine farm. Ask him for tips on showing and fitting pigs.
5. Visit a livestock supply store that sells stock show grooming, showing equipment, and supplies.

Questions

1. Why should you exercise your pig?
2. What part of the day should you haul a pig in the summer?
3. Name items you need to take to the show for fitting and showing your pig.
4. Why is it a good idea if possible to feed and water your pig outside the pen when you are at the show?
5. Should you wave at the judge or point at your pig's strong points?
6. Should you feed your pig heavily or lightly at the show?

Other Resources

1. Experienced purebred swine breeders in your area who actively show their hogs.
2. Swine breed association representatives.
3. Your County Extension 4-H Educator.



The end result of a good job of feeding, fitting, and showing a barrow.

Prepared by the Southern Region 4-H Literature Committee, Dr. William G. Luce, Extension Service Emerti, Swine.

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Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Edwin L. Miller, Interim Director of Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma. This publication is printed and issued by Oklahoma State University as authorized by the Dean of the Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources and has been prepared and distributed at a cost of 20 cents per copy. 0305.