

General Rat Standards

Condition

- Rats brought to shows and events should be free of any health issues, injuries or parasites.
- Rats should be of a good size for their sex 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 injury, and any indicators of blindness. Eyes should appear bright and clear and not be sunken or cloudy.
- A rat's 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 dyeing or trimming of fur.
- The rat's coat should appear dense and healthy, not thinned and dishevelled. The coat should not be missing patches of fur and whiskers should be intact (patchwork exempt). Unkempt sparse coats are to be considered a sign of ill health.
- The rat should not show any signs of illness such as porphyrin, discharge, congested noises, wheezing, rattling, sneezing, chirping or gasping for air. A rat that is hunched up with fluffed fur, porphyrin, avoiding socialisation and making audible wheezing sounds is ill and is not permitted to be brought 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. Rats are to be treated for parasites no later than one week prior to the show or event.
- 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 more active and bucks more laid back. Rats should be receptive to handling. A rat should not exhibit a listless or lethargic demeanour 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 behaviour's grounds for disqualification. A rat should never bite, this behavioural display results in immediate disqualification.

Rat Coat Standards

Standard

The standard rat should be athletic in type, but under no circumstances underweight. The spine and hips should not protrude, and a healthy layer of muscle should smooth the body over the skeleton. Some fat stores are welcomed but should in no way be dense enough to inhibit the movement or agility of the animal or contribute to a reduction in overall health. Males should be larger and heavier in structure than females, females should be highly agile and feminine but neither very fine or lightly boned.

The ears should be large and clean with no nicks or injuries and sit high on the head at around 11 and 1 o'clock. This is the case for both males and females. The male head should be long but not too narrow or pointed at the nose and the forehead should be broad, flat and well-spaced between the ears. The female head should be more feminine and displaying softer features. Eyes should be big and bright and expressive in both the male and female but not so large that the conjunctiva is overly visible.

The tail should be thick at the base and round, tapering evenly to a fine point. The tail should be equal to the length of the body but not fall any shorter than behind the eyes and have a fine covering of hair. The rat should have all its digits which also have a fine covering of hair down to the nail line

The coat should be smooth, glossy and clean with the male presenting a longer, coarser guard hair than the female which should be soft and lay flat against the body. Whiskers should be rigid, straight, and fan out with only slight deviation without curling or looping.

Faults

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

Disqualifications

- Brittle, short or missing whiskers
- No bald patches
- No resistance in coat

Silky (Soft Coat)

The Silky has a soft fine coat of medium length which gives no resistance when brushed back against itself. The coat has an iridescent glossiness to its appearance with light flecks to the ends of the coat. The rat also bears a distinct ridge of coat that starts from the back of the head and travels down the neck, and between the shoulders before softening out.

Guard hairs are very minimal, particularly in mature males from 5-6 months of age. The guard hairs drop away from the nape and over the haunches exposing the soft glossy medium lengthly undercoat. Males may have a wave to their coats, but female coats remain flat with the hair flicking out at the ends.

Because of the lack in guard hair agouti-based animals will appear washed out without distinct ticking.

Whiskers are long that gently deviate with the very ends lightly hooking. The whiskers above the eyes distinctly bend forward with light hooks on the ends but do not curl.

The Silky rat is known for its expressive features and flattening of the ears that typically give it a worried expressive face. The head is well shaped to the Standard model; however, the length of the snout is a little finer and is typically slightly pinched. The ears are set low on the head at 10 o'clock and 2 o'clock. Athletic build with narrow shoulders that follow a nice length of body to a well-proportioned hind quarter.

Faults

- Visible guard hairs
- Coat too short or too long
- Coat too thick or thin
- Lack of lustre and shine

Disqualifications

- Too many guard hairs
- Brittle, short or missing whiskers and whiskers curled or kinked
- No balding or coat thinning
- Greasy, Curled or brittle coat

Silk (Soft Coat)

Silk is half as fine as the standard coated rat and takes on a greasy appearance described as being akin to brushing the coat with oil. Due to its greasy nature the coat will separate in clumps on the stomach and behind the ears along the neck. The coat is fine and gleams in the light. The guard hairs are commonly finer and less rigid in both males and females than those of the standard coat. The coat should sit flat and smooth against the body but is not penalised for flicking away slightly from the body at the ends of the guard hair or monotrix.

The coat feels like the material Satin with a higher body temperature to the touch. The silk is athletic and muscular but should not be small or light. The ears should be round and large proportionate to the head which should not be fine, small or pointed.

Whiskers of the silk are deviated with a notable and even bend with some hooking at the ends allowable. The fine hair of the feet and legs should have a notable luster. The eyes should be large and expressive, but not so much so that the conjunctiva is visible.

Due to the nature of the coat type and the way it reflects light colours appear intensified and whites can take on a more ivory hue. Blacks are deep and rich and ticked colours are intense and striking.

Aged males may experience a slight waving in the coat toward the rump but should not detract from the overall quality of the coat. Females retain the straight, slick appearance of the coat throughout their lives, but are penalised for dryness or a brittle texture.

Faults

- Coat lacking lustre
- Thinning of coat
- Coarse guard hairs
- Coat is too wavy

Disqualifications

- Brittle, short or missing whiskers
- Very coarse textured coat
- Bald patches
- Very thin coat
- Coat has a 'fluffy' appearance
- Soft, dry or brittle coat texture

Powderpuff (Soft Coat)

The Powderpuff has a very thick coat with the undercoat being of comparable length to the guard hairs. Due to the density of the coat the hair comes away readily when held and brushed. The coat is shiny with a natural luster but neither greasy nor rigid. The male coat ripples slightly over the haunches as the coat ages, but females are soft and plush throughout their lives. Rippling of the coat in males is not penalised in males of the type.

The powderpuffs have large soft bodies, both malleable and pear-shaped with large soft rumps. Females are particularly large and pouchy for their gender. The powderpuff is not viewed as athletic, but rather bred as large, soft lap-pets in both physique and temperament and should be handled with ease and pleasing under hand.

The head should be small, and wedge shaped, starting broad between the ears and tapering toward the nose. The face is short and large expressive eyes sit with equal distance between the ears and nose. The face can be described as 'mouse-like' and soft in both males and females creating the overall appearance of an appealing family pet. The ears are small and rounded, sitting low on the head at 10 o'clock and 2 o'clock. The tail is chunky at the base proportionate to their large bodies, tapering quickly to a point but falling no shorter than in line with the ears.

The whiskers are very long, and individual follicles gently bend but without kinking, doing so in no uniform direction.

Faults

- Coat coarse to the touch
- Coat hairs rigid
- Lacking in lustre
- Greasy or dry coat

Disqualifications

- Short coat
- Whiskers brittle, short or missing
- Bald patches
- Coat very thin

Rex (Coarse Coat)

The Rex Rat has a coat that is both frizzy and ripply, the double rex having a slightly thinner coat than the singles. The hair curls tightly and skin can be seen between the hair follicles. The overall coat appears to be short due to the curling and the whiskers of the double rex is shorter in length and more tightly curled inward toward the nose than their single counterparts. The whiskers of the brow are also shortened in the double rex.

The body is large and athletic, muscular and healthy. The ears should be large and clean with no nicks or injuries and sit high on the head at around 11 and 1 o'clock. The male head should be long but not too narrow or pointed at the nose and the forehead is broad, flat and well-spaced between the ears. The female head should be more feminine and displaying softer features.

Eyes should be big and bright and expressive in both the male and female but not so large that the conjunctiva is overly visible. The tail should be thick at the base and round, tapering evenly to a fine point. The tail should be equal to the length of the body but not fall any shorter than behind the eyes and have a fine covering of hair.

Faults

- Prawn like eyes
- Too many guard hairs, too flat
- Whiskers too straight

Disqualifications

- Brittle, short or missing whiskers
- Very rough textured coat - patchworking
- Large bald patches
- Entropion

Velour (Coarse Coat)

The Velour has a stout, muscular and dense body type. The body should be large but hard and muscular to the touch without the softness of fatty tissue. The skin should feel thick and heavy.

The head is of average length and broad with a slight roman arch from the eyes to the nose. The jaw is square, and their noses rounded. The female head is not fine or feminine, maintaining the boxy shape of the males but slightly narrower across the brow. The ears are round, small and set low on the head at 10 o'clock and 2 o'clock, having a thicker covering of fine hair than the standard model of the rat. The eyes are set more deeply in the skull in both males and females and as such should not suffer from entropic related injuries as a result of the heavily curled vibrissae of the eye and brow.

The velour coat matures, in both males and females under approximately 6 months of age will be rippled with short hair follicles. Females maintain this short, plush, coat while males after molting their guard hairs from behind the shoulders have a thick coat comprised of under-coat that curl tightly *away* from the dorsal. The monotrich and guard hairs appear rough and textured which are primarily maintained in females, throughout their lives. The undercoat is short and plush to the touch.

The whiskers are looped and kinked, appearing to do so in no uniform direction and the whiskers of the brow curl tightly on themselves. They are long and not physically shortened by the coat type despite their shape.

Faults

- Coat too coarse
- Guard hairs lacking in texture
- Mature undercoat not kinked enough
- Whiskers to straight

Disqualifications

- Whiskers brittle or missing
- Bald patches

Patchwork

The patchworks undercoat, lacking the strength to properly penetrate the skin should be primarily absent, comprising the coat of Guard hair. The patchworking should follow the natural molting pattern of the standard coat, but in its more extreme form. The animal should be devoid of scratches to the skin which is readily visible and free of greasy buildup or dirt. The skin is wrinkled, and the whiskers should be shortened in length but clearly visible. The eyes should be clear and healthy showing no signs of irritation. The rat should be well constructed and of good weight and size. A higher body temperature to the touch is not penalised and the animal should conform with all the ideal guidelines for the standard model of the rat anatomically.

Faults

- Scratch hair thin not fresh
- Not many bald patches

Disqualifications

- Over/Under patching
- Large skin blemishes, scabs, scars, etc
- Missing whiskers
- Wounds

Rat Colour Standards

Non-Ticked

General

The coat is to be a solid, even colour, with no rusting or patchiness. On darker colours, an even, light-to-medium silvering is desirable. The foot and belly colour are 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

Black (aa)

To be a deep lustrous black all over devoid of rusting, dinginess or dullness (Except in rex varieties). An even, light-to-medium silvering is desirable. Eyes black.

Buff (Ruby-Eyed Black – aa rr)

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.

Champagne (Pink Eyed Black – aa pp)

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

Mink (aa mm)

An even medium grey colour with a slight brown tone. An even, light-to-medium silvering is desirable. Colour to be even with belly colour matching the top. Should be devoid of patchiness, rusting and dinginess. Eyes black.

Dove (Ruby-Eyed Mink – aa mm rr)

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

Blue (aa dd)

A deep steel-blue colour with no patching, dinginess or dullness. An even, light-to-medium silvering is desirable. Eyes black.

Platinum (Ruby-Eyed Blue – aa dd rr)

A medium blue with no browning of the colour. Eyes ruby.

Silver (Pink-Eyed Blue – aa dd pp)

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

Chocolate (aa B)

A colour that imitates milk chocolate and be clearly differentiated from black. An even, light-to-medium silvering is desirable. Eyes black.

Beige (Ruby-Eyed Chocolate – aa B rr)

A medium beige colour with no sign of greyness or patchiness. Eyes ruby.

Blonde (Pink-Eyed Chocolate – aa B rr)

A warm creamy yellow colour with no greyness or patchiness. Eyes pink.

Lilac (Blue-Chocolate – aa B dd)

Colour is medium dove grey evenly mixed with brown, not to dark. Eyes black.

White

The colour 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.

Ticked

General

The coat 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

Agouti

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

Fawn (Ruby-Eyed Agouti)

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 ruby.

Silverfawn (Pink-Eyed Agouti)

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 pink.

Cinnamon (Mink Agouti)

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

Argente (Ruby-Eyed Cinnamon)

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

Apricot (Pink-Eyed Cinnamon)

Colour is a rich, golden orange, as deep as possible. Belly colour will be a slightly lighter shade. Eyes pink.

Blue Agouti

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 black.

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.

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

Disqualifications

- Any coloured spotting

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 socks, and front feet are to be white to the elbow. Marking should be at least 70%. White markings inside the legs to the socks should connect. 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
- White leg markings under-marked or over-marked, Belly to socks not connected.

Disqualifications

- Coloured patches on the white underside
- Any high side salt and peppering

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 will not be judged on any other marking other than the wedge.

Faults

- Wedge blaze covers eye(s)
- Wedge blaze is uneven
- Wedge blaze does not reach forehead

Disqualifications

- Non-wedged blazed
- Additional face/head markings

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

Disqualifications

- 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 at least half the tail coloured, the saddle should be as wide as the measurement from inside ear to ear, must be even and unbroken.

Faults

- Saddle is incomplete or broken
- Ragged hood and/or demarcation
- White throat and/or chin
- Less than half tail colour

Disqualifications

- Extremely under-marked or broken saddle
- Large coloured patches on the white
- White spot in the hood

Irish

The rat is to have a white equilateral triangle from arm pit to arm pit, smaller is a markdown. The triangle is to be of a good size spanning the chest region and is not to streak down towards the belly. 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
- white tail tip, except in pink eyed and ruby eyed varieties

Disqualifications

- Coloured spots on the triangle
- Other white patches on the rat excluding feet and tail

Variegated Hooded

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 required. The colour should extend to at least 50% of the tail, which should be devoid of any markings.

Faults

- Inadequate variegation
- White throat and/or chin
- Tail marking less than half

Disqualifications

- Coloured patches on the white underside

Variegated Berkshire

The rat is to have markings like 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 at least 50%, except in pink eyed and ruby eyed varieties
- White leg marking under-marked or over-marked

Disqualifications

- Coloured patches on the white underside

Down Under Hooded

The rat shall have a hood and dorsal stripe that is unbroken, covering the head, throat, chest and shoulders. The dorsal stripe shall be continuous, extending down the spine to the tail, with as much of the tail as possible being coloured. The dorsal stripe should be about 1 ½ inches wide and must be even and unbroken. The underside of the rat should also be coloured, with the pattern running unbroken from the chin down the belly to the tail being as coloured as possible. The belly marking should be wide but should not extend up the sides of the rat.

Faults

- Dorsal stripe 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
- Broken colour on the underside

Disqualifications

- Extremely under-marked or broken Dorsal stripe
- Extremely under-marked or broken under-belly marking
- Large coloured patches on the white

Down Under Berkshire

The rat is to be symmetrically marked as possible. With even colouring covering the topside of the rat's body, stopping at the wrists and ankles and along their sides but not connecting to the colour on the belly. There shall be good coverage of colour on the under-belly that stops short of coming all the way up the sides of the rat and does not connect to the colour on the topside of the rat. The colour shall be unbroken and not variegated along the edges.

Faults

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

Disqualifications

- Large coloured patched on the white underside
- Uneven markings on underside and/or demarcation
- White spotting or breaks in colour on the belly marking
- The white marking separating the belly colour and body colour too wide
- The white marking separating the belly colour and body colour containing spots
- Variegation on the edges of the colour

Down Under Hooded Spotted

The rat shall have a hood and dorsal stripe that is unbroken, covering the head, throat, chest and shoulders. The dorsal stripe shall be continuous, extending down the spine to the tail, with as much of the tail as possible being coloured. The dorsal stripe should be about 1 ½ inches wide and must be even and unbroken. The underside of the rat should also be coloured, with the pattern running unbroken from the chin down the belly to the tail being as coloured as possible. The belly marking should be wide but should not extend up the sides of the rat. There shall be coloured spots, of varying sizes and shapes, as evenly distributed as possible on the white sides of the rat's body between the dorsal stripe and the belly colour.

Faults

- Dorsal stripe 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
- Broken colour on the underside

Disqualifications

- Extremely under-marked or broken Dorsal stripe
- Extremely under-marked or broken under-belly marking
- Large coloured patches on the white

Chinchilla

The entire underside to be white with a clear demarcation between top colour and belly. Head markings must be present, either a blaze or a spot to be acceptable. Head spots to be centrally placed on the rat's forehead and no bigger than the rat's eye.

Blaze to be a wedge-shaped symmetrical blaze of white starting at the nose and extending up the face to the forehead. The blaze to cover the whisker bed and to taper to a fine point midway between the eyes and the ears. Markings not to extend onto the cheeks or the eyes.

Forelegs to be white to half their length, back feet white to the ankle. Tails to be pied. Standard coat only.

Faults

- Yellow or brown tinge to the top colour
- Skewed or misshapen blazes
- Uneven or over large head spots.

Disqualifications

- White comes up to high on the side
- Belly marking to restricted
- Blaze not even/symmetrical
- Head spot to large
- Missing facial marking/head spot

Rat Pet Class Standards

This standard applies to all pet classes, including the Junior Pet Exhibitor class. The pet scoring system is designed to help the judge fairly rate each animal. The winner of pet class is determined by the highest score. Pet animals should exhibit friendly behaviour, appearing to enjoy being held. Highest scores will be awarded to the best, most well-rounded pet in both health and temperament.

An animal may be shown in pet class if it is desexed or it has a missing body part, as long as any wound is well-healed.

Disqualifications

- Nursing or pregnant
- Biting or unhandleable
- Poor condition – including significantly underweight or extremely obese
- Audible breathing, eg. persistent rattle or wuffle sounds

- Mites, scabs, lice, sores, head tilts, tumours or wounds
- Any artificial alterations to change the appearance of the animal eg: not limited to eye drops, trimmed hair, plucking odd hairs or artificial colouring