

Sexing a Calf



Disclaimer

A series of booklets (instructions for skills and flipped classroom materials) has been developed by the Clinical Skills Lab team (staff, recent graduates and students) from Bristol Veterinary School, University of Bristol, UK.

Please note:

- Each flipped classroom booklet includes ways to prepare for learning a skill in class; it is acknowledged that there are often other approaches. Before using the booklets, students should check with their university or college to determine whether the approaches illustrated are acceptable in their context or whether an alternative resources should be used.
- The booklets are made available in good faith and may be subject to changes.
- In using these booklets, you must adopt safe working procedures and take your own risk assessments (as and when appropriate), checked by your university, college etc. The University of Bristol will not be liable for any loss or damage resulting from failure to adhere to such practices.

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Equipment list: Sexing a Calf

Equipment for this station:

- Male and female calf models

Considerations for this station:

- The positioning of these models will change (the male will not always be on the left-hand side)!

Anyone working in the Clinical Skills Lab must read the 'CSL_I01 Induction' and agree to abide by the 'CSL_I00 House Rules' & 'CSL_I02 Lab Area Rules'

Please inform a member of staff if equipment is damaged or about to run out.

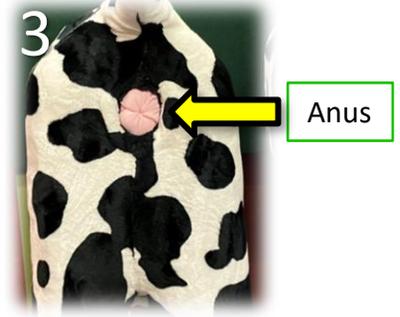
Clinical Skills: Sexing a Calf



1
Male - Grasp the tail with one hand.



2
Lift the tail to visualise the perineal area.



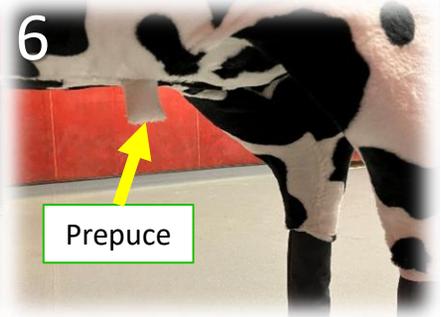
3
In the male, only the anus is present.



4
While still holding the tail, use your other hand to palpate the scrotum between the hind legs.



5
Move to one side of the calf. The prepuce can be seen and palpated ventrally on the abdomen.



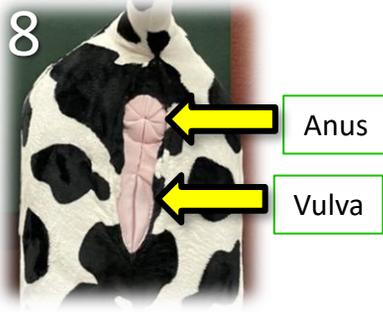
6
The yellow arrow in the photo indicates the prepuce on the model.

Take care not to confuse the prepuce with the naval in a neonatal calf.

Clinical Skills: Sexing a Calf



Female – Grasp and lift the tail with one hand.



The vulva is present ventral to the anus.



There is no prepuce or testes present. However, the navel can be confused with a prepuce.



Compare the perineal areas of the male and female models.

Clinical Skills: Sexing a Calf



Male (*photos of real calves*)
With the calf restrained e.g. by another person, lift the tail to visualise the perineal area. In the male only the anus is present.



Palpate the scrotum between the legs.



Move to one side of the calf. The prepuce can be seen and palpated ventrally on the abdomen.



Female (*photos of real calves*)
With the calf restrained e.g. by another person, lift the tail to visualise the perineal area. In the female, the vulva is present ventral to the anus.



There is no prepuce or testes present. However, the navel can be confused with a prepuce, particularly in a neonatal calf as in the photo above.



Compare the perineal area of the two calves:

- male (photo on the left)
- female (photo on the right)



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Resetting the station: Sexing a Calf

1. Place the instruction booklet beside the models

Station ready for the next person:



Please inform a member of staff if equipment is damaged or about to run out.



I wish I'd known: Sexing a Calf

- Teats are present in male and female calves
- Some calves have pigmented mucosa making distinction between male and female more difficult.
- It is common to castrate calves very young (< 1 week) and therefore the scrotum is not always present.
- The navel can be confused with a prepuce, particularly in a neonatal calf.
- Some calves will have faeces on the perineal region which can make visualising the anus and vulva more difficult.