

THE BROKEN HORN IN A GOAT

First, assess where the horn is broken. If it is broken somewhere in the length of the horn, the broken part must be removed. I usually use a pair of sharp hoof trimmers to do this, and spray with Wound Kote. The horn bleeds profusely when broken, and sometimes it is necessary to cauterize it to stop bleeding. A dehorning iron is good for this purpose, but so is a soldering iron. I usually do not put a dressing on the broken end. I do not usually put a dressing on the broken part, as it heals faster if open.

If the horn is broken close to the head:

Assess the break. Is it broken in the skull, or above the line of the skull? IF it is broken above the hair line, it must be removed.

If the skull is broken around the horn, it can be splinted. This kind of break is most common in doe kids. **NEVER CATCH A DOE KID BY THE HORNS** if you can help it. Some does have heavy horns, and are safe to catch like that, but it is best to avoid that if you can.

For treating breaks of the skull at the base of the horn:

I usually use a small diameter dowel as a splint. Measure the dowel so that it is 2-3" longer than the width of the horns at the base, then measure the width of the horns midway of the length of the horn. Cut two lengths of dowel to fit these areas. Secure the short dowel to the base of the horn, about 1-1/2-2" above the skull. I use duct tape to do this. I tear the tape lengthwise and wrap it with a figure eight around the strong, unbroken horn.

Place the broken horn back into it's original position. Put your fingers over the skull at the base of the horn, and level the bone. Hold the position securely of the broken horn, so that it is even with the unbroken one. Tape the broken horn at the base with the same figure eight tape wrap. Then do the same at the midway level with the longer dowel, taping the healthy side first. Re check the position of the broken horn again; before you secure the second dowel to the splint on the broken side.

Put the goat in a pen with a smaller goat, or with it's dam. It won't eat if it has to compete and get its sore head bumped. It probably won't eat well if kept alone. It takes 4-6 weeks for this to heal. Be sure to keep a good balanced mineral available.

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