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Ten Tips to become an ARBA Licensed Registrar

Prestige. Income. Becoming a judge: All of these are reasons why breeders may pursue a rabbit or cavy registrar's license. But the number one reason to consider becoming a registrar, and the only guaranteed benefit, is the in-depth **learning experience** you'll gain in the process of licensing. Even if you never plan to be a judge, the skills you will gain in studying the Standard and working under professionals will help you develop your herd of rabbits to its top potential.

Ten Preparation and Study Tips for ARBA Registrar Applicants

1) Don't fill out the application until you have the time to pursue a license. It's not uncommon for breeders to request the application for a registrar's license from the ARBA months before they actually send in the form. While there's nothing wrong with that, it does become dangerous when you fill out the application and get your signatures long before you actually apply. A certain number of **current** adult ARBA members must



endorse your application. If you get the signatures months before you send in your application, some of their memberships may have lapsed. It's also a good idea to have a few extra people sign on the back of your form in case some of them had let their membership expire. It's usually pretty easy to get the required signatures at a show.

2) Study before you apply! Once you send in your application to the ARBA and it's approved, you have just two years to complete the licensing process. While this seems like a long time, we have busy lives and it goes fast! So, do not apply for a license until you have done your studying and are ready to test. If you don't get at least 70% on both the written and oral exams, you have to wait six months to retest.

3) Go to your examining judge's home. Your exams will be administered by an ARBA licensed judge. You have a chance to request which judge gives you the test, and you'll usually get the one you ask for. Pick a judge that lives near enough to you that you can go to their home to test. A judge will have more time to spend with you at

their home on a free weekend than if they met you before a show. You may get a chance to see their rabbitry and put your hands on some of their animals. Frankly, you may get a much better education from some of the lesser known judges at their home than from a “top ten” judge that has to squeeze you into their schedule at a show. Of course, you should contact the judge and get their agreement before you send in your application.

4) Make sure you have a current Standard of Perfection. The new SOP goes into effect this year! Make sure you get your copy because there were several changes. Also, pay attention to which new breeds or varieties pass their third presentation after the SOP was printed. Their standards are printed in Domestic Rabbits upon becoming official. When you actually apply for a registrar’s license, the ARBA will send you the standards for the breeds and varieties that passed since the last printing.

5) Learn how to clamp tattoo rabbits. As you may know, all rabbits have the registration insignia ® tattooed in their right ear at time of registration. (The registration number may be tattooed instead, but the ® symbol is more common.) When you receive your registrar’s license, you can get this symbol from the ARBA that fits into a tattoo clamp. Even if you intend to use an electric tattoo pen on the bunnies you register, your examining judge will probably have you demonstrate your ability to tattoo bunnies with a clamp.

6) Make your own study guide. A few breeders have written study guides and practice tests for registrar’s applicants that are available online. Also, the ARBA publishes study guides for rabbit and cavy registrar applicants. These guides are excellent resources that help you know what to study. However, you have an even better shot at programming all that information into your mental hard drive if you write your own study guide and practice tests. Simply take a notebook and categorize information something like this:

- REQUIREMENTS FOR BECOMING A REGISTRAR. (From ARBA yearbook)
- PROCEDURES FOR REGISTERING A RABBIT. (From ARBA yearbook) You should know what the current fees are, what the requirements for registration are, what the maximum length of a name is, details about how to fill out a registration blank, etc.
- ALL-BREED FAULTS AND DISQUALIFICATIONS. (From current *Standard of Perfection*)
- DETAILS ON EACH BREED. Devote a page to each breed that includes the following:
Disqualifications – probably the most important thing you need to know. I memorized a list of the disqualifications of each breed when I was studying.

Faults – you should be familiar with the ideal type/fur and the faults/severe faults for each breed.

Weights – you will probably not be asked questions about specific breed weights on your written exam. However, it never hurts to be familiar with them.

Most important feature – again, you probably will not be asked about a breed's scale of points on your exam. However, in the oral examination you will have to show that you know what several breeds should look like, and what matters most in them. So don't worry about exact points, but do remember the most important feature of each breed. You may want to list the features in order, like this: Type > Fur > Color = Condition.

-COLORS. I would recommend creating a separate section on colors. There are only so many basic rabbit colors, though they take many names in the various breeds. Arrange the colors by group (Agouti includes chestnut, chinchilla, opal, lynx, squirrel, chocolate chin, and lilac chin). Your entry for each color should include the usual ring pattern colors, usual top color, and usual eye color, making note of common disqualifications for that color. You won't have to know all the details about desired shades, but make sure you know the eye colors for each breed, because wrong eye color is a disqualification.

-NOTES SECTION. Always handy to have a little section where you can jot down little rhymes or acronyms you come up with, or those facts that you just can't seem to remember.

(Disclaimer: I honestly have never taken a close look at the ARBA-published registrar's study guide, so I don't know how much it resembles this outline. These recommendations are based on the study guide I created for myself before the ARBA one was published.)

7) Refer to old yahoo-group posts. Several yahoo groups have been created for registrar applicants to help each other study. Though most are now overrun by spam, if you dig deep into the archives you can find a wealth of information. Make sure you check it against your current Standard, though!

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbitregistrarstudy/>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/registrarstudy/>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ARBASTUDYGROUP/>

8) Act professionally under the judges. When you do pass those exams, the ARBA will give you the go-ahead to work with judges and a registrar. In fact they mail you some evaluation forms you will present to each of the four officials you need to work

under to complete your license. You must gain both the judge's and the show superintendent's permission before working at a show, and they appreciate plenty of head's up. On show day, act as an aspiring professional under the judge. Wear a show coat or apron and have your standard ready. Answer his or her questions respectfully and don't leave the show table without his or her permission. Be as eager to help and to learn as possible and don't be afraid to ask questions! The judges like to know that you are serious about getting your license.

9) Have all the supplies you need. When you finally achieve your license and are asked to be the registrar at a show, make sure you come prepared with all the necessary supplies. You will want a case in which to keep paperwork, a tattoo set, a current Standard of Perfection, and a hearty supply of registration blanks that you obtain from the ARBA. Make sure you pack plenty of blanks; you never know when a breeder is going to tote in their whole herd to be registered!

10) Believe in yourself! You can do it! Becoming a registrar is a wonderful goal and not all that difficult if you are serious about it. There are many resources and many great people out there to help you along the way.

GENERAL RABBIT REGISTRATION INFORMATION

(If you don't know what it means to be an ARBA registrar or to register a rabbit, you probably haven't read this far. ☺ But just in case, here are a few links that answer general FAQ about registering rabbits.)

<http://www.showbunny.com/pedigree.html>

<http://www.blueribbonrabbitry.com/registrationjudging.htm>

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