

# How to Tattoo Your Cattle

## Mandatory Cattle Identification - ALCA By-Law 8

All cattle submitted for registration must be either ear tattooed or conform to the National Livestock Identification Scheme (NLIS) in Australia or the National Animal Identification and Tracing Scheme (NAIT) in New Zealand.

### Tattooing

Requirements:

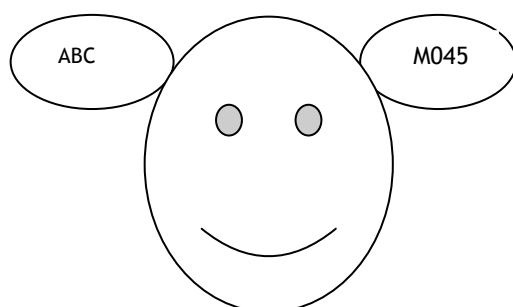
- Tattoo gun with letters & numbers
- Green Ketchum Tattoo ink
- Cotton buds (to save ink on hands)
- Disposable plastic gloves

Confine animal's head in a head bale. Clean the inside of both ears with water on a cloth. Don't use any chemicals (eg. methylated spirits) as this will stop the ink from staining the skin and leaving a tattoo.

The **stud tattoo code** (eg. ABC) goes into the animal's right ear so that it can be read upright from the front (the ear on the left when you face the animal).

The **year letter and individual calf number** (eg. M045) is imprinted into the animal's left ear (the ear on the right when facing the animal).

In the example below, with the stud tattoo in the animal's right ear & the Year letter & calf number in the left, the full ear tattoo can be read as 'ABC M045', which is the animal's ID.



## Steps To Tattoo

1. Clean inside the ears
2. Get the Tattoo letters and numbers out ready
3. Place your STUD CODE letters in the tattoo gun (3 digits)
4. Check the letters are the correct way around by testing tattoo on a piece of cardboard or paper
5. Make sure you have your disposable gloves on to save a mess on hands
6. Put green ink on the letter pins & on the area to be tattooed in the ear using a cotton bud
7. Place tattoo gun in the top third of the ear, as far in from the hairline as possible. Try to avoid the large blood vessels.
8. Close gun tightly - holding pressure for a few seconds.
9. Remove tattoo gun & rub in the green ink over the area that has been tattooed - either with your gloved finger or the cotton bud.
10. Most tattoos will bleed a bit but leave the area to scab & heal by itself.
11. Repeat for the other ear, using the YEAR LETTER & CALF NUMBERS (4 digits)

It is mandatory to have good tattoos at all major shows, especially Royal Shows. The tattoos will be inspected prior to judging and if any animal has an unreadable or incorrect tattoo, it will be disqualified from the competition.

If you are unsure of how to tattoo or apprehensive about doing it, ask another breeder to give you a hand or show you how to do it.

If you are new to the breed & don't know anyone, your state Promotion Group should be able to suggest someone in your area that might help.

PG contacts are on the website under the Promotion Group tab.