1.2 Presentation of sheep for shearing

All practicable steps should be taken to ensure sheep are presented in good order for shearing to help reduce the risk of injury or illness. For example:

- Farmers must ensure sheep are dry for shearing operations. Damp or wet wool should not be shorn as this increases the risk of shed workers developing wool abscesses or arthritis. The quality of the wool is also affected.
- Sheep should be dagged prior to shearing.
- Sheep should be drafted according to:
  - breed
  - sex
  - age: lambs, hoggets and mature sheep
  - wool length: sheep previously shorn at different times
  - sheep brought onto the property since the previous shearing
  - illness or ailments including footrot, lice, ticks, flyblown, and zoonoses.
- Before shearing mobs of rams, negotiations between the grower and contractor or shearing team members can take place to determine a method for shearing that allows adequate support to be available to shearers in the event of a ram struggling free or becoming free on the board.



- Sheep that are adequately emptied out cause fewer back injuries and strains, and reduce the incidence of pen stain in wool.
  The recommendations for emptying out sheep prior to shearing are summarised in the following table. It should be noted that they refer to the minimum and maximum periods of time without feed and water prior to shearing for any individual sheep.

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Summary of recommendations for emptying out sheep prior to shearing					
Recommended minimum and maximum number of hours without feed and water prior to shearing					
	Minimum number of hours without feed	**Maximum number of hours without feed**	**Minimum number of hours without water**	**Maximum number of hours without water**	**Special considerations**
Ewes (and adult male sheep)					
Non-pregnant, non-lactating	20	32	12	24	
Early to mid-pregnancy	18	30	12	24	Exceeding these maximums may induce metabolic problems and/or precipitate clinical diseases.
Late pregnancy and lactation	12	24	8	20	Exceeding these maximums may induce metabolic problems and/or precipitate clinical diseases. Where practical, unweaned lambs should remain with their mothers until ewes enter the woolshed.
Hoggets					
Non-pregnant, non-lactating	18	30	12	24	
Pregnancy and lactation	12	24	8	20	Use special care when handling pregnant hoggets. Exceeding these maximums may induce metabolic problems and/or precipitate clinical diseases. Where practical, unweaned lambs should remain with their mothers until hoggets enter the woolshed.
Lambs					
Pre-weaning	6	24	6	20	Exceeding these maximums may precipitate clinical diseases.
Weaned	12	24	8	20	Exceeding these maximums may precipitate clinical diseases.

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