



Rabbit Care

About your rabbit:

Rabbits are intelligent social animals who need affection. They can become wonderful companion animals if given a chance to interact with their human families. While most rabbits will use a litterbox, hormones may cause unneutered males and unspayed females to “mark” territory. Spaying or neutering your rabbit improves litterbox habits, lessens chewing behavior, decreases territorial aggression and gives your rabbit a happier longer life. A well cared for rabbit can give you 7 to 10 years of companionship.

Living Area:

Contrary to popular belief—rabbits are not happiest outdoors in a backyard hutch. Most backyard rabbits are forgotten, relegated to a life of solitary confinement, while battling weather extremes, flea born diseases, and constant fear of predators. Rabbits should be indoors, where they can get social contact

- Rabbit cages should be large enough to allow a feeder, water bottle, litter box, and some room for stretching and hopping.
- Choose a cage with a wire floor and a removable catch pan for bunny droppings. These are very easy to keep clean and will therefore be much more comfortable for your pet.
- Aquariums are not suitable for rabbit habitat.
- Many people choose straw or hay for rabbit bedding. It is most economical, but realize that hand towels and sheepskin rugs will work as well—and won’t get tracked through the house. Bedding should simply be something comfortable for your rabbit to rest on.
- Fasten a litterbox in the corner of the cage your rabbit chooses for a bathroom. Like a cat—if the litterbox is placed where he chooses—he will almost always use it. Once he’s using it consistently you can give him some supervised freedom in a rabbit proofed room.
- Even though he has a great cage, your rabbit will benefit from supervised freedom and social interaction outside the cage.

Rabbit-Proofing a Room:

We all know that rabbits love to chew and they will chew anything they can. Baby gates make good barrier to keep rabbits in areas that are safe. Putting out safe play and chew toys will also keep your bunny from lurching on inappropriate items.

Electrical cords should be pulled up out of reach or encased in vinyl tubing to prevent your rabbit from shocking himself. Get them way up! Your rabbit will stand on his hind legs to reach tempting items—so that can be a long stretch.

Carpet should be tacked down, or covered with plastic runners. If your bunny won't leave an area alone try putting a dab of perfume on the spot (bunnies noses are very sensitive and they avoid strong odors).

Get down on Rabbit level to find nooks and crannies where your bun can get wedged. If you don't want to spend the afternoon fishing him out from behind the fridge—block it off.

Raise or remove houseplants—many can be poisonous.

Cover raise or remove any furniture that you don't want damaged. A short burst of water from a spray bottle to a bunny's face will quickly tell the offender that the item he's sampling is off limits.

Nutrition:

Rabbits do well with rabbit pellets, but they also need supplemental grass hay which should be given unrestricted every day. Fresh vegetables and special bunny treats like yoghurt drops are welcome additions to the daily diet. Plenty of fresh water should be available preferably via a water bottle with a steel ball bearing. (Crocks work too but strong back legs can easily kick over even a heavy crock, and that creates a mess.)

Toys:

Bunnies need toys for mental and physical exercise. They love anything they can climb into, or pick up and make noise with. Some toys your bunny might enjoy are:

- **Stainless steel measuring cups**
- **Stainless steel spoons**
- **Tin cans (no sharp edges)**
- **Oatmeal containers**
- **Hand towels**
- **Wire balls with bell inside**
- **Golf balls**
- **Cardboard boxes**
- **Apple branches**
- **Paper bags**
- **Parrot toys**
- **Dried out pine cones**
- **Downey balls**
- **News paper(no color)**
- **Phone books**
- **Baby rattles**
- **Wooden blocks**
- **Metal bowls**
- **Key-ring with keys**

Attention:

Spending time with your rabbit each day strengthens the friendship and bond between you. Additionally it will make for a happier and healthier companion. You might be surprised but soon you will find your bunny demanding attention. If you suspect any health problems or see changes in activity or eating habits consult your veterinarian.