

Showing Your Ferret Checklist and General Information

For first time exhibitors we recognize that showing your ferret may seem a little intimidating. We have prepared this list to introduce you to the process. Further information can be found on the Greatest Ferret Show on Earth (GFSOE) website at <http://gfsoe.weebly.com/showing-your-ferret.html> and under the "Showing Your Ferret" menu.

Please join our Facebook Group where you can ask questions. Members are happy to help! It's also where you can read all of the latest news about the show. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/GFSOE/>

Let's get started!

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1. **Hotel.** If you are traveling from out of town and need to book a hotel, do so 60-90 days before the show. There may be other events in the area that will cause rooms to fill quickly. If staying at the show's recommended hotel, group blocks usually have a limited number of rooms so by booking early you will be eligible for a better rate.

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2. **Rabies and Distemper Vaccinations.** These are done for your ferret's health and safety while out in public. Both Rabies Vaccine and Distemper Vaccine or Distemper Titer are required to be administered within one year before the date of the show.
 - a. Complete vaccinations at least 2 weeks, but preferably one month or more, before the show so proper antibodies have the chance to form. More than one vaccination should never be given during the same veterinarian appointment. They should be staggered 2 to 3 weeks apart. While reactions to vaccinations are not always able to be prevented, this can help.
 - b. Distemper Vaccination or titer test: The American Ferret Association requires that ferrets have sufficient antibodies. This can be accomplished through yearly vaccination. However this puts your ferret at a greater risk of reaction to the vaccine. If your ferret has been vaccinated for Distemper within the past two years there is a good possibility it still has sufficient immunity. Therefore it is suggested that your veterinarian perform a titer test for antibodies rather than vaccinate.
 - c. Complete the CDV (canine distemper vaccine) Waiver and bring to the show as part of the required paperwork. The CDV Waiver is available on the GFSOE website at <http://gfsoe.weebly.com/showing-your-ferret.html>
It will also be included with your registration confirmation e-mail.
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3. **Negative ADV Test.** Although seemingly rare, Aleutians Disease is a highly contagious disease. Please read more about ADV on the GFSOE website at <http://gfsoe.weebly.com/adv-info.html>
ADV testing is required within one year before the date of the show.
- All ferrets entering the show hall must have and show proof of a negative test result. If any ferret within the same household tests positive, unfortunately no ferrets from that household can be shown or allowed in the show hall.
 - Have the testing done at least one month or more prior to the show. Test instructions can be found on the GFSOE website at <http://gfsoe.weebly.com/adv-testing.html>
 - Complete the ADV (Aleutians Disease Virus) Waiver and bring to the show as part of the required paperwork. The ADV waiver is available on the GFSOE website at <http://gfsoe.weebly.com/showing-your-ferret.html>
It will also be included with your registration confirmation e-mail.
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4. **Register.**
- All of the information you need to register your ferrets along with the show's requirements can be found in the registration packet. Be sure to read it thoroughly. The hardest part of registration is deciding which classes to enter. If you are unsure of which color and pattern classes your ferret belongs in, the American Ferret Association provides a chart at <http://www.ferret.org/events/colors/colorchart.html>
Many of the color and pattern names are underlined. Clicking them brings up a photo description. If you are still unsure please ask in the GFSOE Facebook group.
 - There are 2 registration deadlines. Early Registration qualifies for discounted fees and has a deadline approximately 2 weeks before the final deadline when registration closes. GCFA members receive entry fee discounts. Registration information and entry fees can be found on the GFSOE website at <http://gfsoe.weebly.com/registration.html>
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5. **Grooming.**
- Nails should be clipped two to three days before the show. This will allow time for the edges to smooth and will make handling the ferret more comfortable. If the nails are still sharp on the day of the show use a nail file to soften the edges.
 - Ears should be free of all debris. Do not use an oil based ear cleaner within a week of the show as it will cause dirt to continue to rise out of the ear. On the morning of the show clean your ferret's ears using cotton swabs lightly moistened with water or saline. Bring cotton swabs to the show to wipe away any last minute debris before you enter the ring.
 - Teeth should be free of tartar. If needed, and your ferret is in good health, consider scheduling a dental cleaning with your vet. The judges take age into consideration when evaluating teeth, but dirty teeth can be the difference in points between 1st place and 5th place.
 - Give your ferret a bath a two or three before the show. When the ferret is dry, brush the coat to remove any remaining loose hair. Have clean bedding in your ferret's cage after bathing.
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6. Carrier options.

- a. If you enter your ferret in a Title Class, the ferret will need to be presented for judging in a carrier to prevent anonymity. Not using the proper type or not following the rules for acceptable items in the carrier could result in points deducted from your ferret's overall score. The carrier system explanation can be found on the GFSOE website at <http://gfsoe.weebly.com/showing-your-ferret.html>
 - b. Specialty Classes do not require the ferret to be presented to the judge in a carrier, however you should always have a carrier or travel cage for them to comfortably wait their turn.
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7. **Housing during show.** You want your ferret to be comfortable during a long show day. A travel cage should be roomy enough to eat, sleep, stand, and poop. Small playpens are allowed in the exhibitor space (quiet area) or within a vendor's space but not in the common areas. The travel cage or playpen should have bedding, food, water, and a litter box. Ferrets are not allowed on the show floor so travel cages and playpens must have a bottom or mat. Some popular travel cages and playpens are manufactured by Martin's Cages. <http://www.martinscages.com>
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8. **Show check-in.** The day of the show is finally here! Check-in begins at 7:30am and continues until 9:00am. Ferrets are not checked in by 9:00am may be scratched from the competition so please be on time. Bring all of the required paperwork with you. Without the proper paperwork a ferret cannot enter the show hall.
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9. **Show Packet.** At check-in you will be given a packet that contains information about the show. You will also receive a card and tag with your ferret's assigned show number which will be called when it's your ferret's turn to be judged. The packet will also include a show book if you purchased one when registering. If not they will be available at registration but for an increased price. The show book has a listing of all of the show classes and all of the ferrets entered in each class. Be sure to look for your ferret's name!
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10. **Judging.** Let the show begin! Names are not used during judging. Ferrets are called by numbers only. Please listen carefully to the announcer throughout the show. Make sure you are ready when your ferret's number class and number are called.
- a. If your ferret is entered in a Title Class attach the number tag to the carrier. A range of numbers will be called. Bring your carrier to the announcer's area for judging. Each of 3 judges will present their top 10 ferrets with a placement ribbon. First place also receives a trophy.
 - b. If your ferret is entered in a Specialty Class you will bring your ferret directly to the judge when the class is called. Every ferret will receive a placement ribbon. First place also receives a trophy.