

# PROPER POSING AND EVALUATION

## COMMERCIAL TYPE



Josh Humphries has been raising rabbits since 1994 and became a ARBA licensed judge in 2001. He has been an ARBA district director and is a current member of the ARBA Standards Committee. In 2013 Josh was the recipient of the prestigious ARBA Distinguished Service award.

Josh has long been a popular judge and is frequently selected to pick Groups at ARBA Conventions. He has judged all across the USA, Japan, Canada and Thailand. Currently, Josh lives in Birchwood, TN where he works as a hospital manager at a small animal veterinary clinic.

**W**ithin the Rabbit and Cavy community the most common area of criticism from both judges and exhibitors alike is inconsistent or improper posing. Too many good animals are culled because they are improperly posed. In addition too many culls are kept for the same reason. Simply stated: If your animal is not properly posed you cannot properly evaluate the body type.

**Overposing**, is the most common posing fault. It distorts the animal creating the illusion of depth but causes the animal to slide off the hindquarter.

**Underposing** can make the animal appear to have a fuller hindquarter, but also creates the illusion of length and lacking in depth.

To pose your animal, you must first understand the style of animal you are breeding. The ARBA specifies five body type profiles:

**Semi-Arch**  
**Compact**  
**Cylindrical**

**Full Arch**  
**Commercial**

Within these body type profiles there are further specifications. For example; while some compact types may be posed with a low headset (Mini Rex, Florida White, Mini Satin), others are posed to display a high headset (Netherland Dwarf, Holland Lop, Jersey Wooly). Some full arch rabbits may be posed (Britannia Petite and Belgian Hare), while others are permitted to move naturally about the table to evaluate type (Rhinelanders, Checkered Giant). The ARBA Standard of Perfection provides detailed posing instructions relating to the type of animal you are breeding.

*French Angora, Giant Angora, Satin Angora, Blanc de Hotot, Champagne d'Argent, Californian (pictured), Cinnamon, American Chinchilla, Creme d'Argent, French Lop, Harlequin, New Zealand, Palomino, Rex, American Sable, Satin, Silver Fox, and Silver Marten*

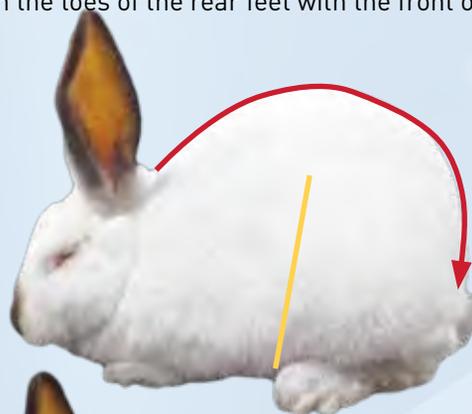
Commercial type rabbits are medium length with a depth of body equaling the width of body throughout. There will be a slight taper from the shoulder to the hips when viewed from above. Since commercial type rabbits are primarily raised for meat, a firmness of flesh and fullness of body are particularly important. The animal should present a smooth appearance throughout.

### To pose your Commercial Type Rabbit:

- Place the front feet directly under the eyes.
- Align the toes of the rear feet with the front of the hips.

#### Over Posed

The rabbit is over tucked, giving the illusion of depth, but creating a flat spot behind the hip and an under-cut appearance.



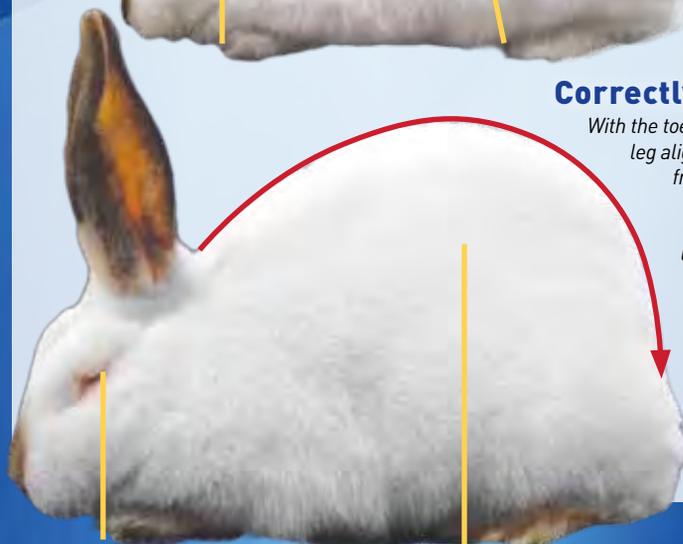
#### Under Posed

The toes of the back leg are placed behind the hip which falsely elongates the rabbit and distorts the topline.



#### Correctly Posed

With the toes of the back leg aligned with the front of the hip, and the front feet directly under the eye, this animal is posed correctly and ready for evaluation.



# FULL ARCH TYPE

*Belgian Hare, Britannia Petite (pictured), Checkered Giant (pictured), English Spot, Rhinelander, and Tan*

Full arch animals have an arch starting at the nape of the neck continuing smoothly over the shoulders, loin, hips and rounding to the base of the tail. There are two types of animals in this group: *Posed & Running*

## Posed breeds:

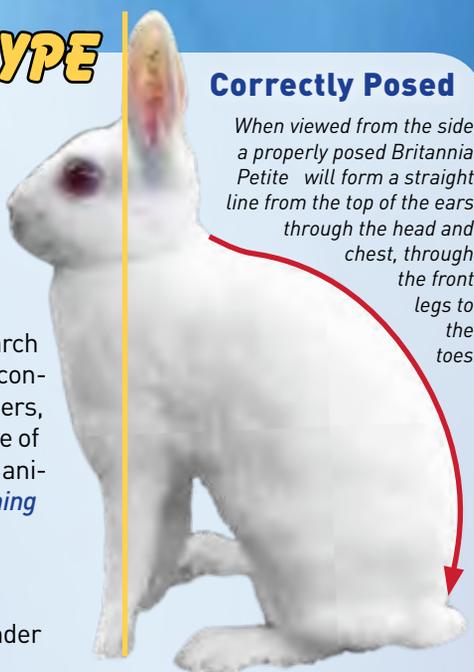
*Britannia Petite & Belgian Hare*

Set hind feet, lift head from under jaw, or gently from shoulder.



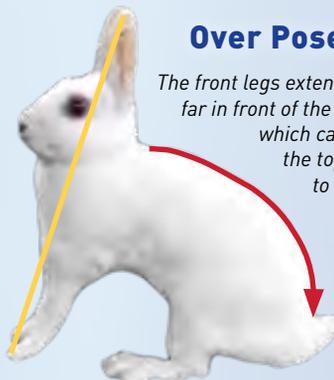
## Under Posed

*The front legs are not fully extended to show this rabbit off to its best advantage.*



## Correctly Posed

*When viewed from the side, a properly posed Britannia Petite will form a straight line from the top of the ears through the head and chest, through the front legs to the toes.*



## Over Posed

*The front legs extend too far in front of the body which causes the topline to slide.*

## Running breeds :

*Tan, Rhinelander, Checkered Giant, and English Spot*

- Allow the animal to run. Step back and watch. View from all angles. the reason you run a full arch breed?
- Look for full extension, length of leg, wide/straight tracking, spinal curve with the high point over the loin. Body carried well off the ground.



**"YOU RUN THESE BREEDS TO WATCH THEM STOP." - BOBBY BYRNE**

## Mechanics of Handling

Rabbits are nervous and excitable by nature so handle them confidently with a gentle hand to allow them to relax so that a proper evaluation can be performed.

- Use minimal restraint when handling rabbits.
- Lift rabbits from underneath while moving to and from holding coops or cages.
- Use a table as support for when turning a larger rabbit over.
- Do not scruff rabbits.
- If you are judging rabbits remember to treat each exhibit as if it were your very own, and return the rabbit in the same condition you received it!

## Posing and Balance

Posing creates the element of uniformity and consistency in our judging and evaluating of the rabbit. **Consistency is key.** Properly and uniformly pose your rabbits to assess their balance and conformation as related their breed standard.

## Mechanics of Posing

*Before you pose your rabbit, check the toenails and trim if necessary. Overgrown toenails will make it uncomfortable for the rabbit to properly sit to its best advantage.*

You may be surprised to note that there are very few variations to the standard pose between all 48 breeds of rabbits. The common elements that apply to all breeds are:

- **Hind feet placed flat and square on the table.**
- **Toes of hind feet aligned with the front of the hip.**
- **Front feet placed directly under the eyes.**

# COMPACT TYPE

American Fuzzy Lop (pictured), English Angora, Standard Chinchilla, Dutch, Dwarf Hotot, Florida White (pictured), Havana, Holland Lop (pictured), Jersey Wooly, Lilac, Lionhead, Mini Lop, Mini Rex, Mini Satin, Netherland Dwarf, Polish, Silver, and Thrianta

Compact type rabbits are lighter in weight and shorter in body than the commercial type animals. Though the rules of posing remain the same, the headset and depth of shoulder will determine the specific profile appearance.

## To pose your Compact Type Rabbit:

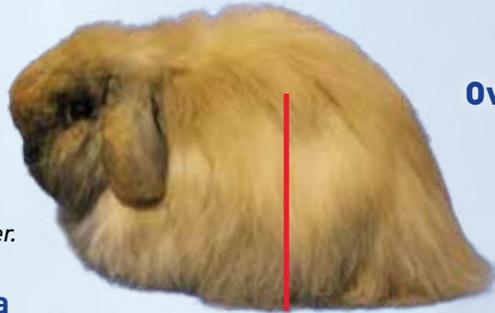
- Place the front feet directly under the eyes.
- Align the toes of the rear feet with the front of the hips.

## Compact Rabbits with a Low Headset:

English Angora, Standard Chinchilla, Dutch, Dwarf Hotot, Florida White, Havana, Lilac, Mini Lop, Mini Rex, Mini Satin, Polish, Silver and Thrianta.

## Compact Rabbits with a Medium Headset:

American Fuzzy Lop  
The head shall be massive in appearance and set close and of medium height on the shoulder.

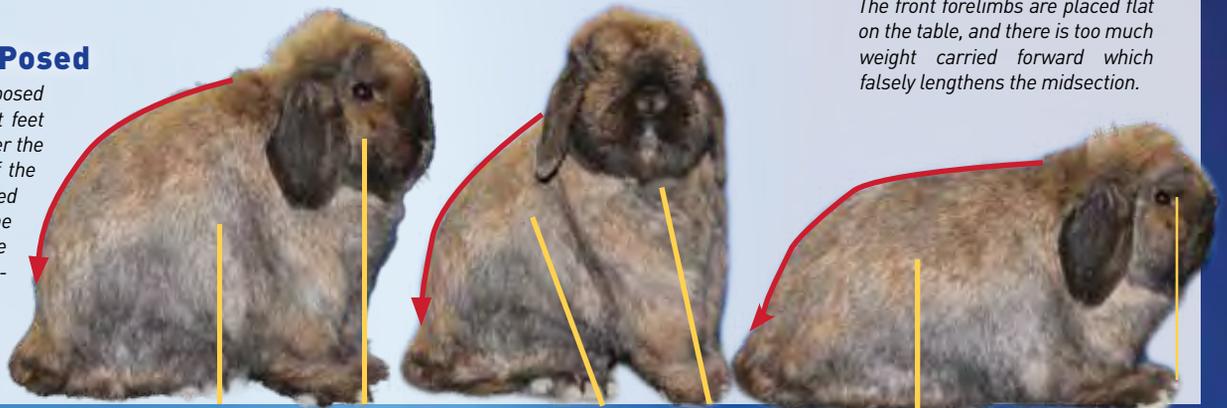


## Compact Rabbits with a High Headset: Holland Lop, Jersey Wooly, Lionhead, & Netherland Dwarf

- The Holland is encouraged to pose lightly on its front feet.
- The Jersey Wooly is posed to display a high headset.
- The Lionhead is posed with the front feet resting lightly on the table.
- The Netherland Dwarf topline is to show that the depth of the shoulders is carried through to a deep, well-rounded, and well filled hindquarter.

## Correctly Posed

The Holland is posed lightly on its front feet with its weight over the hips. The toes of the back leg are aligned with front of the hip. Front feet are placed directly under the eye.



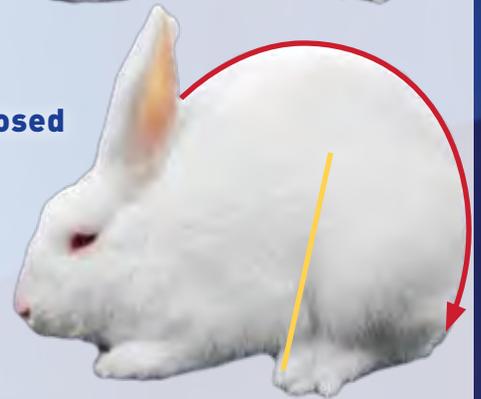
## Correctly Posed



## Under Posed



## Over Posed



## Over Posed

The front feet are lightly placed, but both the front and back toes are positioned too far forward for proper evaluation of type.

## Under Posed

The front forelimbs are placed flat on the table, and there is too much weight carried forward which falsely lengthens the midsection.

## CYLINDRICAL TYPE

*The Himalayan is the only breed of rabbit in this body type group.*

The topline should be straight with no arch or rise

### To pose your Cylindrical-Rabbit:

- Place the front feet directly under the eyes.
- Align the toes of the rear feet with the front of the hips.
- Elongate the animal as much as possible making sure to keep the hocks flat on the table.
- Slide hands down the body while lifting and stretching the hindquarter.
- Continue process until the animal is properly posed



**Correctly Posed**

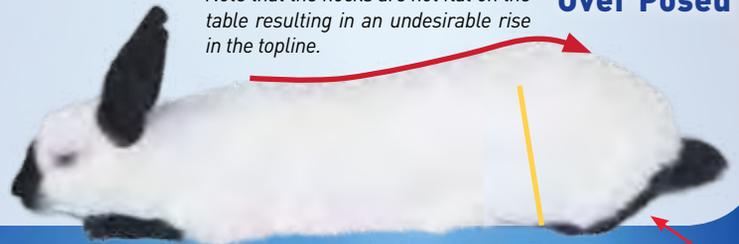
*The rear feet are pushed forward distorting the topline and creating an undesirable rise in a topline that should be level*

**Under Posed**



*Note that the hocks are not flat on the table resulting in an undesirable rise in the topline.*

**Over Posed**



### Correctly Posed

*Toes of back leg aligned with front of hip. Front feet directly under the eye.*



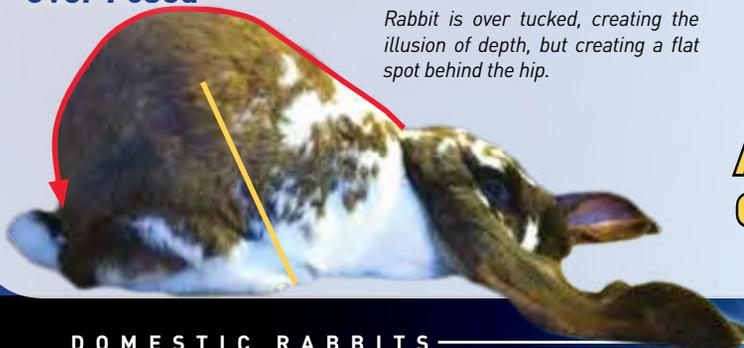
### Under Posed

*Toes of back leg are placed behind the hip falsely elongating the rabbit.*



### Over Posed

*Rabbit is over tucked, creating the illusion of depth, but creating a flat spot behind the hip.*



## SEMI-ARCH TYPE

*American, Beveren, English Lop (pictured), Flemish Giant and Giant Chinchilla*

Semi Arched rabbits are longer in body with a well-defined rise starting at or near the back of the shoulders. The high point of the rise occurs at the top of the hips.

### To pose your Semi-Arch Rabbit:

- Place the front feet directly under the eyes.
- Align the toes of the rear feet with the front of the hips.

**All breeds within the Semi-Arch Group are posed exactly the same**