

Rabbit Selection and Handling



Rabbit Skill: Create a rabbit breed chart.
Life Skill: Decision making
Success Indicator: Uses decision making skills to select a rabbit project breed.
Science Standard: Characteristics of organisms

Hop on Board

In the rabbit project you will make decisions about housing, feeding and breeding. There are more than 40 breeds (kinds) of rabbits. Your first choice is to select your rabbit.

“Hop to it!”

Visit with your project helper, county Extension educator, local breeder and/or teen leaders in the rabbit project about various breeds of rabbits.

Pick 10 breeds from Rabbit Facts. Show in the chart what you discover about each breed. Tape or draw a picture of your favorite breed in the picture frame.

My Favorite Breed

I like this breed best because _____

My Rabbit Breed Chart						
Breed	Ideal Weight	Color(s)	Origin of Breed	Size	Class	Comments



Rabbit Rap

Share What You Did

Which breed did you like best? Why? Why do you like the rabbit you chose?

Process What's Important

How did you decide on this breed? If you choose this rabbit what will you have to do to take care of it?

Generalize to Your Life

What other decisions did you make today?

Apply What You Learned

How does making a chart help to make better decisions?

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See breeds and varieties on front and back covers. The ARBA Standard of Perfection contains most all the breeds.

Rabbit Facts

Rabbit Breeds and Ideal Weight Groups

Four Class Rabbit Breeds	
Small (2 to 6 lbs.)	Medium (over 6 to 9 lbs.)
American Fuzzy Lop Britannia Petite Dutch Dwarf Hotot Florida White Havana Himalayan Holland Lop Jersey Wooly Mini Lop Mini Rex Netherland Dwarf Polish Silver Tan	American Sable Belgian Hare English Angora English Spot French Angora Harlequin Lilac Rex Rhinelander Satin Angora Silver Marten Standard Chinchilla
Six Class Rabbit Breeds	
Large (over 9 to 11 lbs.)	Giant (over 11 lbs.)
American American Chinchilla Beveren Blanc de Hotot Californian Champayne D'Argent Cinnamon Creme D'Argent English Lop New Zealand Palomino Satin Silver Fox	Checkered Giant Flemish Giant French Lop Giant Chinchilla Giant Angora



Did you know

A rabbit hide is called a pelt.

Bounding Ahead

1. Visit a rabbitry or show. Make a list of the different kinds of rabbits you see. Go to the library and check out a book on your favorite kind of rabbit. How many breeds did you find?

Furry Future

What do you want to be when you grow up? A doctor, a police officer, a rabbit breeder? These are all decisions you will make as you get older. Much like your life, you will also need to make decisions about the future of your rabbit project. Decide what you will use your rabbit project for. This will help you choose what to feed and where to have your rabbit live.



- Rabbit Skill:** Determine the use of your project rabbits.
- Life Skill:** Decision making
- Success Indicator:** Decides the use of various rabbit breeds.
- Science Standard:** Form and function



« Hop to it! »

Put the breeds of rabbits you found in the Hop On Board exercise in the first activity into the six (6) possible rabbit uses listed below. Some breeds may be used more than once.

Uses of Rabbit Breeds					
Breeding Stock	Meat Production	Fur	Wool	Laboratory Use	Pets

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Rabbit Rap

Share What You Did

What is the use of each rabbit breed you picked?

Process What's Important

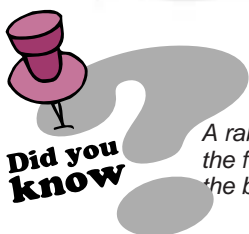
Which breeds were better when used for meat? Why? Which breeds are better for fur? Why?

Generalize to Your Life

What other decisions will you need to make in the rabbit project?

Apply What You Learned

How did this activity help you decide on a breed of rabbit to raise? How does the end use of your rabbit affect how you will feed it?



Did you know

A rabbit has five toes on the front feet and four on the back feet.



See 4HCCS Rabbit WWW Site
www.n4hccs.org

Rabbit Facts

Uses of Rabbits

Breeding stock

Rabbits raised for high quality offspring. Keep good records. Attend shows to have your rabbits' breed characteristics judged. Maintain a high level of quality in your animals.

Meat Production

Rabbits raised to eat.

Fur

Rabbits raised for fur to be tanned and made into novelty, craft and consumer products.

Wool

Rabbits raised for wool. It is important for wool to be clean, durable and easily processed. The Angora rabbit is one breed raised for its wool. If you want to raise Angoras, learn where the wool can be marketed for a profit.

Laboratory Use

Rabbits raised to be used by laboratories for research. Licenses may be required.

Pets

Rabbits raised for companionship. Pet stores may be a place for you to sell extra rabbits.

Bounding Ahead

1. Talk to two local rabbit breeders. Decide what they use their rabbits for. Ask why they made that choice.
2. Visit someone doing something you would like to do when you grow up. Talk to them about their job. List what the person likes and doesn't like about their job. Share your list with your helper.



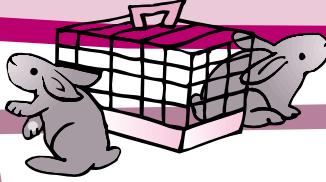
Handling and Showing

It is important to learn how to pick up and carry a rabbit. Rabbits can scratch or bite when they do not feel safe. Your rabbit will have to be handled a lot to present it for show.



Rabbit Skill: Handling rabbits for show
Life Skill: Communicating with others
Success Indicator: Demonstrates how to hold and show a rabbit
Science Standard: Organisms and environment

“Hop to it!”



1. Picking Up a Rabbit

Use a stuffed model rabbit to practice picking up a rabbit. When you are ready, show your helper or your parent how you do this with a live rabbit. Tape a picture of you holding a rabbit in the frame.

2. Removing from a Cage

Place the palm of your right hand under the middle of the abdomen and lift. Take the rabbit out of the cage with the backside first and the head last. When the rabbit is taken out of the cage, place your left hand around the hindquarters.

3. Turning a Rabbit

When you are showing or checking your rabbit you will need to examine the underside of your rabbit. Try this style of turning your rabbit.

- * Have the rabbit face your left side and firmly hold the rabbit's ears in the palm of your hand. Hold the head securely with a fold of fur and skin at the back of the neck between your fingers and the palm of your right hand.
- * Lift the rabbit with your left hand cupped around the hindquarters. Support your rabbit with your left hand as you turn the rabbit over.
- * Complete the turn, rest the hindquarters on a table so that your left hand is free to examine the rabbit. Finish the examination.
- * Reverse the turn supporting the rabbit with your left hand on the hindquarters. Pose your rabbit after you set it down.

Note: Repeat the above process using the opposite hand listed if you are left hand dominant.

Picture of me holding a rabbit.

4. Showmanship

When participating in rabbit showmanship you will want to show that you and your rabbits can do all the required moves. You will also be demonstrating your knowledge and the ability to communicate to others. Sometimes the judge will ask all the participants to do the moves together as a group. Other times the judge will ask you to do them by yourself.

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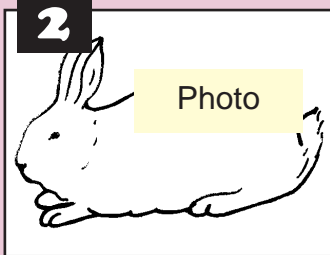
Rabbit Facts

Rabbit Showmanship Steps



1 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.



2 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.



3 Checking Ears

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



4 Check Eyes

Check each eye for signs of blindness or abnormalities. Check for walleys 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.



5 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.



6 Check Nose

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



7 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.

8 Check Front Legs

Extend the front legs to check for straightness. Run your index finger and thumb the length of each front leg.

9 Neck Area

Check neck for a dewlap (some breeds do not allow a dewlap), fur mites, fungus and abscesses.



10 Check Front Feet

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 or broken toes, toenails, unmatched toenails on corresponding feet, (including dew claws), proper color toenails for the breed as stated in the breed standard.



11 Check Body for Rupture Abscess or Mastitis

Run your hand over the chest and abdominal area to check for any abscesses, tumors, swollen teats, 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, neck, or chin areas, or under the legs.



12**Check Rear Legs**

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.

**13 Check Hocks**

Check the bottom of the hind feet for sore hocks. You are checking for sore, infected or bleeding areas. Bare areas may indicate fungal growth.

14**Check Gender**

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.

15**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. A screw tail or bob tail will disqualify an animal from judging competition.

16**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.

**17****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, Mini Rex, Silver Fox, by patting and blowing into several areas. Some woolled 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.

18**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, ribs/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.



Rabbit Rap

Share What You Did

What happened the first time you picked up a rabbit?

Process What's Important

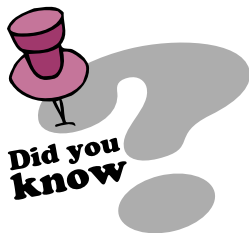
Why is practicing during the cooler part of the day important? Why don't you pick a rabbit up by its ears or legs? What did you learn about the rabbit by showing it?

Generalize to Your Life

How did showing others how to handle and show a rabbit help you learn better?

Apply What You Learned

How can you help others learn without telling them how?



You are expected to show the front, rear and sides of your rabbit in the order requested by the judge so he or she can see the overall balance. If a judge asks you to move to a different spot on the table, you are expected to pick the rabbit up for carrying before moving to the new location.



You might want to use the model made from the 4HCCS Rabbit Pattern 4HCCS BU-7199 to practice your handling skills.



Rabbit Facts

Tips for the Participant



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. Pull long hair back and wear a long-sleeved shirt or lab coat.

Knowledge

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

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.

Bounding Ahead

1. Show your group how to handle a rabbit. Tell what you are doing and why.
2. Demonstrate proper showmanship techniques at a rabbit show.
3. Assist a judge at a rabbit show.

Parts Are Parts

Think you can judge rabbits and pick the best ones? In order to do more than just say which one you like best you will want to know the names of each of the rabbit's parts so you can tell someone else "WHY" you picked a certain rabbit. In this activity you'll learn these so you can make even better decisions.

Rabbit Skill: Identifying rabbit body parts
Life Skill: Communicating with others
Success Indicator: Names 10 parts of a rabbit.
Science Standard: Characteristics of organisms

Hop to it!

Work with an adult helper, parent or friend to complete this crossword puzzle. There are some extra words. Share your answers with your adult helper.

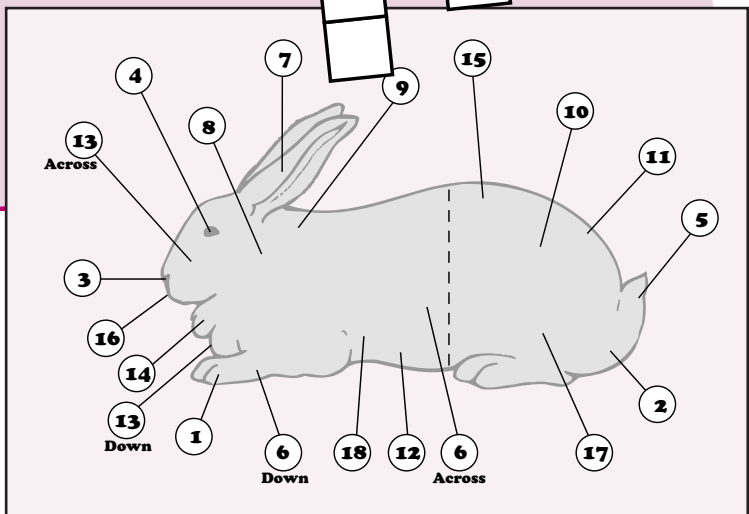
Photo of a Parts Skillathon

Parts Crossword

- Toes
- Nose
- Back
- Foot
- Neck
- Tail
- Stomach
- Mouth
- Shoulder
- Loin
- Rump

- Hip
- Rib
- Cheek
- Flank
- Belly
- Front
- Chest
- Dewlap
- Ear

- Face
- Hock
- Eye
- Leg



Did you know

The rabbit is becoming an increasingly popular pet. It is clean and neat and requires little special care.

Rabbit Rap

Share What You Did

What rabbit parts were difficult to identify? Why?

Process What's Important

How are a rabbit's feet and ears different than yours? Why do they need to be? How can learning the parts of a rabbit help you be a better rabbit raiser?

Generalize to Your Life

How did finishing the rabbit crossword help you and your friend or adult helper better understand each other?

Apply What You Learned

How would you like to improve the way you talk to others?

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Rabbit Facts

Parts of a Rabbit

Belly - The lower part of the body, abdomen. From the bottom of the last rib to the pelvis. Contains the intestines.

Chest - The front part of the body between the forelegs and neck, the breast.

Cheeks - The sides of the face below the eyes.

Forehead - The front part of the head between the eyes and the base of the ears.

Hind (rear) Leg - The foot, hock, stifle (knee) and hip joint.

Hindquarters - The rear part or section of the body; includes the loin, hips, hind legs and rump. From the last rib back.

Hip - The joint that attaches the hind legs to the trunk of the body.

Hock - The joint in rabbits that is like the ankle in man. The joint below the stifle.

Knee - The second joint of the hind leg - connects the thigh to the leg. Also known as the stifle.

Loin - That portion of the back on each side of the vertebrae from the last rib posterior to the hip joint.

Neck - Connects the head to the body.

Nostrils - The two openings of the nose leading to the internal structures of the head.

Ribs - The curved portions of the sides immediately back and under the shoulders and above the belly.

Rump - The upper, rounded part of the hindquarters.

Shoulders - The upper joint of the foreleg, connecting it to the body.

Look in Rabbit Talk 1 for other definitions of parts.

Bounding Ahead

1. Now that you know the parts of a rabbit, use a picture to "show 'n' tell" a friend or family member where the parts are and the shape of each for your breed.

