

Preparation for your new goat

To support a smooth transition to their new home, goats should have the following:

Housing - They need shelter from the wind and rain as goats hate to get wet! For one or two goats, x-large dogloos work well. We recommend a 3-sided shelter to protect them from the elements.



Protection from predators (this includes dogs, coyotes, bobcats, mountain lions and bears). You should have secure fencing in advance of your new goat(s) arriving home. Having secure fencing not only ensures your goats will stay where you want them, it will also help prevent predators and others from getting in to your goat area. If you have predators, putting a gate on your 3 shelter and locking them in at night is also advised. Depending on the type of predators you have, you may want to look into a livestock guardian animal.



We have used horse fencing and combo cattle panels with small to large openings with much success. Remember, kids are small and can squeeze through small openings until they get a little bigger. Fence height should be at least 4 feet high but the higher the better to keep these acrobatic critters where they are supposed to be!



Feeding supplies - hay should be fed off the ground as goats are very picky eaters and will not eat soiled hay that touches the ground. There are several kinds of feeders you can use (or make) that work well for goats. If you use feeders that stand on their own, I recommended you secure it to something stationary to keep it from tipping over. While it may be rare, I have experienced my Nigerians knocking it over as well as getting their head stuck in the feeder and then having the feeder fall on them while stuck. So please secure it and your goats should be safe!



You should also have a bucket or trough for water but not too deep as you don't want your goats at risk of drowning should they happen to find themselves in the water. You should also have small feeders/buckets to feed loose minerals.



We do not typically bottle feed our kids as they are dam raised, however, at times it may be necessary for us to bottle feed one or more kids. If bringing home a bottle kid, you will also need a bottle and teat, (we have had success using Pritchard teats), and a milk supply (we recommend using Vitamin D Whole Milk if you don't have access to goat milk).



Feed - For bucks, does (not in milk) and wethers, good grass hay is recommended – never feed moldy hay. We do not recommend feeding wethers alfalfa as it can contribute to urinary stones/blockage. For does in milk or pregnant, they will need additional calories and feed types – please discuss with your breeder or vet for the best combination of feeds to support growing kids and a steady milk supply. Always transition to new feed gradually to prevent stomach upset and/or bloat.

We also provide free access to baking soda – it is a digestive aid for goats and acts as a buffer to help them if their rumen PH gets off. Goats will usually eat baking soda if their stomach begins to get upset and can help prevent stomach issues and bloat, a sometimes-deadly condition caused by overeating or eating the wrong food.

Loose goat minerals should also be provided in a dry location as they will be ruined if allowed to get wet. We have found our goats like the loose mineral rather than a mineral block and don't eat enough of the block to get the benefits they need. We have used these feeders and put loose minerals on one side and baking soda on the other but you can put in separate buckets as well.



Medical Care - We recommend finding a vet that can treat goats before you bring your kid/goat home. Goats are typically hardy animals, however, adjusting to a new home and environment may be stressful to a kid/goat and it's best to have a vet identified to act promptly to address any issues. We live in Sonoma County and use Cotati Large Animal.

Water - Always provide clean and fresh water - goats are picky about their water and will drink less if it's dirty or soiled which can lead to other issues (urinary blockages). If your water freezes in the winter, its recommended to heat the water or bring warm water for them to drink.



Playtime - Goats love to play! - so we recommend having safe toys for them to play on. You can buy or build toys - some ideas are large wooden spools, plastic playgrounds, rocks, wine barrels, etc. Just keep any toys in the middle of your goat pasture and not along the fence line, otherwise, these smart little goats will be finding an easy way to go over your fencing and roam around your home eating all of your favorite plants (like roses and the bark off your favorite tree!)



Handling - Goats love to hang out with you so spend time with them - the more they get to know you the more enjoyment you will have with them! They also love scratches so find their special scratchy spot and you'll have a friend for life.

Goats kids may take a couple days, up to a week to settle into their new home and surroundings so give them time to adjust. Don't chase them as this teaches them to run away from you. Better to sit down in a small area with them (stall or small pasture) and let them come and investigate you. Resist the urge to grab them and let them see, smell and touch you. Before you know it, they should be climbing all over you and waiting for you to come and play with them.

We also recommend - DO NOT play "butting" with your goat, otherwise, you may find yourself protecting your knee caps and the back of your knees while visiting your goat friends. Scratching vs. patting their head is your best bet. Do not pet the top of their head like a dog – this will be viewed as butting and may tell your goat it is ok to butt you back. Once your goats learn they can play "butt" with you – I don't know how to unteach it, so better to avoid the issue from the start!

Enjoy your goats – we can't imagine life without them and we think goat hugs are the best!