

## **Pet rabbit or Show rabbit?**

The difference between pet and show rabbits is usually defined by the owner. Are they a member of the British Rabbit Council? To show rabbits you must be a member and each rabbit you show must conform to a standard. You would get a Standards Book from the British Rabbit Council when you joined. Each rabbit must also be registered to you by the ring on its leg that is put on when they are small. The rings all have numbers that are assigned to your name. Records are held by the British Rabbit Council. [www.thebrc.org](http://www.thebrc.org) A pet rabbit may have a ring on when you buy it because a breeder thought it was going to be a good enough standard to show when it was young, but as it grew it wasn't good enough, so it then became a pet. The breeder can be found by asking the British Rabbit Council who the number on the leg ring is registered to if you wanted to let them know you had bought their rabbit, and where from, or if you wanted more rabbits from them.

Shows are advertised in a magazine that can only be bought by mail. It is called the Fur & Feather. [www.furandfeather.co.uk](http://www.furandfeather.co.uk)

When you enter a show the Secretary of that show collects in entries before the show day so that he can list the rabbits in the right classes and make lists of classes out for the judge. This can apply to pets too although most shows do accept entries of pets on the day of the show.

A pet doesn't have a standard to conform to and should be judged on three points.

Coat, Condition and Cleanliness.

- 1) The fur must be brushed or combed and if this has been done and the rabbit is not moulting then it is in good coat.
- 2) The flesh of the rabbit must be firm. It shouldn't have a big baggy stomach from being overfed or the reverse a boney backbone.
- 3) A rabbit should keep itself clean. If it gets a dirty bottom its probably had too much feed in its pot and should be given less feed and more hay. Of course pet rabbits play out and get dirty feet and the fur on their belly might be a bit grubby. Before a show it show be stood in the sink with an inch of warm water in. Have an old towel at the ready on the draining board. Wash the feet with a bit of soap then lift the rabbit onto the towel and wrap it up before you get wet through. You'll probably need a second towel to finish drying it. Keep the rabbit warm until it is pretty dry and then brush it underneath. Maybe the feet wont be as clean as they should be for a show rabbit but if it doesn't look like it has just walked to the show the judge will take the fact that it is a pet into consideration.

To keep your pet fit you could try teaching it to jump. There are many sites to give you information linked from Demi's site:

[www.rabbitjumpinguk.moonfruit.com](http://www.rabbitjumpinguk.moonfruit.com)

All the jumps on her videos are home made so no excuses. There is information on how to train your rabbit too.

All rabbits should be provided with water at a show.