

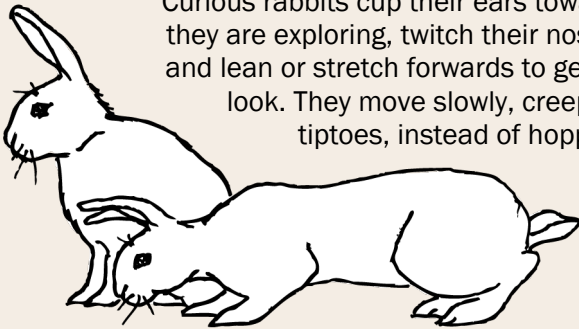
Behaviour: What Your Rabbit is Feeling

By Tamsin Stone

www.theRabbitHouse.com

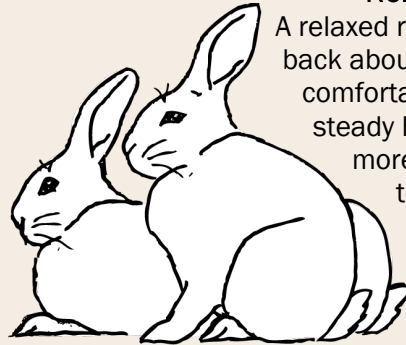
Curious

Curious rabbits cup their ears towards what they are exploring, twitch their nose rapidly and lean or stretch forwards to get a better look. They move slowly, creeping on tiptoes, instead of hopping.



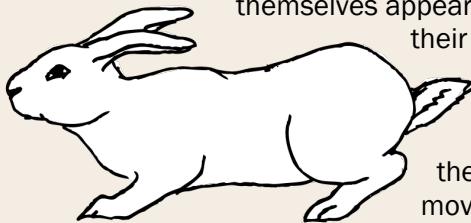
Relaxed

A relaxed rabbit will rest their ears back about 45 degrees, sit or lay comfortably and move with a steady hop. When napping, the more difficult the position is to get up from, the more relaxed they are.



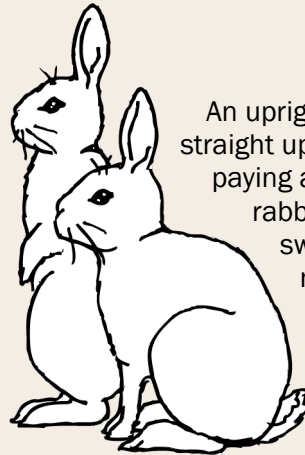
Aggressive

A rabbit ready to attack will try to make themselves appear bigger by raising their body, chin and tail. Their ears are folded and pointed back over their shoulders. They move forward in quick dashes, often growling!



Alert

An upright posture and ears pointed straight up mean your rabbit is alert and paying attention to something. Alert rabbits freeze in position, but may swivel their ears and twitch their nose rapidly. They are ready to flee (or head for the treat jar) as soon as they work out what is going on.



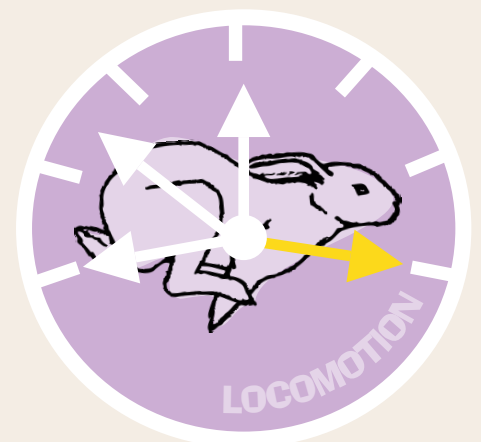
Sleepy

When rabbits are napping, and not paying any attention to their surroundings, they lay down, stop twitching their nose and rest their ears back on their body.



Nervous

A nervous rabbit will lean or turn away from the threat, crouch down to make themselves harder to spot, but still be ready to run. Their ears are folded and pointed back, they may freeze, bolt for cover or turn aggressive if cornered.



Rabbits have great hearing, and can rotate their ears independently. Their ears are also a quick guide to how they feel: forward - curious, upright - alert, backwards 45° - relaxed, laid back further - nervous or aggressive.

A rabbit's posture, the way they sit or stand, is a big clue to what they are thinking - particularly for lops who don't move their ears much. Rabbits lean forwards to investigate and lean away from scary things.

Pay attention to changes in normal hopping motion. They go faster when excited or running away, and slower when being cautious. Cautious or scared rabbits also keep their body closer to the ground when moving.