

TYPES OF SHEEP



Types of sheep



A flock of sheep is usually made up of different types of animals including: lambs, weaners, hoggets, wethers, ewes and rams.

Lambs

Lambs are sheep (male and female) less than one year old. Lambs rely on their mothers for milk for the first few months of life.

Weaners

Weaners are young sheep (male and female), which no longer rely only on their mothers for food. They can graze enough pasture and drink enough water to survive and grow on their own.

Hoggets

Hoggets are older than weaners but not yet adults. They are like teenagers.

Wethers

Wethers are adult male sheep used for wool production, but not for breeding.

Ewes

Ewes are mature adult female sheep who produce wool and lambs.

Rams

Rams are adult male sheep kept for breeding and for wool production.



Showing your age: This four-tooth wether is about two years old.



HOW OLD
AM I?

You can estimate the age of a sheep by the number of teeth in its lower jaw.

Sheep are born without teeth, but most have eight milk teeth by the time they are two months old.

As sheep get older they lose their milk teeth, which are replaced by permanent teeth — just like humans.

Permanent teeth replace the milk teeth in pairs — first the two front teeth, followed by one either side until they have eight incisors (permanent front teeth).

As sheep grow they are known by the number of permanent front teeth they have. For example, a sheep that is about 16–18 months, with two permanent incisors is called a 'two-tooth'. When sheep have all their permanent teeth they are called a 'full-mouth'.

Adult sheep also have 24 molar teeth at the back of the jaw with six each side on both the top and bottom.



Milk teeth
(lamb)



Two-tooth
(12–18 months)



Four-tooth
(18 months–2yrs)



Six-tooth
(2–3 years)



Full-mouth
(adult)

Did you know?

- A ewe may have one or more lambs each year.
- Every ewe recognises her own offspring by their smell and the noise they make.
- It takes about five months — or 150 days from mating until a lamb is born.
- Unlike humans, lambs can stand and walk soon after birth.
- Sheep only have front teeth in their lower jaw.

More information

To find out more about the different types of sheep on a wool property, take a look at:

- learnaboutwool.com

