

PET RABBIT BASICS

RABBIT PERSONALITIES

- Rabbits are individuals just like people, cats, and dogs.
- Most rabbits do NOT like to be picked up and held. Most will not sit in your lap. They like you to interact with them on the ground at their level.
- Rabbits are intelligent and need rabbit-safe toys and other mental stimulation.
- Remember that rabbits are prey animals and need to feel safe and secure in their environment.
- Most rabbits are very social, enjoy interacting with people, and will bond to their owners.
- Many rabbits enjoy the companionship of another spayed or neutered rabbit. Let your bunny pick his or her own friend.
- Rabbits love head pets and cheek rubs, and will teeth chatter (like purring) in pleasure.
- Some rabbits might not want to be touched in some places like their legs or belly.

HOUSING YOUR RABBIT

- Rabbit must have a litter box, food, and water.
- Rabbits will use a litter box with minimal training once the rabbit has been spayed or neutered. Change litter at least every two days. Never use pine or cedar shavings or clay cat litter.
- Very roomy INDOOR enclosure - minimum 6 times the length of an adult rabbit. A large dog exercise pen works well and is flexible.
- Outdoor housing is not acceptable for rabbits for many reasons. These include them being more prone to disease, heatstroke, and predators outdoors.
- No bare wire floors for foot/toenail safety.
- Rabbits prefer a quiet, stable environment and may want a space they can retreat to and feel safe, such as a turned over cardboard box with an entry opening.

DIET

- 80% of diet: fresh grass (not alfalfa) hay daily. Hay should be available in unlimited amounts.
- 15%: fresh greens daily; limited fruit treats. (<https://rabbit.org/what-to-feed-your-rabbit/>)
- 5% - timothy based pellets (not alfalfa)
- Unlimited fresh water daily. Most rabbits prefer to drink from a clean bowl.

GROOMING & HEALTH

- Rabbits can live for 10 years or more.
- Spaying and neutering for rabbits is important for many reasons. This includes improving litter training, general behavior, and health.
- Brush weekly (or more) to keep rabbit from developing hairballs. Long haired rabbits may need daily grooming to prevent mats.
- Trim nails every 6-8 weeks.
- Chew toys are necessary for dental health. Safe choices include untreated wicker and wood blocks, pine cones and cardboard boxes.
- Be alert and consult a vet if you notice a lack of appetite, change in droppings, bloated abdomen, runny nose, labored breathing, head tilt, urinary problems, or lumps or bumps.

EXERCISE

- Rabbits need at least four hours of supervised out-of-cage time each day.
- Rabbits need lots of attention, playtime, and exercise to stay happy and healthy.

COSTS

- In addition to any adoption fees, initial setup costs usually run from \$100 to \$200.
- Ongoing expenses will be about \$40+ per month.
- Rabbit vet care can be expensive. Checkups average \$50 to \$100 per visit. Emergency vet care can easily run hundreds of dollars. Pet insurance is available for rabbits.

RABBIT-PROOFING YOUR HOME

- Remove or protect all electrical cords/wires with tubing. Protect furniture/other items you don't want chewed.
- Cover tile or wood floors with carpet.
- Remove any household plants at rabbit-level.

OTHER RESOURCES

- www.rabbit.org