



WINTER SHEARING
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I deeply care about giving you the best shearing service, and to do so I need your cooperation to set us up for success on shearing day

Please read the following in full and reach out with any questions or concerns

SHEARING DAY PREP



DAY PRIOR

1) Pen your sheep at least 12 hours prior to shearing. Sheep **MUST** be dry to shear. If they're locked in a dry barn **AFTER** getting wet, it will take several days for them to dry sufficiently.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Shearing wet sheep is bad for the sheep, the shearer, the gear, and the wool!

If your sheep are wet when your shearer arrives they will not be shorn, you will need to reschedule, and **a rescheduling fee will be added to your bill**. Please call or text at least a day in advance if you anticipate issues

NEW TO SHEEP?

It is **highly** advisable to do several practice runs penning up your sheep well before shearing day. This trains your sheep to connect no negative associations with penning up, and help you recognize any difficulties in guiding them or keeping them contained in the pen overnight. What works well for your friends and neighbors may not work for you. Having a smooth-running system to pen up your sheep is invaluable for regular health checks and vet visits, not just shearing.

2) Fast your sheep. Sheep must have **NO food and water for 18 hours prior** to shearing. This includes access to grass, alfalfa, hay, pasture, grain, and anything else ingestible. If this request creates concern, please refer to the following research-based guidelines:

	Minimum Number of Hours W/O Feed	Maximum Number of Hours W/O Feed	Minimum Number of Hours W/O Water	Maximum Number of Hours W/O Water
Mature Sheep (Ewes and Rams)				
Non-pregnant, non-lactating	20	32	12	24
Early – mid gestation	18	30	12	24
Late pregnancy and lactation	12	24	8	20
Yearlings				
Non-pregnant, non-lactating	18	30	12	24
Pregnancy and lactation	12	24	8	20
Lambs				
Pre-weaning	6	24	6	20
Weaned	12	24	8	20

<https://u.osu.edu/sheep/2022/03/22/fasting-sheep-before-shearing/>

<https://www.worksafe.govt.nz/topic-and-industry/agriculture/working-with-animals/working-with-sheep/fasting-of-sheep-prior-to-shearing-gpg/>

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

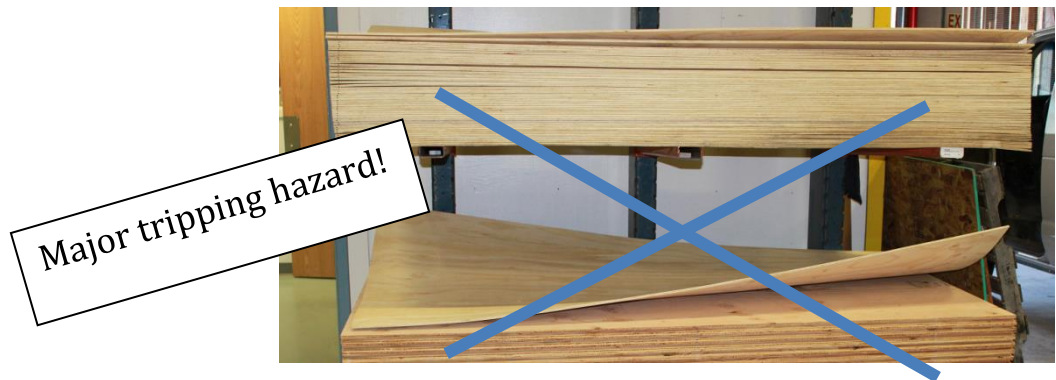
Sheep are ruminants and hold food in their multiple stomachs much longer than other mammals. The less bulk in their bellies, the easier your sheep can breathe during shearing and the more calm they will be, which is important for safety and fleece quality

Risk of heart attack is higher on hot days for stressed sheep

3) Ensure that you can provide a flat, level shearing surface.

Ideally this is a clean, dry 4x8 plywood board that is not warped or twisted. If the ground is not level where the board will be laid down, please have a shovel and/or hay fork on hand so that ground can be leveled

It is also acceptable to shear on grass, dirt, or a rubber barn mat, so long as it is level. Rocks or concrete, however, will damage the metal teeth on shearing gear



WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Your shearer needs a dry, flat surface to keep balance while shearing. Without a suitable surface, your shearer is risking serious potential injury to themselves and your animals. For biosecurity reasons I do not bring a board with me

A suitable surface will keep your wool as clean as possible

4) **Check your electricity source.** Is the breaker tripping? Does your generator start?

Ensure you have an extension cord or two, depending on the distance from power to the shearing location.

For biosecurity reasons I do not travel with extension cords. Access to 120V power and an extension cord (if necessary) must be available.

EXCEPTION!

Small flocks 5 head and under can be shorn with a battery-powered handpiece, so electricity access does not need to be provided

Please confirm with your shearer beforehand



MORNING OF

On shearing day, your sheep should be suitably penned before your shearer arrives. If the pen is too large to easily catch a sheep, please set up livestock panels/boards to divide it into a smaller area.

Depending on your set up, your shearer may shear in the pen or drag them out of the gate. Please ensure the gate swings freely, or have someone on hand who can mind the pen door.

Water must be removed from the catch pen before I arrive. (Sheep WILL step in or knock over water while they are being caught)

DURING SHEARING – SAFETY PROTOCOL

My safety, your safety, and the safety of your sheep are very important to me. Please note the following:

- Observers, especially young children, should be kept a safe distance back. Sheep can and do kick unpredictably
- All skirting must happen after the sheep is completely shorn and the fleece is off the board.
- Dogs that do not behave well around sheep must be restrained from the shearing area.
- Vaccinating or deworming on shearing day is not recommended. This creates more stress for sheep, reduces medication effectiveness, and adds to the cost of the time billed for shearing. This must not delay or slow down shearing
- Hoof trimming may be done, but must be performed after shearing each sheep. If you desire to hoof trim yourself, please have sufficient help on hand to efficiently trade off the sheep from the shearer and remove the fleece in a timely manner so that shearing progress is not delayed
- Have a plan for guiding the sheep back to the appropriate pen if they are not all released together to the same pen or paddock. Please have help on hand to set up and move livestock panels in a timely manner

SETTING UP YOUR SHEARING SHED

Shearing must be done in a clean, safe area. This means a dry, well-lit, level area where other animals (especially guard animals) won't be present to interfere with shearing.



CATCH PEN SIZE:

The catch pen must be a suitable size to the flock of sheep to keep them calm and easy to catch. In other words, the sheep should not have enough room to get up to running speed. Your shearer must be able to easily catch and drag sheep to the shearing board without chasing sheep inside a pen that is too big. Undue additional time spent on chasing sheep will be added to your bill.

If the owner does not have a suitably sized pen they must provide help to escort sheep to the shearing board for the shearer in a safe and timely manner.

NEW TO SHEEP?

The below picture is an ideal density to catch sheep. In this system the sheep are penned in a large stock yard outside overnight, then driven up into the wool shed and into these catch pens. Your system can simply involve having a livestock panel or two on hand (and some baling twine) to reduce the size of your pen on the morning of shearing day. Please do not attempt to pen sheep with electric netting! It never works



SHEARING AREA:

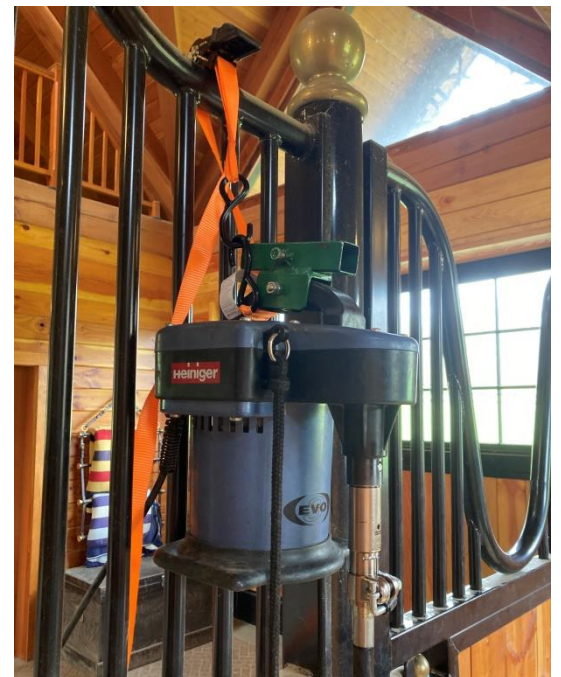
The owner must provide a clean surface (plywood, rubber mat, or wooden barn floor) to work on. Wet hay and poo on the floor is slippery and unsafe!

If the shearing area is outside, you must set up some sort of shelter in the event of rain

I do not travel with a generator or extension cords. Access to 120V power and an extension cord (if necessary) must be available

I shear with a 1/2 HP motor that requires mounting at approx 6' high. Either screwing onto a wall/beam or ratchet strapping can work

I cannot shear if there is no a suitable place to mount this motor (unless you have confirmed with me that I can shear your flock with my battery-powered gear)



SCHEDULING REQUIREMENTS

If you need to cancel or reschedule, let me know as soon as possible.

If I arrive for a shearing appointment and your sheep are not penned, not dry, and/or not fasted I will not shear. These conditions are unsafe for sheep and shearer.

If weather conditions, such as snow/ice make it unsuitable for shearing or road travel, I will reach out to reschedule your shearing appointment.

THANK YOU FOR READING TO THE END!!!!

See you in the shearing shed :)

