



Show Standards for Rats

Version 3.0

General

- All animals brought to the show, whether being entered or not, should be of good health, well groomed and in excellent condition (please refer to the Rat Entry Conditions for further details regarding expectations of animals brought to club events).
- Enclosures brought along to house rodents on the day of a club event are to be clean with fresh bedding and be supplied with adequate food and water. Heavily soiled, dirty, damaged, broken, inappropriate or insecure enclosures are not permitted.
- Rats brought to show are not to be younger than 6 weeks of age, this also applies to rats bought as companion animals or rats for sale.
- Rats should be parasite treated by their owners a minimum of one week prior to show.
- If your rat's variety is not listed in the standards in this document, it is not permitted to be entered in any of the standardised classes.

Class Entry Rules

Introductory

The introductory class is for exhibitors new to the club who have not shown with the AusRFS NSW before. It is not a compulsory class for new exhibitors to the club, but allows for new members to sit down with the judge while their animal is scored against the standards. The judge will discuss with the introductory exhibitor the different aspects of scoring a rat against the standards, including what to show and what not to show. New exhibitors may enter 2 entries per show for 3 shows.

Kitten Class

Kitten class is reserved for all rats entered in show aged between 6-12 weeks. This class has an entry limit of 2 rats per exhibitor per show.

Junior Pet Class

The junior pet class is for exhibitors aged 15 years or younger. Pet classes are novelty classes that judge who has the friendliest rat on the day. This class has an entry limit of 2 rats per exhibitor per show.

Senior Pet Class

The senior pet class is open to all exhibitors over the age of 15. Pet classes are novelty classes that judge who has the friendliest rat on the day. This class has an entry limit of 2 rats per exhibitor per show.

Conformation Class

Conformation class is reserved for rats that are not adequately marked enough to be entered into their appropriate standards based class. Conformation class omits the colour/markings aspect of the score sheet (weighing 20 points), and is designed to give the exhibitor an idea on how well their rat meets the clubs' conformation, condition and temperament standards. This class has an entry limit of 2 rats per exhibitor per show.

Standards Based Classes

The standards based classes are open to all exhibitors. Standards based classes are listed further down on this document. There is no limit on entry number per exhibitor for these classes.

Provisional Class

Provisional class is for rat varieties that are currently in the process of being assessed for full standardised status by the club. Once a variety is proven to breed true and considered different enough from other varieties to warrant full standardised status, it is reviewed by the committee, the written standard refined and added to the standards based classes. Varieties currently under provisional status are listed further down this document. This class has an entry limit of 2 rats per exhibitor per show.

Unstandardised Class

This class is for the introduction of new standards and the refinement of the standards to be used in future judging competitions. Entries in this class are not eligible for awards or points.

Use of a Breeder Prefix and/or Rodentry Name

All rodents that are the result of a pairing between your doe and a buck (either yours or someone elses) must have your rodentry prefix attached. If the rat you own is the result of another breeders pairing, then the breeder prefixed attached will be the one of the breeder you purchased the animal from. Rats from pet shops or un-named breeders will have no breeder prefix in front of their given name.

When entering a rat for show on the entry form, please write out the rodentries full name in front of the rats given name, excluding the words 'rattery' or 'rodentry'. E.g. If you have a rat named Billy you purchased from Mushroom Rodentry (prefix MSR), you would enter it as Mushroom Billy. You would not enter it as Mushroom Rodentry Billy, MSR Billy or Billy.

Placing the rodentry name/prefix in front of the rats given name is part of show etiquette and gives credit to the breeder of the animal you are exhibiting at show.

Appeals and Clarifications of Decisions

Appeals and clarification requests are to be lodged with either the secretary or a steward within a timely fashion. Exhibitors are not to approach the judges whilst they are in the process of judging.

Rat Entry Conditions and Disqualifications

Condition

- Rats bought to shows and events should be free of any health issues, injuries or parasites.
- Rats should be of a good size for their gender and age, and not be severely obese or underweight.
- They should be devoid of any wounds (open or healing), scabs, lumps, lesions or skin irritations.
- A rat should be well groomed. Their bodies should be clean of debris, dirt or grime, nails should be trimmed and tails washed.
- Eyes should be free of discharge and/or injury, and any indicators of blindness. Eyes should appear bright and clear and not be sunken or cloudy.
- Rats teeth should align correctly, and are not to be missing, broken or overgrown.
- Missing body parts or appendages are not permitted in exhibited fancy rats, nor are rats with birth damage, defects or malformations that alter its natural appearance.
- Physical alteration by the exhibitor of the fancy rat is strictly not permitted. This includes the dying or trimming of fur.
- The rats coat should appear dense and healthy, not thinned and dishevelled. The coat should not be missing patches of fur and whiskers should be intact. Unkempt sparse coats are to be considered a sign of ill health.
- The rat should not show any signs of illness such as congested noises, wheezing, rattling, sneezing, chirping or gasping for air. A rat that is hunched up with fluffed fur, avoiding socialisation and making audible wheezing sounds is ill and is not permitted to be bought to show. Head tilts, tumours, abscesses, hernias, growths, etc are all considered signs of ill health and are grounds for disqualification.
- The rat should be free from lice, mites, parasite eggs and any other evidence of parasite infestation.
- Pregnant or nursing does are strictly not permitted to shows.
- Bucks are to have two fully descended testicles.
- Rats entered in shows must be domesticated fancy *Rattus norvegicus*. Wild rats that have been tamed are strictly not to be entered in show classes.

Temperament

Rats should be alert and inquisitive, exhibiting an attentive and friendly nature, with does being more active and bucks more laid back. Rats should be receptive to handling. A rat should not exhibit a listless or lethargic demeanor when being handled. Any rat that exhibits signs of aggression, skittish or fearful behaviour and is unable to be handled will be considered a fault, with extreme displays of such behaviours grounds for disqualification. A rat should never bite, this behavioural display results in immediate disqualification.

Conformation

Rats are to be of a good size for their gender, with does exhibiting a more racy and elegant type compared to bucks who appear stockier. Rats are to be muscular, well arched over the loin, firm of flesh and proportionate on the whole. The rat is to be an ideal healthy weight, not being undersized or too overweight. If two rats are equal in conformation aspects, preference will be given to the larger rat.

Head

Should be proportionate with a well defined brow. The muzzle should be of good breadth, rounded and blunt, not narrow or pointed. A buck should appear masculine, exhibiting broadness and strength, while a females head exhibits definition and refinement and is clearly feminine.

Eyes

The eyes should be prominent, round and clear. They should be of a good size in proportion with the head, not being too large or too small. The eyes should not protrude. In curly coated varieties, eyes should be almond shaped, being slightly deeper in the head preventing the curly eyelashes from irritating the eyes. Eyes should have adequate spacing between them.

Ears

Should be well formed, of a good size, oval shaped and lacking in creases. Ears should be set apart at 10.30 and 1.30. They should be clean with no nicks, tears or cuts.

Tail

The tail should be long and cylindrical, tapering to a fine point from a thick base and good set-on. The tail should be at least the length of the rats body, it should be firm and of a size and thickness appropriate to the size of the rat, giving the appearance of balance. The tail should not be kinked, feel ridged, or be damaged.

Rat Coat Standards

Standard

Fur should densely coat the body evenly and appear lustrous. The coat should lay flat, and smooth. Coarser fur and slightly longer guard hairs are permissible in males. Whiskers are to be long and straight.

Faults

- Dull coat
- Hair too sparse or missing
- Coarse coat or long guard hairs on doe

Disqualifications

- Brittle, short or missing whiskers
- Large bald patches
- Incorrect variety

Silky

The coat is to be softer than a standard coat, in both does and bucks. Silky rats have minimal guard hairs, giving ticked varieties a more vibrant appearance. The fur coat is twice the length of a standard coat, and has a delicate sheen.

Faults

- Visible guard hairs
- Length of coat more alike to standard coat
- Coarse coat
- Dull appearance
- Additional faults listed in standard coat

Disqualifications

- Too many guard hairs
- Incorrect variety
- Brittle, short or missing whiskers
- Large bald patches

Rex

Fur to be thick, plush and soft. It should evenly cover the body and should appear slightly waved all over, and to a lesser extent on the belly. Guard hairs may be slightly reduced in number, but not greatly. Coat can be slightly longer than standard, but should not be too long as to detract from the overall look. Whiskers are to be long and slightly wavy, but not extremely so.

Faults

- Fur lacking soft texture
- Coat is too curly
- Too few guard hairs
- Curly or crimped whiskers
- Additional faults as listed under Standard coat

Disqualifications

- Brittle, short or missing whiskers
- Very rough textured coat
- Incorrect variety
- Large bald patches

Double Rex

The fur coat is to be evenly dense and curly, with the belly having less curl. Guard hairs are greatly reduced or missing, and the coat has less of a shine compared to a standard coat, however it should not look unusually dull. The texture of the coat is to be coarser than that of a standard coat type but it should be brittle. The whiskers are to be tightly curled and shorter than those of a standard.

Faults

- Too many guard hairs
- Coat or whiskers lacking in curl
- Additional faults listed in standard coat

Disqualifications

- Brittle, short or missing whiskers
- Very soft textured coat
- Large bald patches
- Incorrect variety

Rat Colour Standards

Ticked

General

The rat is to have an even ticking over the body with no rusting, patchiness or white hairs. The demarcation between the top and belly colours should be devoid of irregularities and brindling. The foot colour is to match the top.

Faults

- White flecking or silvered/white hairs throughout the coat
- Inconsistent ticking, as to almost appear merled
- Uneven or light colour
- Rusting or patchiness

Disqualifications

- White spotting
- Entered in incorrect class

Agouti (A*)

Colour is a rich chestnut brown, with a dark grey undercoat and black guard hairs. Belly is a silvery grey, eyes are black.

Cinnamon (A* m/m)

Colour is a warm, russet brown with a grey undercoat and black guard hairs. Belly is a light silvery grey and eye colour is black.

Fawn (A* r/r)

The rat is to be a rich, deep golden orange, with a pale blue-grey undercoat and silver guard hairs. Belly colour is a creamy silver, eyes are ruby.

Argente (A* m/m r/r)

A vibrant, bright orange with a cream undercoat. Guard hairs are silver and belly colour is a soft cream. Eye colour is ruby.

Silverfawn (A* p/p)

Rat is to be a pale apricot colour, with a light silvery white undercoat. Guard hairs are white and belly is a pale silvery cream colour. Eyes are pink.

Opal (A* d/d)

The rat is to have a blend of mid-blue ticking over a medium fawn ground. Undercoat is to be blue down to the skin. Belly colour is silver and eyes are black.

Rat Colour Standard

Non-Ticked

General

The rat is to be a solid, even colour, with no rusting or patchiness. Some silvering is permissible. The foot and belly colour is to match the top, but in the case of light coloured varieties, a pale throat and belly is permissible.

Faults

- Uneven or light colouration
- Rusting or patchiness

Disqualifications

- White spotting
- Entered in incorrect class

Black (a/a)

To be a deep lustrous black all over devoid of rusting, dinginess or dullness (Except in rex varieties). A light amount of silvering permissible, heavy silvering is a disqualifiable fault. Eyes black.

Mink (a/a m/m)

To be an even medium grey colour with a slight brown tone. Colour to be even with belly colour matching the top. Should be devoid of patchiness, rusting and dinginess. Eyes black.

Buff (a/a r/r)

A medium beige colour with a warm grey tone with no signs of dullness, rusting or patchiness. Belly colour to match the top. Eyes ruby.

Dove (a/a m/m r/r)

A cool, even grey, similar to that of a pigeon, with no dullness, dinginess or patchiness. Belly colour should match the top. Eyes ruby.

Champagne (a/a p/p)

A creamy-honey colour, that is not too pale so as to look ivory, with no sign of dinginess, greyness or patchiness. Belly colour should match the top. Eyes pink.

Blue (a/a d/d)

A deep steel-blue colour with no patching, dinginess or dullness. Eyes black.

Silver (a/a d/d p/p)

A delicate ice-blue colour with no brown tinge or hue. Eyes pink.

White (includes BEW (N/N), REW (N/N r/r) and PEW (c/c or N/N p/p))

Rat is to be a clean and crisp white with no yellowing, staining, or cream tinge. Patches of colour on white rats is an immediate disqualification. Eyes are black, ruby or pink.

Rat Marking Standards

General

All markings shall be clearly cut, well defined, and devoid of brindling. Any white shall be pure and devoid of yellowish tinge or staining. Rats entered in marked classes must be a standardised colour and coat.

Disqualifications

- Entered in incorrect class
- Unstandardised coat or colour variety

Bareback

The rat shall have a hood that is unbroken, covering the head, throat, chest and shoulders. The remainder of the body is to be white.

Faults

- White throat and/or chin
- Ragged hood and/or demarcation
- Small white coloured spots on white

Disqualifications

- Large coloured patches on the white.

Berkshire

The rat is to be symmetrically marked, with as much white on the underside as possible. The white marking shall not extend up the sides of the body, with the edges clearly cut and devoid of brindling. The back feet are to be white to the ankle, and front feet are to be white to the elbow. The tail is to be white to half its length. A white head spot is desirable, but lack of a head spot is will not be penalised.

Faults

- Uneven markings on underside and/or demarcation
- Missing white tail tip, except in pink eyed and ruby eyed varieties
- Small coloured spots or hairs on the white underside
- White leg markings under-marked or over-marked

Disqualifications

- Large coloured patched on the white underside

Blazed

The rat shall have a white, wedge-blazed facial marking that covers the chin, nose and whisker bed, and tapers to a fine point on the forehead. The blaze should be symmetrical and not cover the eyes. The rat is to be a good example of a standardised marking (E.g. Berkshire, variegated, bareback, etc.).

Faults

- Non-wedge blaze is to be severely penalised
- Wedge blaze covers eye(s)
- Wedge blaze is uneven
- Wedge blaze does not reach forehead

Disqualifications

- Head spot only
- Inadequate blazed marking
- Unstandardised marking exhibited

Capped

The rat shall have colour on the head that does not extend past the ears and follows the line of the lower jawbone. The colour is not to extend under the chin. A head spot is desirable, but a lack of one will not be penalised. The remainder of the body is to be white.

Faults

- Colour extending below the jaw-line
- Colour extends behind the ears onto the shoulder area
- Small coloured spots or hairs on the white

Disqualifications

- Large coloured patches on the white

Hooded

The rat shall have a hood that is unbroken, covering the head, throat, chest and shoulders. The hood shall be continuous with the saddle, extending down the spine to the tail, with as much of the tail as possible being coloured. The saddle should be about 1 ½ inches wide and must be even and unbroken.

Faults

- Saddle is incomplete or broken
- Ragged hood and/or demarcation
- White throat and/or chin
- Small coloured spots or hairs on the white
- White tail markings

Disqualifications

- Extremely under-marked or broken saddle
- Large coloured patches on the white

Irish

The rat is to have a white equilateral triangle on the chest. The triangle is to be of a good size spanning the chest region and is not to streak down towards the belly, but is to occupy the space between the front legs. The back feet are to be white to the ankle, and the forelegs are to be white to the elbows. The tail is to be white to quarter of its length.

Faults

- Uneven triangle marking and/or demarcation
- Missing white tail tip, except in pink eyed and ruby eyed varieties
- White leg markings under-marked or over-marked

Disqualifications

- Coloured spots on the triangle
- Other white patches on the rat

Variegated

The rat is to have similar markings to a hooded rat, but instead of a solid spine marking, it is to be comprised of small flecks and patches of colour, akin to the look of 'salt and pepper'. The head and shoulders are to remain solid. A head spot is desirable, but lack of one will not be penalised. The colour should extend to the tail, which should be devoid of any markings.

Faults

- Inadequate variegation
- Solid patches of colour on the spine
- Ragged hood and/or demarcation
- White throat and/or chin
- White tail markings
- Small coloured spots or hairs on the white underside

Disqualifications

- Large coloured patches on the white underside

Variegated Berkshire

The rat is to have markings similar to a Berkshire marked rat but with as much white dappling and flecking as possible, extending up the sides from the white belly, and running the full length of the rat from behind the forelegs to the hind legs on each side. The back feet are to be white to the ankle, and the forelegs are to be white to the elbows. The tail is to be white to half its length. A head spot is desirable, but lack of a spot is not to be penalised.

Faults

- Inadequate variegation
- Missing white tail tip, except in pink eyed and ruby eyed varieties
- Small coloured spots or hairs on underside
- White leg marking under-marked or over-marked

Disqualifications

- Large coloured patches on the white underside

Downunder

Downunder rats can be shown in any standardised marking variety (E.g. Berkshire, variegated, hooded, etc.), as well as downunder spotted and downunder hooded spotted, which are markings unique to the downunder trait. Downunder rats must be a good example of their marking variety.

General

Downunder rats are to have a solid coloured stripe running along the centre of their underside. The belly stripe is to be as solid and symmetrical as possible and not be disrupted by any white spots or patches of hair (except for downunder spotted rats). The downunder stripe should be clearly defined and devoid of brindling.

Faults

- Incomplete hood or belly stripe
- White markings on the belly stripe
- Additional as listed under the relevant marking standard

Disqualifications

- Extremely poor belly stripe
- Large patches of colour on the white
- White Berkshire marking not visible around belly stripe (for downunder Berkshire rats)
- Additional disqualifications listed under the relevant variety standard

Downunder spotted rats are similar to the variegated standard, however instead of numerous small patches and flecks replacing a solid saddle spine marking, the rat will instead have large coloured spots on its back. The belly stripe is to be as broken and spotted as possible. The coloured spots are to extend over the entire white area of the rat, including the tail. A head spot is desirable, however a lack of shall not be penalised

Faults

- Inadequate spotting
- Belly stripe or spine stripe not broken enough
- Missing colour spots on tail
- Spots not evenly distributed from head to tail

Disqualifications

- Solid stripe down spine or belly
- Lack of spots

Downunder hooded spotted rats are to conform to the hooded standard, but also include a solid coloured stripe on the belly, and large coloured patches between the stripe on the underside and the saddle. The large coloured spots are to be clearly defined, with no demarcation and as evenly distributed along the sides as possible. The colour on the tail can be spotted.

Faults

- Incomplete hood or belly stripe
- White markings on the belly stripe
- White throat and/or chin
- Inadequate and/or uneven spotting

Disqualifications

- Extremely poor hood or belly stripe
- Lack of spots

List of Rat Classes

A list of the rat classes of the AusRFS NSW Inc. For detailed information on these classes, please refer to the Class Entry Rules listed above in this document. The purpose of this document is as a quick reference guide to the available classes for rats.

Pet Classes

- **Junior Pet Rat**
 - For exhibitors aged 15 years and under
- **Senior Pet Rat**
 - For exhibitors aged 15 years or older

Standardised Classes

- **Rat Kitten**
 - For all rats aged 6-12 weeks
- **Ticked Self**
 - Agouti
 - Cinnamon
 - Fawn
 - Argente
 - Silverfawn
 - Opal
- **Non-Ticked Self**
 - Black
 - Mink
 - Buff
 - Dove
 - Champagne
 - Blue
 - Silver
- **White**
 - Black eyed white
 - Ruby eyed white
 - Pink eyed white
- **Bareback**
- **Berkshire**
- **Blazed**
- **Capped**
- **Hooded**
- **Irish**
- **Variegated**
- **Variegated Berkshire**
- **Downunder**

