



Clover Kid Rabbit



UNL Clover Kid Team
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Clover Kid Corner Website
(<http://child.unl.edu/cloverkid>)

Before You Get Started:

Information for Parents

Caring for a rabbit can be a very special learning opportunity for your child. The role of caregivers can help your child develop a sense of responsibility and a sense of compassion for others. As a youth project, rabbits are gaining in popularity for many reasons:

- Rabbits can be raised almost anywhere. They fit easily into most family settings.
- Raising rabbits give kids lots of options, from a beginner's pet project to a breeding project and perhaps on to a small business venture.
- Rabbits are a good sized animal for young children to work with. Young people are very capable of learning the skills necessary for a successful rabbit project.
- It doesn't take a lot of money to get started with rabbits—this project will fit into most family budgets.

Raising a rabbit is a big commitment as the average lifespan is 8 to 10 years.

When You Finish This You Will Have Helped Your Child:

- Identify Parts of the Rabbit
- How to Care for a Rabbit
- Practice Handling a Rabbit
- Wash a Rabbit

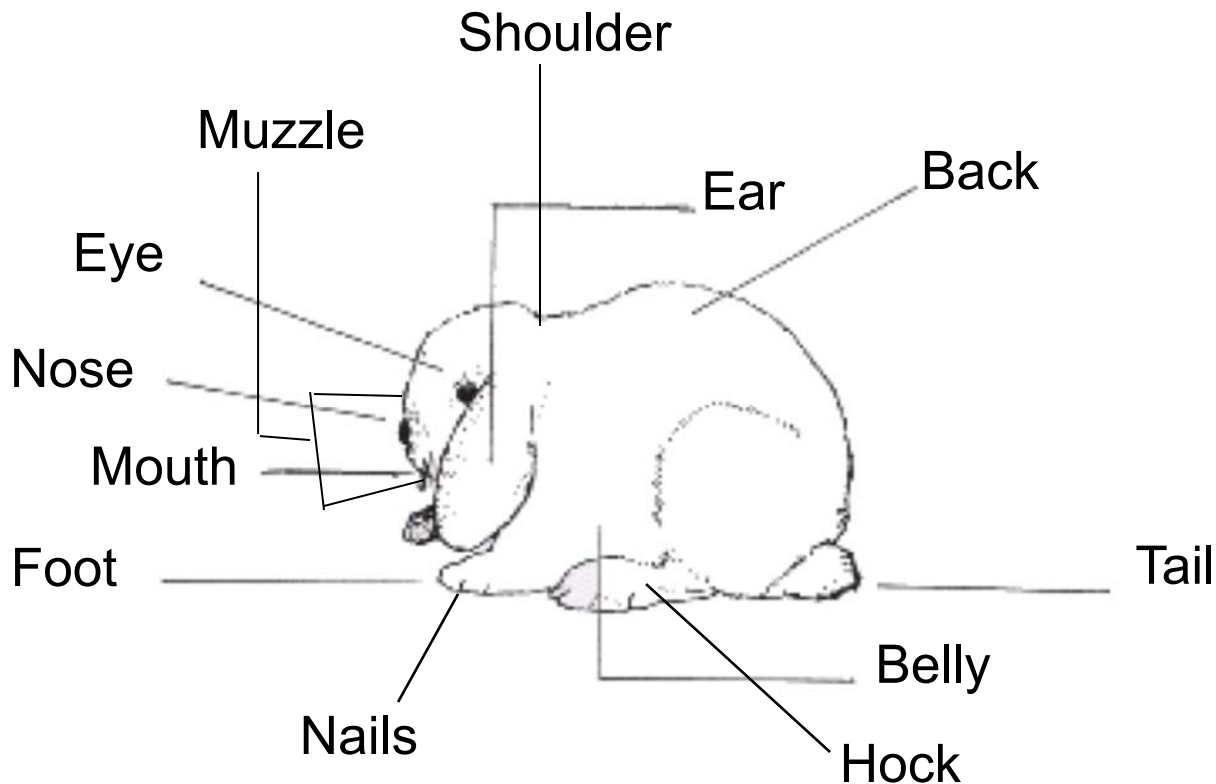


When first learning how to handle your rabbit, practice on a stuffed animal rabbit. Rabbits have a delicate spine, so handle them carefully.

Connections to State Science Standards

- SC2.3.1.a Children will differentiate between living and nonliving things
- SC2.3.1.b Children will identify the basic needs of living things (food, water, air, space, shelter)
- SC2.3.1.c Children will identify external parts of plants and animals
- SC2.3.2.b Children will describe how living things change as they grow

Parts of a Rabbit



FACTS:

Baby bunnies are called “kittens”.

Girl rabbits are called “does”.

Boy rabbits are called “bucks”.

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



Selecting the Right Breed



Netherland Dwarf



Mini Lop



Rex



Californian



Flemish Giant

Potential pet rabbit owners might be surprised to learn how many rabbit breeds are sold as pets; and there can be a great deal of variance in size, temperament and coat maintenance from breed to breed.

Size Categories and Popular Breeds in each category:

- Tiny (2 to 4 pounds) - Netherland Dwarf
- Small (4 to 6 pounds) - Mini Lop
- Medium (6 to 9 pounds) - Rex
- Large (9 to 11 pounds) - Californian
- Giant (11 pounds and over) - Flemish Giant

Basic Temperaments associated with each breed:

Excitable breeds, like Netherland Dwarf, often require more exercise and interaction than other breeds.

Relaxed breeds, like Californian and Flemish Giant, are generally calm-natured and seldom prone to biting.

Curious breeds, like Holland Lop, are investigative and have an equal balance of both calm and excited moments.

Coat Type of your pet rabbit (more care is required the longer the coat):

- ▶ Rex fur is short and feels like velvet. It is the most rare type of fur coat in pet rabbits.
- ▶ Flyback coats, as seen on Dutch and Californian breeds, are most common. Flyback means the fur will return quickly to its normal position when stroked toward the head of the rabbit.
- ▶ Rollback coats are seen on Flemish Giant, Netherland Dwarf and Holland Lop breeds, while the several inch long wool coats are seen on Angora breeds and the Jersey Wooly. Rollback means the fur will return slowly to its normal position when stroked toward the head of the rabbit.

What to Look For When Choosing Your Rabbit:

- ▶ Neither overweight nor underweight
- ▶ Coat should appear full and healthy with no bald spots
- ▶ Eyes, ears and nose should be free of discharge
- ▶ Ear interior should appear pink in color
- ▶ Eyes bright in appearance
- ▶ Teeth should be aligned correctly and not overgrown
- ▶ Breathing should be quiet and unlabored
- ▶ Should move without difficulty
- ▶ Should react calmly when petted

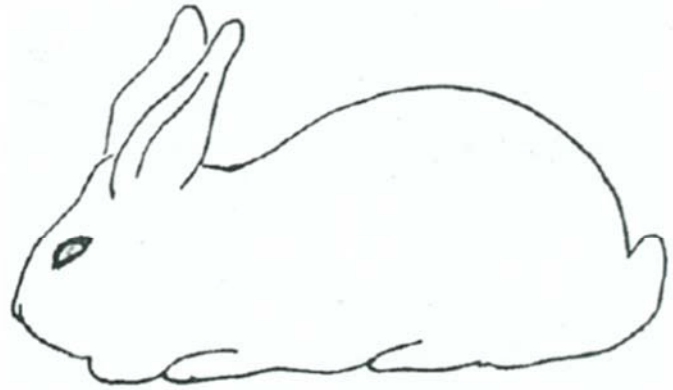
Color the Rabbits

Follow the directions on how to color each breed of rabbit.

New Zealand White

The New Zealand rabbit can be white, red, or black in color. This one is white. All New Zealand rabbits have pink eyes. They weigh about 10 to 11 pounds when they are full grown. They are an excellent meat rabbit and you will always find a class of these rabbits at the fairs.

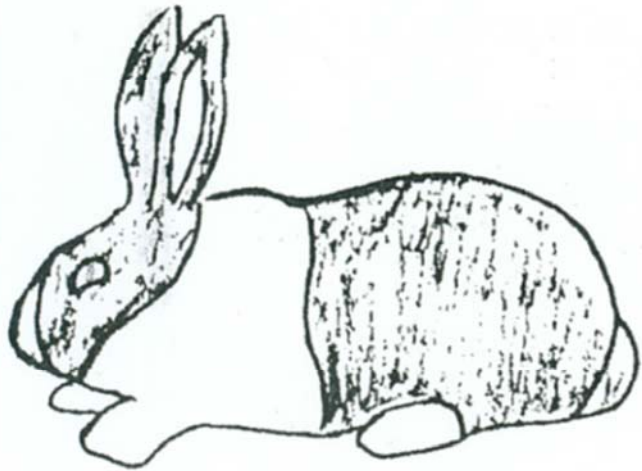
Color this rabbit white with pink eyes and pink inside the ears.



Dutch

The Dutch rabbit is very popular at the shows and fairs. They are white from the neck to a dividing line behind the front legs. The front legs are white and only the paws of the hind legs are white. They also have a white streak going up on the front of the face called a blaze. The rest of the body is black, grey, bluish grey, or brown.

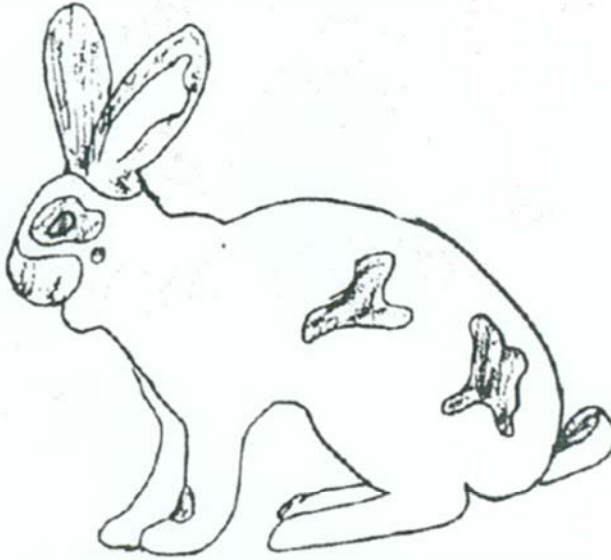
Since the most popular is black, color this rabbit so it is a black-belted Dutch.



Checkered Giant

This rabbit originated in Germany. It has a marking of its own. The spots are usually black or a bluish-grey color and its body is white. It is a very good meat rabbit and weighs between 10 and 11 pounds full grown.

Color this rabbit white with black spots.



Californian

This breed of rabbit originated in California and was first shown in 1928. It is a very good meat rabbit and very popular at shows and fairs. It weighs about 9 pounds when it is fully grown. The Californian has white body fur, but the nose, ears, feet, and tail are always black.

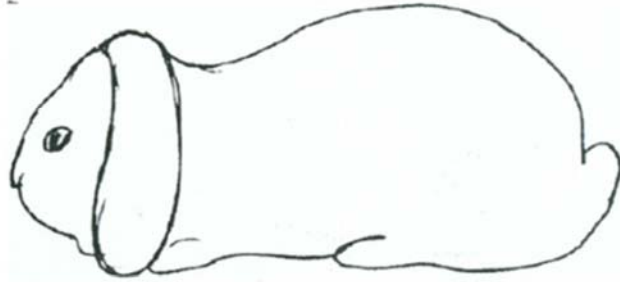
Color this rabbit white with black feet, ears, tail, and nose.



French Lop

The French Lop is another large rabbit which weighs between 10 and 11 pounds full grown. It is an excellent meat rabbit and very popular at rabbit shows and fairs. They come in a variety of colors. The way you can tell this rabbit is that its ears fall down. They are not broken, but they do not stand up like other rabbits ears do.

Color this rabbit grey and see if you can find a lop at the fair this year.



Angora

This rabbit looks like a fuzzy ball of fur. It is raised for its fur and not its meat. It can weigh from 6 to 8 pounds full grown. They are very soft to touch and the fur feels very silky.

Use your imagination and make this rabbit look fuzzy and soft.



Satins

This breed was produced and perfected in America. It has very shiny fur so it is an excellent show rabbit. It weighs about 8 to 9 pounds full grown and can be black, brown, red, colored like a Californian rabbit, or colored like a Siamese rabbit.

Color this rabbit red and pretend its fur is very shiny.



Housing for Your Rabbits



Before purchasing any rabbits you need a place to house them. Appropriate housing should be ready when you bring your rabbits home. The structure that shelters or holds the removable wire cages for your rabbits is called the "hutch". Hutches may be large or small.



They can be open-sided structures or enclosed structures with ventilation.

The kind of housing needed depends upon location, climate and the money you have to spend. Whether you go into raising rabbits in a small or big way, plan for housing and equipment that allow easy feeding, watering, breeding and cleaning. Keep construction as simple as possible. Neatness and convenience will make a good impression on visitors and prospective buyers.

Weather and Ventilation

Rabbits can withstand cold weather better than hot weather. They may die if exposed to extreme heat. Ideally, the temperature in the hutch should not be higher than 85 degrees. In hot weather, your housing should provide the rabbits with shade and any gentle breezes. On extremely hot days, place plastic bottles of frozen water in the cage. The rabbits curl up around the bottles, which helps to keep them cool.

In cold weather, it is important to protect rabbits from drafts, rain, sleet and snow. Rabbits can tolerate low temperatures and excessive cold, but wet and drafty conditions weaken their resistance to disease.

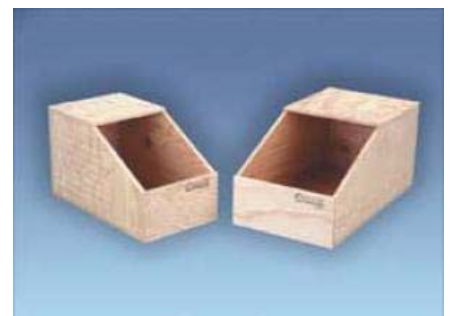
Proper ventilation is important in all types of weather. Signs of poor ventilation are condensation and a smell of ammonia. The more rabbits there are in an enclosed area, the greater the manure build-up and the greater the number of air changes that are required to keep the ammonia level within tolerable, safe limits.

Location and Security

Rabbits are easily frightened, so rabbit housing should be located where the rabbits won't be disturbed. It is important to protect rabbits from predators. Make rabbit hutches strong enough to keep rabbits in and predators out.

Nest Boxes

It is necessary to provide nest boxes for your does, before they give birth. A nest box keeps the kits dry, protects them from extremely hot and cold weather and hides them from predators, as well. The size is important. The nest box should be 2 inches longer and 1 inch wider than the doe. The height of the box will depend on the size of the breed of rabbit.



What to Feed Your Rabbit

Feed your rabbit a combination of rabbit pellets, alfalfa and vegetables such as carrots or turnips. Oats and barley are also good choices to mix in with your rabbit food; however, if you feed your rabbit either one of these items you should give your rabbit less rabbit pellets. Check the labels on the rabbit food to see how much you should feed your rabbit daily. The amount you feed your rabbit will depend on its age and weight.

► Feed a minimum of 1 cup of vegetables for each 4 pounds of body weight. Select at least three types of vegetables daily. A variety is necessary in order to obtain the necessary nutrients, with one each day that contains Vitamin A. Add one vegetable to the diet at a time. Eliminate if it causes soft stools or diarrhea.

► Limit fruits to 1-2 tablespoons per 5 pounds of body weight (none if dieting) from the list below of high fiber fruits. Sugary fruits such as bananas and grapes should be used only sparingly, as occasional treats. Bunnies have a sweet tooth and if left to their own devices will devour sugary foods before healthful ones.

Fruits:

| | |
|------------|-------------------------|
| Apple | Blueberry |
| Melon | Orange (including peel) |
| Papaya | Peach |
| Pear | Pineapple |
| Plum | Raspberry |
| Strawberry | |

► Large, unlimited amounts of fresh hay should be offered daily. Young bunnies should be introduced to hay as soon as they can eat on their own. Mixed grass hay or Timothy hay is preferred because it is lower in calories and calcium than alfalfa.

► In general, I would watch for using alfalfa and grass hay interchangeably. Young growing and pregnant rabbits should be fed alfalfa and adult animals should be fed grass hay to make sure they have adequate fiber in their diets.

► Use a good quality hay fiber alfalfa or timothy based pellet as a small part of your rabbit's diet. Choosing a good quality pellet means you do not have to feed vegetables to your rabbit on a regular basis and instead they can be used as treats.

Vegetables that contain Vitamin A:

Beet Greens (tops)
Broccoli (mostly leaves/stems)
Carrot & Carrot Tops
Collard Greens
Dandelion Greens & Flowers
(no pesticides)
Endive
Kale
Lettuce: Romaine, Red or
Green Leaf
(no iceberg or light colored leaf)
Mustard Greens
Parsley
Pea Pods (the flat edible kind)
Spinach
Watercress

Other Vegetables:

Alfalfa, Radish & Clover Sprouts
Basil
Bok Choy
Brussels Sprouts
Celery
Cilantro
Clover
Escarole
Green Peppers
Mint
Peppermint Leaves
Radicchio
Radish Tops
Raspberry Leaves
Wheat Grass

If you change your rabbit's diet too often, it will affect their digestive system.

Absolutely NO chocolate (poisonous!), cookies, crackers, breakfast cereals, bread, pasta, yogurt drops or other "human treats".

Getting Your Rabbit Ready For Fair

Rabbit Videos

How to Groom Your Rabbit
How to Trim Your Rabbit's Toenails
Rabbit Showmanship Example 1
Rabbit Showmanship Example 2
Rabbit Showmanship Example 3

All videos can be found at the
Youtube playlist link below:

<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLB1CF313248A2FB72>



1. Handle your rabbit on a daily basis. Take it out of its cage and play with it, pet it and get it used to being touched by humans. Tell your rabbit "No" firmly when it attempts to bite or kick you and give your rabbit a reward when it allows you to touch and play with it.
2. Practice positioning the rabbit so that the judge can examine it. Practice flipping the rabbit onto its backside so the judge can see the stomach area. Practice opening the rabbit's mouth so that the judge can see the rabbit's teeth. Practice each day, so you and your rabbit will feel confident and comfortable with the judge on show day.
3. Adult rabbit toenails need to be clipped on a regular basis. Do not clip toenails of rabbits under 6 months of age. The nails should be clipped with a nail clipper similar to the type used for cats and dogs. Be careful not to cut the nails back too far or they could bleed.
4. Before the show, allow your rabbit to explore the cage it will live in during the fair and spend a few days in it. A rabbit that is comfortable with its surroundings will be easier to handle than a rabbit who has never seen its show cage before.
5. Clean your rabbit the day before the show. Give your rabbit a bath with tear-free baby shampoo and remove all dirt and soil from it. Brush your rabbit so that the fur is smooth and shiny. Clean out your rabbit's ears with cotton swabs, but do not enter too far into the ear.



How to Carry Your Rabbit Correctly

To carry a rabbit, tuck the head under one arm and support the rabbit's weight by placing your 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. 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.



Never Lift or Carry Rabbits by Their Ears or Legs!

Helpful Videos:

[How to Know the Right Way to Pick Up Your Rabbit](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ke8XCOJjMp8)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ke8XCOJjMp8>

[The Proper Way to Pick Your Rabbit Out of Its Cage](https://youtu.be/1URtJbdoKrk?list=PLB1CF313248A2FB72)

<https://youtu.be/1URtJbdoKrk?list=PLB1CF313248A2FB72>



Books to Read with Your Children

Caring for Your Rabbit by Colleen Sexton

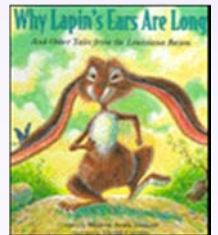
Your Rabbit: A Kid's Guide to Raising & Showing by Nancy Searle

Why Lapin's Ears Are Long And Other Tales from the Louisiana Bayou

by Sharon Arms Doucet

Youtube Living books: **Aesop's The Tortoise and the Hare**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iNGB2eCv54M>



Questions????

At the county fair, your child may be asked these questions by the judge during the Clover Kid Rabbit Showmanship Class. It will be beneficial to ask your child these questions before they appear in the show ring, in front of a crowd, and behind the microphone talking to the judge!

- | | |
|---|--|
| ▶ What kind of animal do you have? | ▶ Where did you get your rabbit? |
| ▶ Where does your rabbit live? | ▶ Does your rabbit have a name? |
| ▶ What do you feed your rabbit? | ▶ Who helps you care for your rabbit? |
| ▶ How long have you cared for your rabbit? | ▶ How often do you feed your rabbit? |
| ▶ How often do you give water to your rabbit? | ▶ What is your favorite thing about caring for a rabbit? |
| ▶ How much do you feed your rabbit? | ▶ How much water do you give to your rabbit? |

Me & My Rabbit

My name is _____

My exhibitor number is _____

My rabbit's name is _____

My rabbit's breed is _____

My rabbit's favorite thing to do is _____



A boy rabbit is called a buck.

A girl rabbit is called a doe.

My rabbit is a _____

How many times a day do you feed your rabbit? _____

Where do you keep your rabbit? _____

What do you feed your rabbit? _____

What is the proper way to hold your rabbit? _____



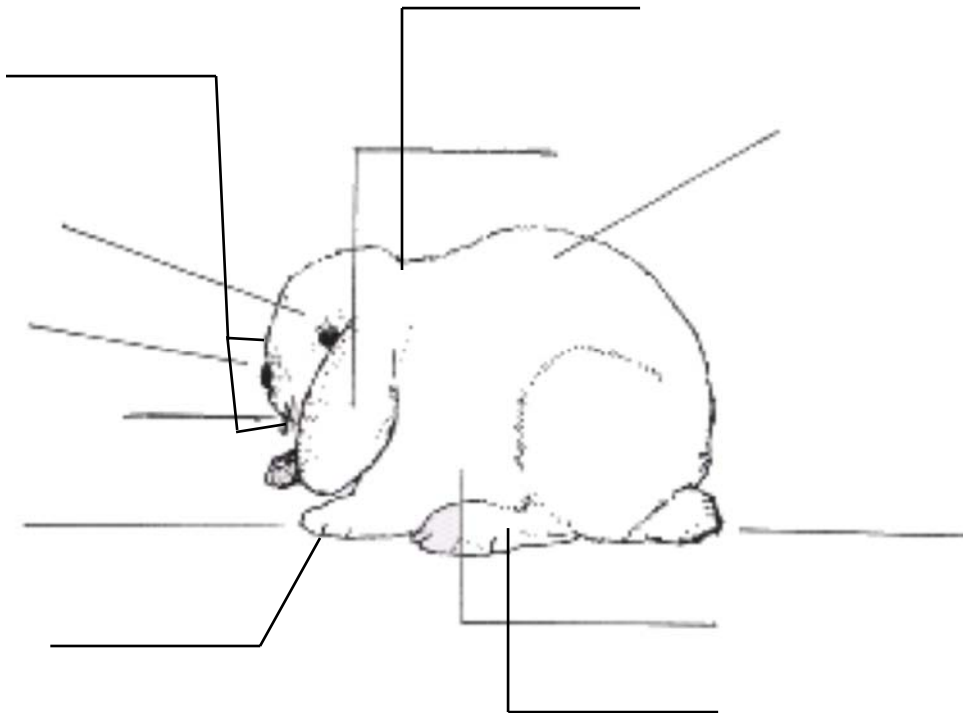
Glue some pictures here
of you with your project.

Here are some pictures or drawings of
my project activities.

Connect the dots. Count by 2's



Parts of a Rabbit



Write in the parts of the rabbit on the lines above and color it to look like your project rabbit.

Parts of the Rabbit Word Bank:

Tail

Ear

Belly

Nose

Shoulder

Hock

Back

Foot

Eye

Mouth

Nails

Muzzle