



Rabbit Showmanship Guidelines

SCORE CARD FOR RABBIT SHOWMANSHIP

Showing Your Rabbit to the Judge	70 points	Member's Appearance	10 points
Member's Action	10 points	Member's Knowledge	10 points

To **carry your rabbit** the usual method is to grasp the fold of skin over the shoulders with your right hand while putting your left hand under the rump to support the weight and lift (or scoop) the rabbit into the left arm, tucking the head under the left elbow (or vice versa if the handler is left handed). If the rabbit prefers the head may be left out. The most important thing is to always have control of your rabbit.

Judge may take marks for... Loss of control of your rabbit; No support of the body; Unruly animal

Always **pose your rabbit** facing your left, unless a different pose is specified by the judge. If asked to pose to best conformation advantage, the pose chosen depends on the breed as well as good points or faults your rabbit may have. When asked to show a different view, the easiest method is to use your hands on each side of the rabbit and move using smooth turns.

Judge may take marks for... Failure to post the rabbit to its advantage; failure to straighten the tail when posing for a rear view; failure to smooth out the rabbit after moving; general difficulty in posing the rabbit or failing to pose in the view requested.

When asked to **show the ears**, open the ears so that the judge can see deep into the ear. Be sure to show both ears. Using smooth turns, move the rabbit in the other direction to show the other ear.

Judge may take marks for.... Failure to show both ears; failure to turn to the other side.

Leave rabbit on the table and ensure to **show both eyes**, use quarter turns to show the opposite side. Be sure the ears are not in the way (especially with lops) while showing the eyes.

Judge may take marks for... Failure to show both eyes.

Turn the rabbit over and tilt head toward the judge **to show nose** clearly. If checking for snuffles, also check the inside of the front feet for signs of caked mucus.

Judge may take marks for... failure to have control of your rabbit.

Turn the rabbit over and while tilting head toward judge, using thumb and index finger, gently part the lips **to show the teeth**. Your hand should be behind rather than in front of the mouth.

Judge may take marks for... Difficulty in having control of your Rabbit; Failure to part the lips to expose teeth.

To show the straightness of the front legs you turn the rabbit over with your hand behind the front legs push both elbows forward causing the rabbit to straighten out the legs.

Judge may take marks for... Failure to straighten the legs; loss of control of the rabbit.

To show the straightness of the hind legs, pick the rabbit up and with its rump resting on the mat gently run your hand down the stomach until legs are straight. You can also do this by turning the rabbit over and placing your hand in front of the legs and pushing toward the back which will straighten the legs.

Judge may take marks for... Failure to straighten the legs; loss of control of the rabbit.

Flip the rabbit over and **show the toenails** by pushing the thumb into the center of the paw. Push back fur with index finger if necessary to see the toenails. Don't forget to show the dewclaw on the front feet. Be sure to show all four feet unless instructed otherwise.

Judge may take marks for... Failure to show the dewclaw. Failure to show the nails on all four feet. Inability to keep control of the animal or show the toenails. Rabbit with overly long nails.



Rabbit Showmanship Guidelines

To check the hocks, show bottom of back feet to the judge, rubbing the fur to check for thickness of fur on the hock of for signs of soreness or bare patches.

Judge may take marks for... Failure to show both hocks.

Show the **sex of the rabbit** to the judge, clamp tail between index and second finger; place thumb below vent area; and push toward front of rabbit. Show the testicles if a male. Return to posted position.

Judge may take marks for... Failure to check sex. Incorrect identification of the sex. Failure to show the testicles on a male. Control problems.

To show the tail, sit the rabbit on the table and turn it so that its hind end is facing the judge. Straighten the tail by gently pulling upward.

Judge may take marks for... Leaving the rabbit sitting on tail.

To check the fur quality, cleanliness and condition, stroke the fur toward the rabbit's head showing fur going back to normal position to show quality and cleanliness. Stroke rabbit from head to rear and show your clean hand to the judge to show the fur condition.

Judge may take marks for... Unclean or stained animal. Animals in poor condition, animals with diseases. Not knowing the difference between quality, condition, and density.

SCORE CARD FOR RABBIT CONFORMATION

Appearance, Actions & Knowledge of General Rabbit Information

30 points

Appearance (10 points)

Be neat and appropriately dressed for the occasion. Be sure to check the required dress code for rabbits as listed in the front of this manual.

Judge may take points for... Unclean apparel, no footwear, chewing gum, long hair falling on rabbit, long neck tie that interferes, unsafe or unsuitable clothing, wearing a hat (with the exception of a sun-safe hat in an outdoor ring).

Action (10 points)

It is very important to carry out actions in a confident manner, always being considerate of your animal, fellow showpersons, and the judge. The judge should have your attention at all times so that he/she doesn't have to come to you to get your attention to move your rabbit or take some other action. Eye contact is very important, but also be careful to watch out for potential hazards and other competitors (please no walking backwards when moving around the table). If asked to move to another position on the table, pick up your animal and move behind other showpersons. Make sure to move in the appropriate direction to allow someone else to move into a space as they were instructed.

Judge may take points for... Unnecessary pauses or slowness, repetition of movements, routine not in order, rough handling of animals, awkward movements, failure to follow instruction, lack of eye contact.

Knowledge (10 points)

Be prepared to answer questions about your rabbit with reference to parts, faults, disqualifications, eliminations, breed and variety characteristics, especially of the breed you show; and general rabbit raising information, such as diseases, feeding, breeding, etc.

Judge may take points for... Inability to answer questions correctly

REMEMBER Members are responsible for care, preparation and exhibition of 4-H project animals. 4-H club leaders and/or parents should be on hand to assist members should they encounter difficulties; however, SHOULD NOT perform duties which members can do themselves.