

Once the fur is damp, gently and repeatedly stroke the rabbit from head to tail to remove loose fur. This may bring about molt, but it is better for the rabbit to molt then instead of at show time. There will be plenty of time for the fur to grow back by beginning the grooming process far in advance of the show.

After the first few days of grooming, stroke your rabbits from head to tail without dampening the fur. Stroking the rabbits on a daily basis will make their fur glossy and tight. Do not stroke the rabbits' fur going backwards (from tail to head). Rubbing against the grain of the fur can break the guard hairs.

Daily grooming does more than improving the appearance of your rabbits. It tames them, making them easier to handle at shows. As you are grooming, place your rabbits in the preferred pose for their breed and encourage them to stay in that position. Different breeds have different posing positions. Talk to someone familiar with your breed to find out how to best position your rabbit for show.

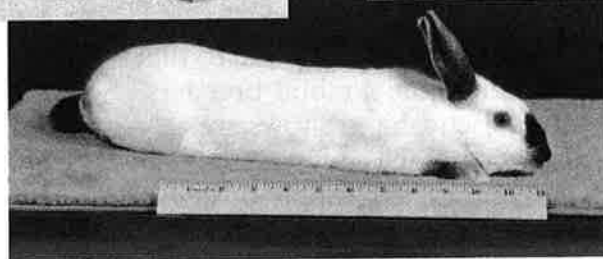
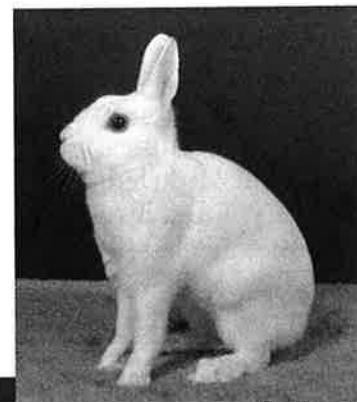
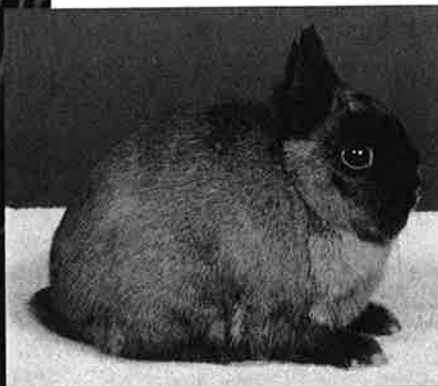
The purpose of posing a rabbit is to determine the rabbit's conformation and bone structure. To put a rabbit in the most common pose, position it on the table facing either right, if you are left-handed, or left, if you are right-handed. This makes it easier to pick the

rabbit back up when you are done. Position the tip of the front feet so they are even with the rabbit's eyes. Position the tip of the hind feet even with its hipbone. Make sure the rabbit's tail is showing and not tucked under its body.

## Showmanship

Showmanship is a combination of the 4-H member's appearance, sportsmanship and show ring ethics, knowledge of good rabbit husbandry and presentation of that information, and the ability to handle and show the rabbit according to its ARBA breed standard. Showmanship also includes the cleanliness and condition of the rabbit. A rabbit with faults and disqualifications will not be discounted or eliminated during showmanship. However, the exhibitor is expected to know his or her rabbit's good qualities, as well as any faults or disqualifications.

Practice showmanship and show ring procedures with your 4-H rabbits long before taking them to their first show. Work with your rabbit on a regular basis, sometimes with other people present. A rabbit that is used to being around different people, as well as being posed and handled on a table prior to being taken to a show, will behave much better than one that



is not. Practice can protect your rabbit from potentially dangerous situations, and can save you a lot of frustration.

A 4-H member showing his or her rabbit should wear a long sleeve shirt or coat, long pants or skirt, and shoes with closed toes and heels (no sandals or clogs). Remove any loose or dangling jewelry. Following these recommendations will help prevent injury while handling rabbits. Youth should also be well groomed, maintain eye contact with the judge, and communicate in a clear and confident voice.

Exhibitors will be expected to answer questions related to proper care, production, breed, variety, and class and fur descriptions. They should know other information contained in their project books or ARBA *Standard of Perfection*, according to the project they are enrolled in, and their age and experience in the project.

New members should not be overwhelmed by the vast amount of information available. Expectations should be based on age and experience. Most shows divide youth by age and experience levels for this contest.

Ohio 4-H has the goal of members being able to evaluate their rabbits used in the showmanship class for faults and disqualifications according to the ARBA *Standard of Perfection*. This should be done in the following manner with members verbalizing their inspection, showing the inspection, and exhibiting confidence, poise, and proper handling techniques.

When asked to examine a rabbit for disqualifications and general conformation, begin by checking the following:

### Ears

- Ear canker
- Illegible or missing tattoo in left ear
- Size and carriage (according to breed standard)
- Torn or missing portion



### Eyes

- Wall eye (white cornea)
- Spots on eyes
- Mismatched eye color
- Wrong color for breed standard
- Runny or weepy eyes



### Nose

- Colds (white nasal discharge)



### Front Legs

- Bent, bowed, or deformed



### Teeth

- Malocclusion (buck or wolf teeth)
- Simple malocclusion (butting teeth)
- Broken or missing tooth



### Front Feet and Toenails

- Missing toenails, including dewclaw (5 each front foot)
- Broken toenail(s) (too short to determine color)
- Unmatched toenails on same foot or corresponding foot, including dewclaw
- Nail color not meeting breed standard



### Chin/Neck Area

- Dewlap
- Abscesses



### Abdomen

- Mastitis or swollen teats
- Tumor, rupture, or hernia
- Abscesses



### Hind Legs

- Bent, bowed, deformed, or severely cow hocked



### Hocks

- Sore hocks (Bloody)



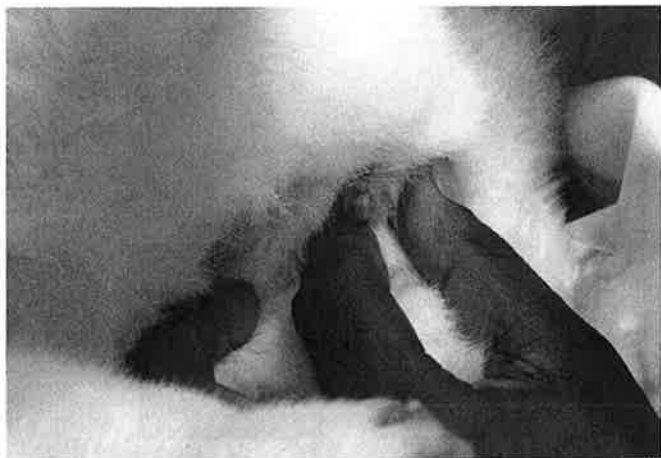
### Hind Feet and Toenails

- Missing toenail(s) (4 each hind foot)
- Broken toenail(s) (too short to determine color)
- Unmatched toenails on same foot or corresponding foot
- Nail color not meeting breed standard



### Sex

- Vent Disease
- Missing testicle(s) on Senior Buck
- Junior Buck with only one testicle showing
- Split penis



### Tail

- Stub, broken or wry tail

