



DVM1 Safe cattle handling: live animal practical classes

Session 2 - Dookie

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Outline

Remember at all times:

- Work quietly and calmly around the animals
- Always touch the cow lightly and talk to it from a distance to let her know you are there before moving your body within striking distance.
- Be aware of your own safety, the safety of your colleagues and the wellbeing of the cattle

In this session you will have the chance to revisit all the activities you were introduced to last class. In addition, you will begin to build on those activities at your instructors discretion and depending on your level of confidence. Suggested activities and progressions are listed here:

- Use of the crush: now you will be asked to catch a cow as they walk into the crush.
- Approaching the cow in the crush:
 - From the side to palpate the paralumbar fossa and over the ribs where you might hear the heart with a stethoscope (can you identify other external anatomical features and areas such as the hip bones or withers)
 - From behind to take a temperature, observe anatomy of the hind end of the cow (can you recognise the pin bones, tail folds, anus, vulva?)
- Putting a halter on a cow in a crush
 - Now, once you have put the halter on, restrain the head of the cow using the halter so that their ear tag can be read easily and safely *
- Moving cows from yards down the race and into the crushes
- Moving a small group of cows from one yard to another
 - You may now be asked to draft out a few cows from the group rather than moving all of them.

Preparation:

- Now that you have seen cows in action, review the material about cow behaviour, points of balance and flight zones from the CLA (links below) – did you recognise these behaviours in the cows you worked with during the last session?
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7B2-M14YAs> (3 mins)
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwu8NcrI0z0> (4 mins)
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIhfpfKYwmA> (2 mins)
 - <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/system/files/documents/1702/general-guide-cattle-handling.pdf> Particularly pages 6-11.

- Watch this video:

Catching a cow in a crush: <https://echo360.net.au/media/0860c9e8-2295-42fd-bddf-b870bd26aa91/public>

- Review the information in the identification of external landmarks simulator activity if you don't remember all the terms that might be used to describe parts of the cow on farm: [External landmark identification - cattle](#)

*Securely restraining the head of a cow with a halter for examination or other procedures can be done either by someone holding the halter or by tying the end of the halter to the crush using a quick release knot. Please:

- ask a demonstrator for help
- review the knot-tying simulator activity for quick release knots here: [Knot tying](#)
- remember the following points:
 - Secure the end of the halter to the crush at about the neutral level of the cow's head or slightly higher for most routine purposes.
 - If the end of the halter is to be held manually, wrap it around a rail of the crush a couple of times to give greater security
 - ALWAYS use a quick release knot when tying a halter – if the animal goes down in the crush, the halter needs to be released quickly so that they are not left hanging from their head.
 - ***Even when the cow's head is restrained in this manner, be careful not to put your own head in a position where it could be hit by the cow if the halter comes loose***