

Rabbit Coat Types

What's on the outside is just one way that rabbit breeds may be different from one another. You know how breeds may vary by body type, size and color. Now you can explore how their coats may also differ.

Rabbit Skill:



Identify the characteristics of the different coat types.

Life Skill:

Learning to learn

Success Indicator:

Can identify each coat type

Science Standard:

Diversity and adaptations of organisms

“**Hop to it!**”

Draw a line from each fact to the coat type/s it describes.



Is this flyback or rollback?

FACT

COAT TYPE

FACT

Transparent hair shaft

Can be harvested 3–4 times a year

Has guard hairs

Includes rollback & flyback variations

Fiber chambers make it a good insulator

More brilliant colors

Guard hairs are shorter

Coat may be plucked or sheared

NORMAL

REX

SATIN

WOOL

Ideal length of 5/8 inch

The most common coat type

Has an undercoat

Plush like feel

Has a glossy sheen

Stand upright

Result of a mutation

Rabbit Rap

Share What You Did

- Which coat type was hard to identify? Why?
- Which of the four coat types does your favorite breed have?

Process What's Important

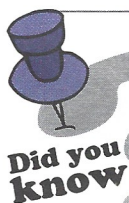
- What management or health issues may be related to the rabbit's coat?
- What is a possible use of each coat type?

Generalize to Your Life

- How does grouping information help you learn?

Apply What You Learned

- When is it helpful to separate items into similar groups?



Did you know

A mutation is a sudden change in a characteristic caused by a change in the organization of a gene (unit of inheritance). In rabbits, two well known mutations are the Rex and Satin fur structures.



Fur Types

Normal Fur

The majority of rabbit breeds have "normal" fur consisting of guard hairs and underfur.

The **guard hairs** are the longer, coarser projecting hair of the coat. Guard hairs offer protection to the underfur and they give resilience to the coat. The **underfur** is softer and shorter than the guard hairs. Within the normal furred breeds, most breeds have what is termed as flyback fur. This means that if you stroke the coat from the hindquarters to the shoulder, the fur should return quickly to its natural position (it "flies" back to normal). Other normal furred breeds have what is called rolled back coat. This means that if you stroke the coat from the hindquarters to the shoulders, the fur returns to its normal position more gradually.

Rex Fur - Rex fur is short and plush-like. Rex fur stands upright and has guard hairs almost as short as the undercoat. This fur feels extremely smooth to the touch. The ideal length for Rex fur is $\frac{5}{8}$ inch. It is a disqualification if Rex fur is less than $\frac{1}{2}$ inch or more than $\frac{7}{8}$ inch long. Rex fur should be extremely dense and have a springy resistance to the touch.

Satin Fur - This fur is fine, silky and very soft and dense. The special feature of Satin fur is its glossy sheen. Satin fur looks glossy because of the gloss-like hair-shaft and its ability to reflect light. The greater transparency makes Satin fur appear more brilliant in color compared to normal furred rabbits. Like normal and Rex fur, Satin Fur consists of guard hairs and underfur. Ideal length for Satin fur is one inch.

Wool - Angora breeds produce a high quality wool that can be made into very soft, warm garments. Angora rabbit wool is much finer than sheep's wool. Angora wool can be harvested 3-4 times a year. The wool can be plucked or sheared. Angora rabbits raised for wool can produce $\frac{1}{2}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds of wool each year.

Bounding Ahead

1. Invite members or breeders to bring breeds with each of the coat types to a club meeting. Compare how each feels, measure how long the fur/wool is, look at characteristics such as rollback and flyback, resiliency, and sheen.
2. Attend a rabbit show and observe the judging of the fur and wool classes. Listen to the judges comments and make a list of words that the judge uses to describe the entries.