



Safe Pig Handling

**Heat Checking
& Breeding**

Step 1 Put on your personal protective equipment (PPE).

- Recommended PPE:
 - Steel toe boots
 - Earplugs
- Suggested PPE:
 - Bump caps
 - Dust masks
 - Knee pads
 - Safety glasses





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Step 2 Conduct routine preparation and maintenance.

- Dispose of all trash immediately after use to eliminate trip hazards.
- Repair or replace bent gate and stall rods.
- Clean, dry, and disinfect the breeding row between breed groups to prevent disease spread and eliminate slipping hazards.



Step 3 Choose the right boar for heat checking in pens.

- Boars should be approximately the same size or only slightly larger than gilts or sows.
 - Large boars can injure gilts under their weight.
- Boars should not be too old.
 - Older boars can be more aggressive, or unpredictable, and have long tusks.



Step 4 Hook up and lead the boar safely.

- Manual lead
 - Carry a sorting board.
 - Never wrap the rope around your wrist.



Step 4 Hook up and lead the boar safely.

- Boar bot
 - Use a well-fitted boar harness.
 - Check the boar regularly for signs of irritation under the harness.
 - Loosen harness as boar grows.
 - Tie the boar to the bottom rung to prevent tipping.
 - Stand behind the stall gate for protection while attaching the boar to the bot.
 - While standing behind the boar and boar bot, use the remote control to move the boar bot.



Step 4 Hook up and lead the boar safely.

- Boar cart
 - Use two people to load the boar.
 - Carry a sort board when loading or unloading the boar.
 - Bring the cart to the stall.
 - Block all escape routes, open the stall, and lead the boar directly into the cart.



Step 5 Heat check.

- Communicate your presence with gentle touch to avoid startling the females.
- Encourage all sows to rise and interact with the boar.
- Watch for pinch and trap points between the female and the stall.
- Minor Corrections Underway
- Visually assess for signs of heat.
 - Ears standing straight
 - Swollen vulva with mucous
- Physically assess for signs of heat.
 - Apply pressure to her back
 - Nudge her flank
 - Rub her underline
- Mark and record all females in heat.
- When working in pens
 - Always carry a sort board.
 - Work in pairs when a boar will be giving shoulder to shoulder contact in the pens.
 - Keep your knees slightly bent.



Step 6 Breed sows and gilts found in heat.

- Watch for pinch points.
- Avoid sticking your arms and hands between the body of the female and the bars of the stall.

