

## Lama Owners of Washington State (LOWS)

**LOWS** is a diverse group of lama (llama and alpaca) owners. Our membership ranges from small farm owners with two lamas to larger farms with over 50 of these beautiful and curious animals. We enjoy and advocate various lama-related activities. **LOWS** has something to offer anyone interested in lamas, whether you currently own them or are thinking of getting some in the future.

**LOWS** sponsors several events throughout the year, including corn maze walks, annual breakfast, Poker Run, and assorted herd health days.

**LOWS** members also benefit from:

- Reduced fees for many **LOWS**-sponsored events.
- Access to an extensive lending library, including books, publications, videos and CD-ROMS.
- Quarterly newsletter, full of useful and fun information.
- Experienced lama owners willing and ready to share information!!

Annual membership is only  
\$30

(first time members qualify for a free one-year membership)

Go to [www.llamasofwa.com](http://www.llamasofwa.com) for a membership application



### To Contact LOWS

#### Web Address

[www.llamasofwa.com](http://www.llamasofwa.com)

#### Mailing Address

LOWS  
PMB 317  
3430 Pacific Ave. SE, Ste A-6  
Olympia, WA 98501  
USA



## Why Llamas?

Hiking and Packing

Carting

4H

Therapy and PR

Showing

Livestock Guardians

Fiber

Fertilizer

# FUN

# Llamas

There is only one breed of llama, although there are several types. Colors include black, white, gray, beige, brown, red and roan. Coloration may be solid, spotted or marked in an array of patterns. Wool varies from heavy to very light, extremely crimped to almost straight. Alpacas, smaller cousins to llamas, come in two varieties: crimped Huacayas and locked Suris. Both species produce very nice fiber.

## Size and Age

Babies, known as crias, are born after a gestation of ~350 days. Most crias are born during the day and single births are the norm. Llama crias are generally ~20-40 lbs and ~30 inches tall at birth, while alpaca crias are somewhat smaller. Full growth is usually attained by 3-4 years of age. Adult llamas can weigh 300-450 lbs and stand 4-6' at the head; adult alpacas can weigh 120-175 lbs and about 4' at the head. Both llamas and alpacas can live 20-25 years, so they are a long-term commitment!!

## Temperament and Behavior

Llamas are gentle, intelligent and easy to train. They are herd animals, so they should not be kept alone and prefer the company of their own kind. Llamas establish dominance hierarchies within the herd. They do spit, but usually only at each other. Females are induced ovulators, so are "open" whenever they are not pregnant. For this reason, intact males and females should not be kept together. Adult males that are not studs are usually gelded between 1-2 years of age. Basic training of llamas can start when the cria is quite young, although care should be taken to not overly coddle babies.



## Basic Care

Llamas are browsers, and will eat grass, leaves, bark and weeds. One acre of good grass pasture will support up to 4 llamas. Salt-mineral supplements are usually also required, depending on local conditions. Llamas need access to fresh water at all times. There are some plants that are poisonous to llamas and other livestock.

A five-foot fence is recommended for most llamas, both to keep them in and potential predators out. A simple three-sided shelter should also be provided to provide protection from climate extremes.

Llamas have very few veterinary requirements, but generally do require a CDT vaccination and should be on a regular de-worming schedule. It is always a good idea to consult with your vet for specific requirements in your area.

Most llamas need to be sheared annually and have their toenails trimmed a few times a year.

Llamas can be easily transported in trailers, minivans and sport utility vehicles. They generally lie down ("kush") while traveling and should not be tied up or restrained during transit.

## Interested in llamas???

Do some research. Visit llama farms and talk to as many llama owners as possible. This is a good way to learn not only about the animals themselves but also about farm practices, grooming tips, various activities, feeding strategies, veterinary needs, etc.

Use the Internet to search for information on llama organizations, publications, farms, history, veterinary care, behavior, activities, equipment, and so forth. Start with the **LOWS** website at

[www.llamasofwa.com](http://www.llamasofwa.com)

Contact your local Cooperative Extension agent for questions about pasture management, poisonous plants, County livestock restrictions, etc.

Subscribe to a llama magazine.

Talk to a local veterinarian familiar with llamas.

Have a basic idea of what you might want to do with llamas. If you are interested in packing, you will want to look for llamas with less wool. If you are interested in fiber arts, wool color and texture will be important. If your interest is 4-H, contact a local 4-H club - they may be able to refer you to farms that already have 4-H llamas.

Join a local llama organization, such as **LOWS**. Take advantage of our Members-Online feature to find local llama farms.

The more information you have, the greater the enjoyment and less chance for unexpected surprises!!!