



Rabbit Showmanship

Learn the steps to show rabbits.

Time

60 minutes total

Materials

- Rabbit Showmanship Steps
- 4-H Member's Rabbits
- Each 4-H Member bring a carpet square

Space Required

Meeting space with multiple tables and an area where you can have live animals.



Before the Meeting

Have enough copies for each member to have a copy of the Rabbit Showmanship Steps. Contact each youth member to bring their rabbits and a carpet square to the meeting.



Background

There are a series of steps for youth members to follow for showmanship. There are a total of 16 steps, and youth members should practice the showmanship steps regularly before the County Fair.



Activity Instructions

1. Have a volunteer or an older rabbit member demonstrate the steps for showing a rabbit.
2. Have youth members practice carrying their rabbit and carpet squares to the table.
3. Have youth members practice the steps for showmanship, while having one person be the "judge."
4. Go over questions that the judge may ask each member about their rabbit project. Talk about the importance of the participant's knowledge when in the show ring.
5. Talk about the participant's appearance expectations and the participant's actions during the show.



Reflect and Apply Questions:

1. How many steps are there in the showing of rabbits?
2. What is the first thing you should do during the show?
3. What are you looking for when you check the hocks and the front feet of your rabbit?
4. What are you checking for when you check the rabbit's tail?



Other Related Resources:

Older 4-H members who have shown rabbits in the past

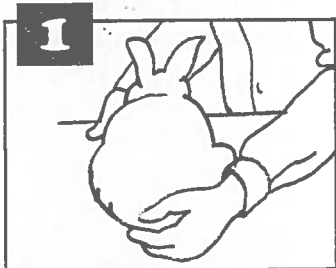


References:

Rabbit Showmanship Steps

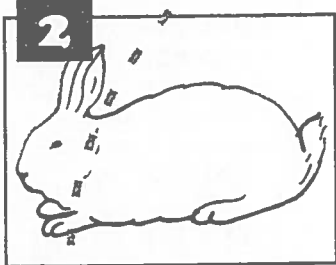


Rabbit Showmanship Steps



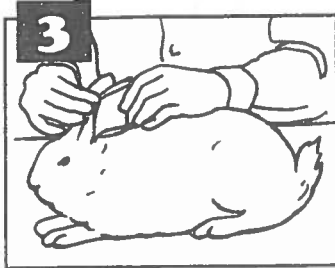
Carry a Rabbit

To carry a rabbit, tuck the head under one arm and support the rabbit's weight by placing the other hand under the rump. One hand supports the weight of the rabbit, while the other hand controls the rabbit. Keep a firm grip since a rabbit dropped from this position can easily break its back. You may remove your hand when you feel confident about being in control. If the judge asks you to move to a different spot on the table, always pick up the rabbit for carrying before moving to a new location.



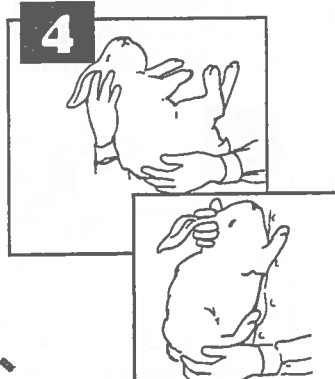
Pose Rabbit

When you arrive at the exhibit table place the rabbit on the table immediately and pose it. Pose the front feet even with the eyes. Rear feet should be firmly on the table with toes even with the haunch (thigh joint) with tail up. Facing left is the natural position for a right handed presenter,



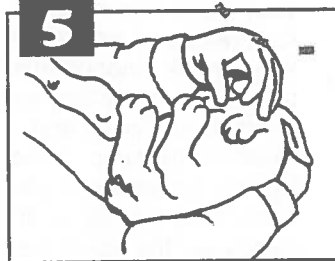
Checking Ears

Check the ears for ear mites, tattoo in rabbit's left ears, torn or missing portions of ears that distract from general appearance, ear carriage, tattoo obliterated by ink that is unreadable.



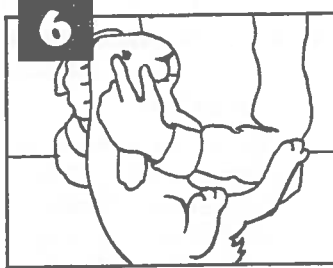
Turn Rabbit Over

Turn the rabbit over, supporting the rabbit on the table or against your body. The rabbit will remain in this position until checking the tail.



Check Teeth

With your hand over the area of the eyes, place a thumb and index finger on each side of the split lip and push back lips to expose teeth. You are checking for tooth defects such as malocclusion or simple malocclusion, broken or missing teeth.



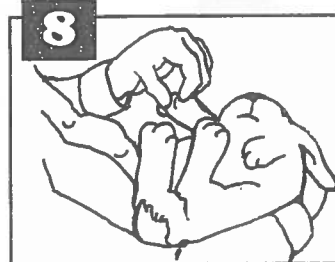
Check Eyes

Check each eye for signs of blindness or abnormalities. Check for walleyes or moon eye (this is an eye with whitish cornea given a milky appearance to the eye), unmatched eyes (two eyes not of the same color), spots or specks in iris or on cornea, off colored eyes (eyes other than color called for in breed standard. Abnormal eye discharge, must be noticeable and pronounced. Marbling, a mottling of eye color, except in some chinchilla breeds allowing blue-gray eyes.



Check Nose

Check nose for sign of cold. The animal shows a white nasal discharge when they have a cold. Matted fur on inside of front legs may indicate presence of cold.



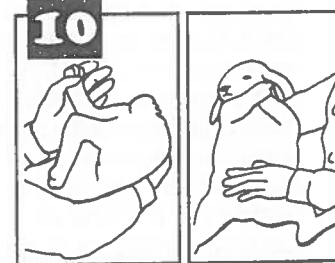
Check Toenails

Check toenails by pushing thumb into center of paw. Push back fur with index finger if necessary to see toenails. Don't forget to check dew claws. You are checking for missing toenails, unmatched toenails on corresponding feet, (including dew claws), proper color toenails for the breed as stated in the breed standard.



Check Hocks and Front Feet

Check the bottom of the hind feet for sore hocks. Also check bottoms of front feet for sore areas. You are checking for sore, infected or bleeding areas, not just for bare areas.

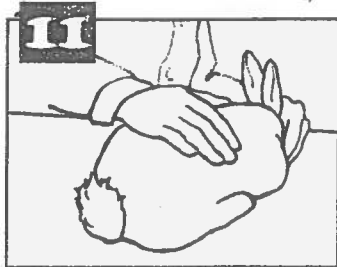


Check Legs

Extend the front legs to check for straightness. Run your index finger and thumb the length of each front leg. Extend rear legs out straight by placing your cupped hand ahead of the rear legs and pushing toward the feet. Legs should not be bent, bowed, deformed or cow-hocked.

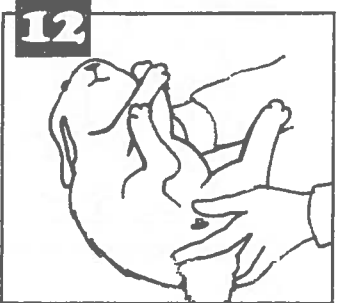


Activity: Rabbit Showmanship Steps



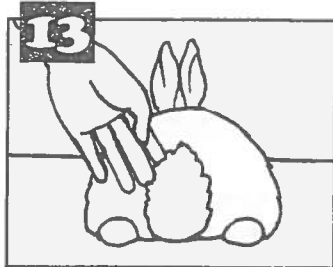
Check Body for Ruptures and Abscess

Run your hand over the chest and abdominal area to check for any abscesses, tumors or abnormalities. Ruptures may appear as lumps or large bumps under the skin, normally in the belly area. Abscesses may appear as red lumps or sores in the belly areas or the neck or chin area or under the legs, normally.



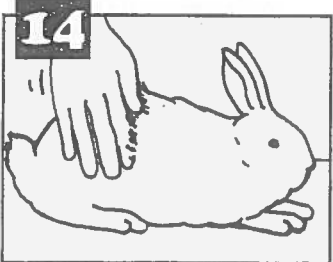
Check Sex

Check for the sex of the rabbit. Place your thumb below the vent area and push toward front of rabbit with the index finger. You are also checking for signs of vent disease (as indicated by a scabby, reddened sex organ), a split penis and testicles. All male animals in the regular show classes must show two normally descended testicles at the time of judging. Juniors must show both or neither testicle because juniors showing only one descended testicle at the time of judging would be disqualified from competition.



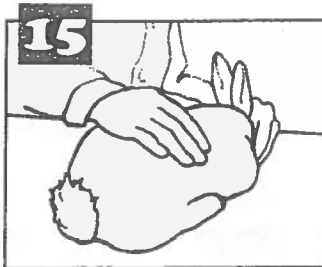
Check Tail

Return the rabbit to its posed position. Check to determine: if tail is straight, permanently set to either side or permanently out of line. Ascrew tail or bob tail will disqualify an animal from judging competition.



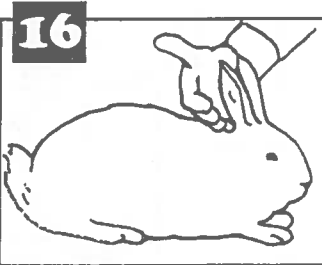
Check for Surface Color, Undercolor, Ring Color, Foreign Spots, or Smut

Check the fur for foreign colored spots (white spots in colored animal, or colored spots in white animal, unless specifically excepted in the breed standard). Inspect fur for smut on the usable portion of the pelt on a Pointed White, Californian, or Himalayan marked breeds and varieties. Check for color. Check surface color. Check undercolor and/or ring color by stroking fur forward or blowing into fur over the entire body. Tan Pattern: any tan pattern marking appearing in the marking pattern of Pointed White, Californians, or Himalayan marked breeds or varieties, is a disqualification. Wrong undercolor, color other than called for in the breed standard, white hairs (excessive white hairs in a colored section) are also disqualifications.



Fur Quality and Cleanliness

Stroke fur toward rabbit's head to show fur going back into natural position, either flyback/rollback. Check density standing/upright fur, such as Rex and Mini Rex, by patting and blowing into several areas. Some wooled breeds, such as Angoras and Fuzzy Lops should be felt and blown into to check density. Stroke rabbit from head to rear for a molt condition. Check for stains on fur.



Evaluation of Overall Balance

Pose the rabbit for evaluation. Check front, rear and side views for overall balance. Locate each of the following with your hand: shoulders, ribspread and fullness of loin. Check hindquarters for fullness by stretching your hand across width and depth of the rump. Check hips for smoothness and fullness by running your hand over the top of the hip to the tail.



Participant's Appearance

You need to demonstrate good posture, keep eye contact with the judge throughout the presentation, smile, dress neatly, remove chewing gum, hat or cap, and pull long hair back.

Participant's Knowledge

Demonstrate quick, confident and correct response to questions asked about your rabbit.

Participant's Actions

Carry out actions in a confident manner, always being considerate of your animals, fellow showmen and the judge. Demonstrate a gentle and smooth flowing presentation. Order is not as important as doing a smooth and organized presentation of a showman.



Rabbit Showmanship

Learn the steps to show rabbits.



Reflect and Apply Questions

1. How many steps are there in the showing of rabbits?

There are 16 steps to showing rabbits.

2. What is the first thing you should do during the show?

The first thing you will do during the show is carry your rabbit and your carpet square to the showmanship table.

3. What are you looking for when you check the hocks and the front feet of your rabbit?

When you check the hocks and the front feet of the rabbit you are looking for sore hocks. You will be looking for sore, infected, or bleeding areas, not just for bare areas.

4. What are you checking for when you check the rabbit's tail?

You are checking if the tail is straight, permanently set to either side or permanently out of line. A screw tail or bob tail will disqualify an animal from judging competition.



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