



Rocky Mountain Llamas

Training Llamas & Alpacas for Willing Cooperation

A Basic Training & Handling Clinic - Bobra Goldsmith

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Setting some long-range goals -- while respecting the nature of llamas

General considerations on the nature of llamas, discipline, rewards, punishment (doesn't work), the effects of praise

--What do you want your llama to be like?

--What would you like your llama to be able to do?

Is he physically and mentally suited to the task?

Catching and haltering the trained llama: the Catching Ritual

--Equipment and fit--for light, sensitive control, how the halter functions

--Adjusting the halter to fit properly

--Leading with a light hand, an essential skill

--Turning the llama loose - proper unhaltering

The basics: Trust, confidence, and willingness start here.

Setting goals for individual lessons, but remaining flexible = most important

Proceed according to the llama's progress, not by a rigid goal.

Training llamas to lead: weanlings and adults

--The appropriate age for young ones

The first lessons--weanlings and untrained or abused adults--trust starts here

1--initial contact and gentling, dispelling fear--weanlings, adults

2--Haltering: The Slow Motion Technique = quicker, gentle, efficient

--Putting on and adjusting the halter--overcoming fear of the rope

--Attaching the lead

--An alternative, safe method for attaching the lead rope.

3--The first leading lesson: The Light-hand Technique

--Where to begin with weanlings, with adults

--Location and length of the initial route

--repetition, but not too long

--Length of the first lesson

--when to quit and the best reward

--What to do if: the llama rears, cavorts, hangs its head, lies down

4--The second leading lesson:

--One repetition of the first route

--Taking a new route and encountering natural obstacles

--If the llama hurries ahead

5--Subsequent lessons: The value of challenges and overcoming them

--A series of appropriate challenges = building trust and willingness

--Simple obstacles first, then more difficult = llama's self-confidence.

Teaching to load into vehicles--trailer, van, or truck

- Reminder lesson: jumping a log or bale
- Choosing and preparing the vehicle: safety considerations
- Learning to load--repetition then release reward
- Later--Taking a short ride, then returning home = overcoming fear.

Teaching the llama to be tied: short tie --Safe situation and safe knots

Grooming and desensitizing: blowing, brushing, touching

- Patting first, then stroking, massaging
 - Further techniques for desensitizing head and legs
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General considerations on the nature of llamas, praise, discipline, rewards, punishment

- what kinds and when to use them

Psychological ingredients of all lessons:

- Focusing the llama's attention
- Reading the llama's face, eyes, ears, body
- importance and function of praise
- imposition, insistence, reward
- Balancing disciplined work and fun

Thinking safety--in all aspects of training and management

Dealing with difficult llamas and bad habits:

- Catching and haltering problems and solutions --Llamas hurrying ahead
- Learning good manners in mixed company

Teaching the llama to stake on a long line--the first lesson

- Choosing a safe location and method of tying - the bowline knot
- Using the lead line + stake line

Restraint methods for trimming toenails and fighting teeth

- Using a chute, safety first
- Types of chutes
- Accustoming llamas to be in the chute

Have fun and enjoy your well-trained llama!