

- Normal procedure
- Cautionary
- Requires urgent action

## PROGRESSIVE

Appearance of feet outside the vulva followed by nose and head/or by tail and pelvis

Normal presentation  
**Forward:** 2 front feet, legs extended, neck straight, head forward, face up)  
**Backward:** 2 back feet, legs extended, or hips aligned, face up)

Abnormal presentation of fetus

Delivery of calf/calves within 2-6 hrs of appearance

## STAGE 3 LABOR

Delivery of placenta within 12 hours of calf

If no delivery of placenta within 12 hrs:  
Retained placenta

Chart illustration: Ray Merritt

## STAGE 1 LABOR

VAGINAL FLUID DISCHARGE (Loss of mucous plug)  
 Dilation vulva and pelvic ligaments, enlarged mammary glands, distended vulva and perineum region, frequent transition between lying down and standing, frequent vocalization and tails raised.

## STAGE 2 LABOR

Appearance of amniotic sac (fluid-filled sac) outside the vulva  
 Abdominal contraction onset.

## NON PROGRESSIVE

No progression of delivery of calf within 2 hours of onset of labor. Intervention is indicated

Vaginal exam:  
 Clean vagina and hands thoroughly + clean sleeve + lubrication

Determine position and presentation of fetus

Determine:  
 Size of fetus relative to pelvic canal  
 Dilatation of vagina and vulva  
 Dilatation of the cervix

**Normal position**

Abnormal position – Attempt to correct

**Upside down presentation:**  
 Rotate or attempt gentle delivery

**Forward or backward presentation:**  
 If legs flexed or only single leg visible. Find other front/back leg & straighten legs, while protecting the uterus

If cervix is **NOT** dilated – attempt to dilate with gentle manual movements

Assisted delivery  
 Lots of lubrication (not J-lube)  
 Place calving chains. Make loop above and half hitch below 2nd joint of both legs. Apply gentle traction and attempt to extract fetus  
 Avoid hip lock: Slightly rotate calf as soon as front legs are out

**Fetus delivered**

Unable to correct position or deliver fetus within 20 minutes

Pelvic canal too small to pass fetus or unable to open cervix

**Call veterinarian**