

# Common Llama Terminology

## **Alarm Call**

A sound which llamas, usually the males, make when they feel that the herd is threatened in some way. It sounds similar to an engine trying to start or a turkey call or some combination of the two.

## **Artificial Insemination (AI)**

A process in which semen from a male llama is manually placed in the cervix or uterus of a female llama by a person. It has not been very successful in llamas.

## **Banana Ears**

A term used to refer to a particular ear set in llamas where the ears come up and curve inwards similar to the shape and size of a banana.

## **Berserk Male Syndrome**

A condition where a male llama who has been improperly imprinted on humans becomes physically aggressive towards people upon reaching puberty. This behavior is usually not alterable once it begins.

## **Body Score**

A numerical value from 1 to 9 given to an animal based on how fat or thin they are. The optimal condition is assigned a 5, emaciated is assigned a 1 and obese is assigned a 9.

## **Bone**

Used to describe the skeletal frame size of a llama. A llama who with "a lot of bone" has a large frame and thicker bones which are usually apparent by the thickness of the legs. Breeders may try to "put on more bone" in their herd.

## **Colostrum**

The first milk produced by a female llama around the time of parturition. It is rich in immunoglobulins (antibodies) and other components needed for the neonatal period.

## **Concentrates**

The component of the diet which is more energy dense with less fiber and given as supplemental feed. This includes many types of grains which can be mixed together to create a feed.

## **Cria**

The term for a young llama from birth until he/she is weaned.

## **Dam**

The female parent of a llama.

## **Dung Pile**

A designated area (usually decided upon by the llamas) where llamas urinate and defecate. There are usually several dung piles within any one field or pasture.

## **Dust Pile**

A bare area on the ground which llamas use for rolling.

## **Embryo Transfer (ET)**

A process in which early embryos are removed from one female llama and placed into other female llamas for gestation and rearing. It has not been very successful in llamas.

## **Forage**

The component of the diet which is less energy dense and contains more fiber. This includes grasses, legumes and hays.

## **Gait**

A type of movement or locomotion. The gaits used by llamas are walk, pace, trot, gallop and pronk. See pictures and videos of the different gaits.

## **Gallop**

A three-beated gait in which all four feet are never on the ground together. This is the fastest camelid gait. See more information on gaits.

## **Get of Sire**

A class at a llama show where three llamas with the same sire and at least two different dams are shown together as a group. The judge is looking for consistency in the influence of the sire.

**Going down**

This is used in reference to a female's receptivity to a male. If she drops into the kushed position, then she is said to have "gone down" for him.

**Herd sire**

A male llama who is used to breed female llamas on a llama farm. He may also be called a stud.

**Humming**

The sounds that llamas make when they are tired, stressed, hot, uncomfortable, curious or concerned. There are different types of hums for different causes.

**Knock-kneed**

A condition in llamas where the knees on the front legs angle in towards each other. The medical term for this is carpal valgus. It is a conformational fault which will cause llamas to move incorrectly and lead to degenerative joint disease in the future. The knock-kneed llamas will 'wing' when they walk. See the definition of winging for a description.

**Kush**

The term for the act of a llama laying down sternally or the actual position a llama is in when it is laying down. It may also be used as a command to get a llama to attain this position.

**Lama**

A term used to include both llamas and alpacas since they are both in the genus *Lama*. People new to the llama and alpaca world often think this is the word llama misspelled. More on classification.

**Maiden Female**

A female who has not been bred to a male yet, usually because she is too young.

**Open Female**

A female who is not pregnant.

**Overconditioned**

The polite way of saying in the showring that a llama is overweight or fat. Learn how to check your llama's body condition.

**Pace**

A two-beated gait in which the front and rear limbs on the same side move forward or back at the same time. It is a medium speed gait and is the least stable. See more information on gaits.

**Packer**

A llama who packs seriously with large loads for longer distances. These llamas usually have light wool coverage and are bigger in size.

**Paddling**

The term for a faulty movement of llamas. The llama will swing their front feet out away from their body as they move their leg forward. It is similar to the way a Bulldog might walk and is usually caused by a chest which is too wide. This can be genetic structure or more commonly from a llama who is overweight and has a wide chest from excess fat present there.

**Potty Pile**

Another common term used for a dung pile. See the definition under dung pile.

**Produce of Dam**

A class at a llama show where two llamas with the same dam and two different sires are shown together as a pair. The judge is looking for consistency in the influence of the dam.

**Preemie**

A term used to refer to a cria who was born prematurely.

**Pronking**

A stiff-legged bouncing up into the air that both adult and juvenile llamas do to play with each other or find and elude predators. It is not performed often. See more information on gaits.

**Rolling**

An activity which llamas engage in regularly. Llamas lay on their side and roll half-way or completely over several times. It is a way of keeping their fiber open enough to create air pockets for insulation. More about rolling.

**Sickle-hocked**

A conformational fault in a llama where the hind feet come too far forward. This creates a sickle shape to the hind end when viewed from the side.

**Sire**

The male parent of a llama.

**Stud**

A male llama who is used to breed females. He can also be called a herdsire.

**Three-in-one**

A common term used to refer to a pregnant female llama who is sold along with her unweaned cria. You are purchasing three llamas for one price: the female, the cria, and the unborn baby.

**Tipped ears**

This is a term used to refer to llamas with ears that are not completely erect. Usually there is a small amount of cartilage at the tips of the ears which is not strong enough to stand up on its own. This can be genetic or it can be the result of prematurity or frostbite. It is not considered to be a major conformation fault.

**Topline**

A common term used to refer to a llama's back, usually as viewed from the side. A level topline is desired from the withers to the tail.

**Trot**

A two-beated gait in which the diagonal front and rear limbs move forward or back at the same time. It is a medium speed gait which is more stable. See more information on [gaits](#).

**Underconditioned**

A term used to describe a llama who is underweight or too thin. Learn how to check your llama's body condition.

**Walk**

A four-beated gait which maintains three feet in contact with the ground at any one time. The slowest of the llama gaits. See more information on [gaits](#).

**Weanling**

A llama who has been weaned from the mother but is under one year of age.

**Winging**

The term used for a faulty movement of llamas. As the llama moves a front foot forward, it will swing the front feet in towards the midline and then back out away from the body before placing it back down. This is usually associated with knock-kneed llamas and will be more pronounced with severely knock-kneed llamas.

**Woolies**

A term sometimes used to refer to llamas who have heavy wool coverage.

**Yearling**

A llama who is one year of age but not yet two years of age.