To protect yourself, wear gloves when applying the chemicals. To protect the calf, avoid application near its eyes. Do not use caustics in rainy weather.

1. Administer sedation, analgesia and local anaesthetic.
2. Expose the horn bud (about the size of a 5-cent piece) by pushing the hair back (Figure 3).
3. Apply the caustic to the horn button. Use a wooden applicator. Apply a thin layer.
4. Re-position the hair over the paste and horn bud - i.e., cover the horn bud.
5. Although the package insert may instruct operators to clip hair at the horn bud, experienced operators have shown that not clipping hair is preferable, because the hair keeps the caustic in place, reduces the risk of irritation to the cow’s udder and flanks and reduces irritation to other facial skin of the calf.
6. Protect the calf and the cow from accidental caustic burns. One method is to place a patch of duct tape over each horn bud. The duct tape usually falls off in a few days. For dairy calves, keep in individual pens.
7. In some countries, the technique is only permitted in calves less than eight days of age.