



Goat Reproduction & Kidding Handout

1. How do I know when she is going into labor?

Watching for specific physical and behavioral changes will tell you when kidding is imminent.

- **Behavior:** The doe will likely separate herself from the herd, appear restless, paw at the bedding to make a "nest," and lie down and get up frequently.
 - **Physical Changes:**
 - **Ligaments:** The ligaments around the tail head will soften and disappear. You will be able to feel a hollow space on either side of the tail bone where it used to be tight.
 - **Udder:** The udder will become very tight, shiny, and full of milk (bagging up).
 - **Vulva:** It will appear swollen and relaxed.
 - **Discharge:** A clear mucus string (mucus plug) may appear hanging from the vulva.
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2. What should I do if a kid is stuck?

Normal presentation is two front feet first, with the nose resting on top of the legs. If the doe has been actively pushing for 30–45 minutes with no progress, intervention may be needed.

1. **Preparation:** Wash your hands and arms thoroughly. Use a clean, water-soluble lubricant (like KY Jelly).
2. **Assessment:** Gently insert your hand into the birth canal to determine the position of the kid.
3. **Repositioning:** If a leg is back or the head is turned, gently try to push the kid back slightly and manipulate the limb into the correct position.
4. **Assisting:** Once the kid is positioned correctly, pull gently **downward** toward the doe's hocks, only when she pushes.

Note: If you are unable to fix the issue within 15–20 minutes, **call your veterinarian immediately.**

3. How do I care for an orphan kid?

If a mother rejects a kid or dies, you must take over as the caregiver.

- **Colostrum is Critical:** Newborns *must* receive colostrum within the first 12–24 hours for antibodies. If the mother’s milk is unavailable, use a colostrum replacer.
- **Feeding Schedule:**
 - **Days 1–3:** Feed every 3–4 hours (about 10% of their body weight per day, divided into feedings).
 - **Weeks 1–4:** Gradually increase bottle size and reduce frequency to 4 times a day.
- **Method:** Use a bottle with a lamb/goat nipple. Ensure the milk is warm (not hot).



4. When can I castrate the buck kids?

Castration is necessary for male goats not intended for breeding to prevent odor and unwanted pregnancies.

- **Timing:**
 - **Early:** 2 days to 3 weeks old. This is less painful and heals quickly.
 - **Late:** 8 to 12 weeks. Some believe waiting allows the urethra to develop more, reducing the risk of urinary calculi, but it is more painful.
- **Methods:**
 - **Banding (Elastrator):** A small rubber ring is placed around the scrotum to cut off circulation. The scrotum falls off in 2–4 weeks.
 - **Surgical:** Removal of testicles by a veterinarian or experienced producer.

CRITICAL: Ensure the kid has had a **Tetanus Toxoid** injection at the time of castration, regardless of method.

