



Dear New Adopting Family,

Thank you so much for opening your heart and your home to a wonderful pet from Animal Care Centers of NYC (ACC)! We hope that this will be the beginning of a long and happy life together. This packet will have information to help ensure things start off smoothly with your new pet.

Here are a few helpful reminders:

- **Diet:** Rabbits thrive on unlimited timothy hay, fresh leafy greens, and a measured portion of high-quality pellets. Please avoid sugary treats and iceberg lettuce.
- **Housing:** Ensure your rabbit has a spacious, safe, and quiet area to relax. An exercise pen or free-roam space is ideal.
- **Enrichment:** Provide chew toys, hideaways, and opportunities for daily exercise to keep your rabbit happy and mentally stimulated.
- **Health:** Watch for changes in appetite, droppings, or behavior—rabbits can hide illness, so early attention is important. Annual wellness check-ups with a rabbit-savvy veterinarian are recommended.
- **Decompression:** Give your rabbit time to adjust to their new environment. Sit nearby, speak softly, and let them approach at their own pace.

We microchip all our pets- please review the HomeAgain flyer provided by the adoptions team for information on registering your rabbit's microchip.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us directly. You can reach us via email at adoption@nycacc.org or by phone at the following numbers: (QACC) 718-241-7166; (MACC) 212-289-8315, (SIACC) 718-494-9780. You can also visit our website www.nycacc.org for additional information. We love to hear updates and see photos of your new pet in the home!

Thank you again for adopting and for giving a rescued rabbit a loving home.

Sincerely,
Adoption Team
Animal Care Centers of NYC

Important next steps

After your pet is microchipped

Registration is the only way to link your pet to you.

Registration* is the only way your contact information can be linked to your pet's microchip ID number—so that you can be contacted when your lost pet is found. HomeAgain® provides **lifetime registration** of your pet's microchip in the HomeAgain National Pet Recovery Database. Registration is what has enabled us to recover **more than 1 million pets!**

With registration, your pet also gets 1 year of HomeAgain membership benefits FREE† (*benefits renewable annually*).

Whether you, the clinic, or the shelter registers the microchip, it's important to **complete your pet's profile** by following these steps:

At www.homeagain.com:

- **Confirm your pet is registered.** Click on "Check Your Status" and enter your pet's microchip ID number
- **Not registered?** Click on "Enroll Now" to enter the microchip ID number and complete your personal and pet profiles
- **Already registered?** Click on "Sign Up for Online Access." Follow the steps to complete your personal and pet profiles

Update your contact information at any time for **FREE!**

Write down your pet's microchip ID number for easy access in the event of an emergency:

My pet's name: _____

My pet's ID #: _____

1-888-HOMEAGAIN (1-888-466-3242)

HomeAgain membership benefits



24/7 Lost Pet Specialists

HomeAgain Lost Pet Specialists are trained to respond to lost pet emergencies by quickly sending rapid Lost Pet Alerts and providing you with a list of animal shelters and veterinary clinics in your area to contact. They are also available to help manage your account and other related needs.



Rapid Lost Pet Alerts and Personalized Lost Pet Posters

Dedicated Recovery Specialists send rapid Lost Pet Alerts to the HomeAgain Pet Recovery network of volunteer veterinarians, shelters, and PetRescuers in the area where your pet went missing. You can also create a Lost Pet Poster on the HomeAgain website to begin your search promptly.



24/7 Emergency Medical Hotline (a \$65 value per call)

Annual HomeAgain membership includes FREE, anytime telephone assistance provided by licensed ASPCA veterinarians.



Found Pet Travel Assistance*

HomeAgain offers complete protection when your lost cat or dog has traveled over 500 miles away. Up to \$500 of travel expenses are covered to fly your pet back home.

*Certain restrictions apply.

Provide further protection with a HomeAgain collar tag!

It may save your pet a trip to the veterinarian or animal shelter to be scanned for a microchip. See all styles at www.homeagain.com



HomeAgain
A lost pet's best chance



*Coverage begins when registration is processed. Go to www.homeagain.com to confirm your pet's microchip ID number has been registered.

†For questions regarding your HomeAgain membership benefits, call 1-888-HOMEAGAIN (1-888-466-3242).

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 **MERCK**
Animal Health

Rabbit Supply Checklist

- Appropriate housing for rabbits: [ACC Rabbit Housing](#)
- Large, carpeted and bunny-proof area for exercise
 - Rabbits need at least 4-5 hours of exercise daily
- Food & water bowl- ceramic recommended, avoid plastic and metal bowls
- Travel carrier- preferably hard plastic
- Litter box lined with newspaper and rabbit-safe litter filled with hay
 - Only paper-pulp based litter; no cat clumping litter or pine/cedar shavings
- Rabbit-safe toys for enrichment
- Electrical cord covers for any outlets near cage or play pen

Food Supplies

- Timothy Hay OR Alfalfa hay for young rabbits
- Timothy hay-based pellets
- Fresh leafy greens and vegetables- see list for appropriate veggies
- Timothy-based treats

Health Care Supplies

- Grooming brush
- Nail clippers / styptic powder
- Critical Care for assisted feedings
- 1 dropper/syringe
- Simethicone (baby gas medicine, Little Tummy's brand)
- Digital safety thermometer

Rabbit Diet

Unlimited Hay: At ACC, we feed our rabbits Timothy hay, but there are many other hays that you can introduce your rabbit to. These include Orchard, Oat, and Meadow Hay. Alfalfa hay should primarily be given to young rabbits 7 months and younger. Rabbits should always have access to fresh hay- this is 80% of their diet.

Did you know? A rabbit's teeth are continuously growing, and eating hay also helps wear them down. Rabbits who don't eat enough hay can develop painful points on their teeth which can grow at different angles and cut into their tongue, gums, and cheeks, and cause them to stop eating. When this happens, rabbits must receive veterinary care for these points to be filed down. - House Rabbit Society

Fresh vegetables: Fresh greens and vegetables are the next most important part of a rabbit's diet. We recommend starting with one type of fresh green and then adding in others gradually. An adult rabbit should receive about 1 cup of packed leafy greens per 2 lbs. of body weight per day. Please make sure to wash all vegetables thoroughly (even those that say organic or pre-washed) to remove any pesticides, fertilizer or harmful bacteria that can lead to illness. Some examples are romaine lettuce, butterhead lettuce, dandelion greens and cilantro. Please reference the following page for a list of rabbit safe greens and veggies! Choose a minimum of 3 different types of leafy greens daily to help them obtain the nutrients and vitamins they need.

Leafy vegetables should make up 75% of the fresh portion of your rabbit's diet. Non-leafy vegetables can include bell peppers, cucumbers, and some edible flowers (such as roses and hibiscus) sprinkled on top. Non-leafy vegetables should make up no more than 15% of your rabbit's diet (or about 1 tablespoon per 2 lbs. of body weight per day). **Make sure to rinse them well and check for spoilage before offering them to your rabbit!*

Timothy-based pellets: The amount will vary depending on the size of your rabbit. Smaller sized rabbits under 5 lbs. Can receive 1/8 of a cup daily. Rabbits over 5 pounds can receive about ¼ cup of pellets. Young rabbits can have alfalfa-based pellets and need to eat more. The amount should gradually decrease as they become adults. Never feed your rabbit pellets that have fruits, seeds, nuts, corn, or yogurt drops mixed in.

Treats: Rabbits can receive one treat a day and should not exceed 1 tablespoon in size. Appropriate treats include: a small piece of carrot, one grape, dried apple sticks, and untreated willow sticks. Other fresh fruits can include berries, kiwis, mangoes, and pears. Avoid any seed mixes, honeyed snacks, and/or pre-packaged rabbit snacks sold in pet stores.

Water: Unlimited access to clean, fresh water is an important part of a rabbit's diet.

VEGETABLES SAFE TO GIVE RABBITS



Take this list along with you the next time you're out shopping for vegetables to try feeding your rabbit! Remember to introduce any new vegetable to your rabbit's diet slowly. Leafy vegetables should make up about 75% of the fresh portion of your rabbit's diet. Non-leafy vegetables should make up no more than about 15% of your rabbit's diet, or about 1 tablespoon per 2 pounds of body weight per day.

All fresh vegetables should be washed or scrubbed (in the case of hard vegetables) before serving them to your rabbit. Due to the emergence of Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus Type-2 (RHDV2), House Rabbit Society recommends washing all vegetables for at least two minutes, in a bowl, changing the water several times.

Leafy Vegetables

Arugula
Basil (any variety)
Beet greens*
Bok Choy
Borage leaves
Carrot tops
Chicory
Cilantro
Cucumber leaves
Dandelion greens
Dill leaves



Endive
Escarole
Fennel (the leafy tops and the base)
Frisée
Kale (all types)
Mache
Mint (any variety)
Mustard greens*
Parsley*
Radicchio
Radish tops*



Raspberry leaves
Red or green lettuce
Romaine lettuce
Spring greens
Sprouts*
Swiss chard*
Turnip greens
Watercress
Wheatgrass
Yu choy



**need to be rotated due to oxalic acid content and only 1 out of three varieties of greens a day should be from these*

Non-Leafy Vegetables

Bell peppers (any type)
Broccoli (leaves and stems)
Broccolini
Brussel sprouts
Cabbage (any type)
Carrots
Celery
Chinese pea pods (the flat kind without large peas)
Edible flowers (roses, nasturtiums, pansies, hibiscus)
Summer squash
Zucchini squash



Step 1: Opt for a long and rectangular litter box instead of smaller corner boxes, which can be uncomfortable for rabbits. When filled, ensure the box is shallow enough for easy hopping in/out.

Step 2: Begin by lining the bottom of the litter box with a layer of bedding. You can choose from options like straw pellets, compressed sawdust pellets, or paper-based litter (see list below). Fill the box to about 1/3 of its depth.

Step 3: Fill the remaining space in the box with your rabbit's favorite hay. This not only provides a soft and cozy spot for your furry friend to do their business but also allows them to graze while using the litter box, promoting healthy gut activity!



AVOID



Pine/Cedar Shavings: Causes liver & respiratory damage



Silica-Gel Crystals: Toxic if consumed



S'Wheat: Causes issues if consumed



Corn Cobs: Causes lethal blockages



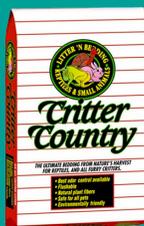
Clump/Clay Litters: Causes lethal blockages

Straw Pellet Litters

HopShop Best Seller!



Cat Country



Critter Country



Oxbow Eco-Straw

Paper-Based Litters



Carefresh



Eco Bedding

Compressed Sawdust Pellet Litters

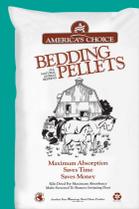


Pine Pellets



Wood Stove Fuel Pellets

Best Value!



Horse Bedding



Exquisicat Paper Pellet Litter

LITTER BOX TRAINING AND HABITS



When bringing home a new pet, especially a rabbit, it is important to keep space limited. Limiting space in the beginning of your relationship will help your rabbit learn the boundaries of their space, where safe places are located and, most importantly, which spaces are best for placing a litter box. Rabbits, just like cats, happily take to strategically placed litter boxes to help keep their living spaces tidy, dry, and better for exercise. By nature, they choose limited places to urinate and collect droppings. Here are some ways in which you can train your rabbit to constantly use the litter box limit messes.

- **Placement:** Place the litter box in off to the side of the rabbits space, preferably the corner when the rabbit will be able to look out over their surroundings while using the litter box to feel safe.
- **Multiplicity:** If your rabbit has free roam of several rooms, place a litter box in each room so that there is a quick, convenient space for them to utilize at any time.
- **Size:** The litterbox should be at least double to the size of the rabbit in order for the rabbit to feel comfortable enough to sit and utilize it.
- **Make it inviting:** Litter boxes should be associated with positive emotions praising, petting or rewarding a rabbit with a healthy treat while they are in the litter box will entice them to return. Yelling, screaming, or thrusting a rabbit into a litterbox after defecating outside the box will induce stress causing the rabbit to associate the litter box with fear and make them less likely to return.
- **Litter:** Line the bottom of the litter box with natural litter pellets (like compressed pine, compressed wheatgrass, or compressed paper), then top with a small layer of hay. This will help keep the rabbit dry and away from the urine while also providing a healthy treat.
- **Cleaning:** Change the litter box every other day to help reduce smell, keep the space tidy, and keep your rabbit clean and dry. Rabbits prefer tidier, dry spaces as it is more comfortable for laying down.
- **Special litter boxes:** Hooded or high sided litter boxes are excellent for rabbits who tend to kick droppings out of the box. This will also discourage rabbits from urinating over the lip of the litter box, causing a mess directly next to it.
- **Compromise:** Sometimes, the spot that your rabbit continues to urinate in is the spot where the box needs to be, even if it means that the space may need to be rearranged to accommodate the box. Place the litter box over the spot and monitor to be sure the rabbit continues to utilize the space.



Things to Consider

It is important to note that rabbits have a natural need to mark new territory in order to feel that they belong in the environment. 'Messes' or 'accidents' will have a higher likelihood of occurring when a rabbit is introduced to a new space or with the addition of a new rabbit friend. This behavior will dissipate as the rabbit becomes accustomed to the space and new friends.

Rabbits who are not yet spayed or neutered have a higher likelihood of urinating and defecating outside the litter box as they are more driven to continuously mark territory. Rabbits who are spayed or neutered are far more likely to take litter box training.



Introducing a new rabbit to a new space

When bringing home a new rabbit, urination and defecation outside the litter box is a common and necessary part of the acclimation process. This tends to resolve once the rabbit feels comfortable in their new surroundings.

Below is a step by step guide to help keep your space tidy:



- 1 Start with your rabbit in at least a 4'x4' exercise pen living space.
- 2 Fill the litter box with pelletized cat or horse stall pellets and top with a layer or your rabbits favorite hay.
- 3 Place the litter box in the corner of the pen the rabbit has been favoring for urination.
- 4 Reward your rabbit with a high value treat the first time jumping into and sitting in the litterbox. No urination needs to take place for the first time they are rewarded.
- 5 If you notice that your rabbit does either urinate or leave droppings in the box the first time they jump in, immediately reward them with another high value treat BEFORE they exit the litter box.
- 6 Limit your rabbit's living space to just the pen for the first few days.
- 7 Top the litter box with fresh hay 1 to 2 times per day. This will help entice your rabbit to continue sitting, eating, and ultimately urinating in the litterbox.
- 8 Dump the entire contents of the litter box every 2-3 days or as the litter pellets are fully used.
You will know if the litter has been fully used if you shake the litter box and you no longer hear the pellets rattle
- 9 If the rabbit urinates in the litter box constantly for 1 week, increase your rabbits free roam access to ¼ of the room. Reward your rabbit when they adventure out into the extended space and then retreat back to their litter box.
- 10 Continue this process of gradually increasing the rabbit's access to the room as the good behavior continues. If you notice the rabbit starting to urinate outside the litter box as their access to space increases, you may have increased their access too quickly. Simply decrease the amount of space until the good litter box habit resumes.
- 11 As you expand your rabbit's access to new rooms, be sure to limit them to ¼ or ½ of the new rooms initially. If your rabbit has access to more than 2 rooms, add a second litter box to the newest, furthest room from their initial space.
- 12 Once the rabbit feels comfortable with you and their new spaces, the rabbit will likely try to jump on your couch, sofa or bed where you tend to sit or lay. Your rabbit will then try "mark" those spots as a way of "marking" you as one of their own. Though this is an endearing gesture and shows a positive indicator of their growing bond with you, deter them from jumping up onto those spaces as to best save your furniture from staining. Washable sofa covers or chair mats can be used if blocking access to those spaces is difficult.



RABBIT DROPPINGS AS HEALTH INDICATORS



Rabbits are hind gut fermenters and, as a result, they have 2 different kinds of droppings - round, hard droppings made of long hay fibers and soft, wet, cluster droppings called cecotrophs made of partially digested foods and nutrients.

In healthy rabbits, it is typical to never see the cecotropes as most rabbits eat them directly from the anus. If you are seeing frequent cecotropes in the rabbit's housing, your rabbit could be:

- Eating a diet too rich to digest
- Experiencing a GI illness
- Having mobility issues preventing them from reaching the rear end to ingest cecotropes

If you consistently see leftover cecotropes, we recommend consulting a rabbit-savvy veterinarian.

Here are examples of the healthy droppings.



Indicators of Health

Rabbit urination and droppings are the easiest identifiable indicators of a rabbit's health. What follows are some common causes for misshapen droppings and changes in urine. This is not a means to diagnose an underlying problem, but as indicators to talk to your veterinarian about dietary changes, additional tests, or medications that your rabbit may need.



String of pearl: Hard droppings strung together with fur. Rabbit is ingesting too much fur while self grooming or grooming a bonded mate. More frequent brushing of your rabbit will help minimize the amount of fur ingested that may cause blockages.



Small hard poops: More "bulk" needed from consumption of plant fibers. Increasing hay consumption will likely increase the bulk of droppings. We recommend consulting your veterinarian to be sure no underlying intestinal problem is present.



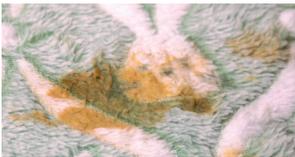
Soft, misshapen cecotrophs or diarrhea: There are many causes for soft misshapen caecotrophs including parasites such as coccidia, overconsumption of sugar, changes in diet, and other underlying gastrointestinal conditions. We recommend consulting your veterinarian as soon as possible to be sure no underlying intestinal problem is present.



White, thick deposits in urine: Deposits in the urine are typically minerals that are built up and flushed out of the body. The most common cause of mineral deposits (sometimes referred to as sludge) are high levels of calcium. This is most common in nursing mothers and growing young rabbits as their diets are higher in calcium from alfalfa hay. Chalky urine can be normal. Urine retention or inability to fully empty the bladder can cause visible deposits. Your veterinarian can advise you on next steps such as diagnosis of a condition or changes to diet.



Blood in urine: If blood is seen in the urine, this is always a reason to see your veterinarian. The most common cause of blood in urine is a urinary tract infection. Other causes of blood in urine, such as cancer or urinary stone, will need to be ruled out by your veterinarian and may result in additional urine lab testing. Red urine (see below) is often mistaken for blood in the urine.



Red urine: Red urine, not to be confused with blood in urine, is typically caused by the oxidation of urine after the consumption of dark, leafy greens. It is normal for rabbit's urine to change color and/or texture at times. This is often due to variations in diet, water intake, etc.



Variation in urine amount: Urine amounts can vary between rabbits as well as in individuals at different times. This is often due to ambient temperature and humidity as well as variations in the foods they eat. If you have concerns about the changes in amount of urine produced, we recommend consulting with your veterinarian to rule out underlying health conditions.



Variation in amount of feces: A decrease in the rabbit's typical quantity of fecal pellets seen can indicate an underlying GI problem and we recommend consulting your veterinarian.

Composting and Rabbit Droppings

About 80% of a rabbit's diet should be hay (such as orchard, timothy, or oat). Their droppings make excellent fertilizer for your garden. Rabbit droppings are rich in nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, and other minerals that are excellent for plant growth.*

If you use biodegradable litter, you can throw the entire litter pan contents into your compost bin or use in your garden. In comparison, many cat litters can't be composted. Additionally, waste from dogs and cats can't be composted as they may contain harmful bacteria. People often also use plastic bags to pick up after their dog.



▲ SKITTLES ENJOYING A TASTE OF BASIL FROM THE GARDEN

**We do not recommend using droppings from rabbits that are on medication as the medication can affect the soil and plant growth.*

Rabbit Health and common medical concerns

Rabbits can hide illness, so any change in eating, drinking, droppings, or behavior should be taken seriously. Rabbits should see the veterinarian at least once a year and immediately if sick or injured.

- **Gastrointestinal Stasis (GI Stasis)**

GI Stasis is a **medical emergency** where a rabbit's digestive system slows or stops, often causing painful gas buildup. This is one of the most common and life-threatening rabbit conditions.

Main Causes of GI stasis:

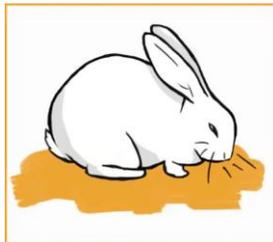
- Inappropriate diet (most common) — low fiber, too many treats or pellets
- Stress — changes in home, new pets, travel, illness, surgery
- Pain or underlying illness
- Lack of exercise- ***Many rabbits with stasis will have a history of little or no routine exercise.***

Lower risk rabbits are those eating unlimited grass/timothy hay, leafy greens, minimal pellets, and very limited treats. A diet high in fiber is essential.

Symptoms of GI Stasis:

Decrease in appetite & water intake	Hunched, fetal position
Reduced or tiny, dry stools	Teeth grinding
Lethargy, quiet or withdrawn behavior	Bloating, belly tenderness

*If your rabbit is presenting with GI symptoms, you will need to take them to the vet for IV fluids to address their dehydration and ease abdominal/gut pain. In the meantime, take their temperature and if they have a low temperature, try keeping them warm. Normal temperature ranges between 101.5-103F.



Dental Disease: Rabbit teeth grow continuously, so improper wear can lead to overgrown incisors or molars. Dental problems cause pain, drooling, difficulty eating, and weight loss. Regular hay consumption and chewing on safe wooden blocks, branches, and toys can help keep the teeth at a consistent and functional length.

Respiratory infections are common and often caused by bacteria. Symptoms include sneezing, nasal discharge, noisy breathing, and eye irritation. Respiratory infections can be transmitted amongst rabbits; it's important to keep your adopted rabbit away from your resident bunny to avoid getting them sick.

Ear Mites and Ear Infections: Rabbits can develop ear mite infestations or bacterial/yeast infections inside the ear canal. These conditions may cause itching, crusting, head shaking, or imbalance. Left untreated, they can lead to severe pain or inner-ear complications.

E.cuniculi: E cuniculi is a microscopic brain and kidney parasite that affects rabbits. Some rabbits can carry the parasite without ever becoming ill while others may show a range of symptoms including head tilts, abnormal eye movements, shuffling or weakness on back legs, and uncontrollable spinning or rolling behavior. Rabbits diagnosed with E. cuniculi are treated long-term with anti-parasitic and anti-inflammatory medications and supportive care.

Urinary Problems: Rabbits can develop thick "sludgy" urine, bladder stones, or urinary tract infections. These issues may cause straining, urine scalding, blood in the urine, or reduced urination.

Obesity is common in pet rabbits, especially those fed too many pellets or treats and given limited room to exercise. Excess weight increases the risk of arthritis, GI stasis, heart stress, and grooming difficulties. A hay-based diet, limited treats and ample daily movement help keep rabbits at a healthy weight.

Heat stress and heat stroke: Rabbits do not regulate their body temperature as efficiently as many other mammals and can become easily overheated. Signs include fast, shallow panting; ears being red and hot to the touch; a wet nose and drooling. Keep plastic bottles full of frozen water nearby to place next to your bunny on warm days. If your rabbit becomes overheated, you can mist his ears with cool water or swab his ears with wet-towel-wrapped ice cubes and bring to your veterinarian immediately.

Link to more information on common medical concerns in rabbits: <https://rabbit.org/health/medical/>

Rabbit Savvy Vets:

Manhattan

The Center for Avian and Exotic Medicine

586 Columbus Ave
New York, NY 10024
(212) 501-8750

The Animal Medical Center

510 East 52nd St
New York, NY 10065
(212) 838-7053 or (212) 329-8622

Brooklyn

Prospect Heights Animal Hospital

277 Flatbush Ave
Brooklyn, NY 11217
(718) 789-3647

Vinegar Hill Veterinary Group

57 Front St Unit 101
Brooklyn, NY 11201
(718) 797-6875

Long Island

Catnip & Carrots

2221 Hillside Ave
New Hyde Park, NY 11040
(516) 887-7080

Island Exotic Vet Care

591 East Jericho Turnpike
Huntington Station, NY 11040
(516) 877-7080

Westchester

Veterinary Center for Birds and Exotics

709 Bedford Rd
Bedford Hills, NY 10507 (914) 864-1414

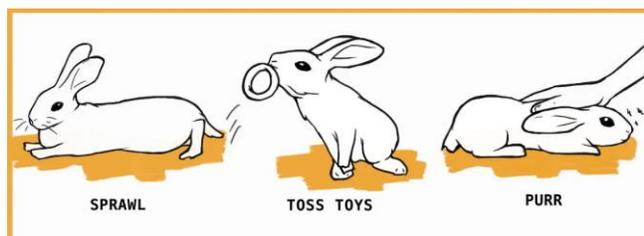
Decompression Time

Bringing home a newly adopted rabbit is an exciting moment, but it's important to remember that your rabbit needs time to decompress. Rabbits are prey animals, which means their natural instincts tell them to stay alert, hide, and avoid anything unfamiliar. Even the sweetest, most social rabbit may feel overwhelmed when placed in a new home with new scents, sounds, routines, and people.

- Your rabbit setup should be placed in a low-traffic area of the house the first couple of days. This will allow the rabbit to decompress without being overstimulated. Avoid loud noises, crowded areas, and constant handling during these early days.
- It's normal for your rabbit to hide and avoid handling during the decompression period. We recommend sitting nearby and speaking softly to your rabbit to get them used to the sound of your voice (try reading a book to them!) Allow your rabbit to approach you when they're ready. Once they come to you, pet them gently between their ears or reward them with a leafy green like cilantro. Over time, your rabbit will associate your presence with positive experiences, and this will help you bond with them.
- Learn what kinds of toys your rabbit likes and rotate them to increase novelty. Offer your rabbit stacking cups to toss or a DIY dig box to forage.
- Before letting your rabbit free-roam, make sure you rabbit-proof your home first and have them explore one room at a time. We recommend getting down to their level and seeing what they may be inclined to chew - remove/cover these items.

When your rabbit begins to feel more comfortable, they will:

- Spend more time out of hiding
- Will groom themselves in front of you
- Accept treats by hand
- Explore their space with curiosity
- Relaxed body language (flops, stretching out, purring)



Rabbit Body Language and Common Behaviors

(Happy & Relaxed Behaviors)

Binkying: A joyful, acrobatic leap and twist in the air. Your rabbit is expressing their happiness and excitement. The more space they have, the more likely it is that you see these adorable jumps!

Flopping: Your bunny suddenly falls onto their side. This dramatic motion means they feel safe, calm, and content.

Purring (Teeth Clicking): A soft grinding of teeth when being pet. This is a sign of comfort and affection.

Loafing: Sitting with feet tucked under the body. Indicates your rabbit feels secure and relaxed.

(Curious or Neutral Behaviors)

Periscoping: Standing on hind legs to look around. Shows curiosity and interest in their surroundings.

Nudging: A gentle nudge with the nose. Could mean “pay attention to me,” “you’re in my way,” or “I’m exploring.”

Chinning: Rubbing their chin on objects. Rabbits have scent glands here —this is how they mark their territory.

Digging: A natural instinct. Can mean playfulness, nesting behavior, or boredom if excessive indoors.

(Stressed or Unhappy Behaviors)

Thumping: A loud stomp of the hind leg. A warning signal—your rabbit senses danger, is scared, or is upset.

Hiding Constantly: Indicates fear, stress, or feeling unwell. Check the environment and consider a vet visit if persistent.

Growling or Lunging: A sign of defensiveness or feeling threatened. Often linked to territorial behavior or discomfort.

Grinding Teeth Loudly: Unlike soft purring, loud tooth grinding can mean pain. Contact a vet if you notice this.

Check out this link for more rabbit behaviors: <https://rabbit.org/behavior/rabbitspeake/>

Enrichment

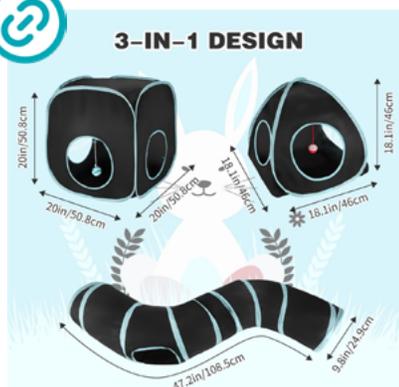
Hiding Spots: Providing rabbits with places they can hide in is an amazing way to provide enrichment! Things like hidey houses and tunnels tap into a rabbits natural instincts to dig, forage, and hide!



Hidey houses can be bought , but it can also be a fun DIY option !



Hidey houses with platforms are also really fun for bunnies as long as the height does not exceed 2 feet !



Fun Fact:
Rabbits LOVE tunnels!

** There are guides that can be found on line that go over making DIY tunnels out of cardboard and other materials as well!

Toys

Toys, especially the ones they can throw, encourage rabbits to investigate their environment in a mentally stimulating way and can often be combined with food to provide dietary enrichment.



Cat toys can often be a great option too!

Toys that encourage digging, chewing, and foraging are also a must have for rabbits! And what's amazing is that it doesn't always have to be store bought!



Things we may not find use for at times such as cardboard and toilet paper rolls, to a bunny, can instead be a source of endless fun! These objects can be combined with things such as hay, pellets, newspaper, and so on to make it even more enriching.

Here's a link that will take you to a more in depth resource/guide that goes over toys and games for rabbits!



Common Behavior Challenges

Excessive chewing and digging: Rabbits that are bored and lack stimulation may opt to chew on their surroundings such as items left on the floor, wall corners, or cords. Make sure to provide your rabbit with a variety of chew toys such as non-toxic wood blocks, hay cubes, and cardboard boxes. Rotating toys weekly can help increase novelty for your rabbit and keep things interesting. Digging is a natural burrowing instinct but can also signify excess pent-up energy. Offer your rabbit tunnels and dig boxes with hidden toys/treats to forage.

Safety tip: Make sure to bunny-proof cords and wires to avoid them getting chewed on!

Urine spraying: If your rabbit is unaltered, they may eventually spray to mark their territory. Both males and females rabbits will spray urine, but males are more prone to this. To curb this behavior, the rabbit will need to be spayed/neutered. Unfortunately, the longer you wait to sterilize the rabbit, the more likely the behavior will continue even after they've been spayed/neutered.

Hormone-induced aggression: Like urine spraying, this is due to the rabbit not being spayed/neutered. Spaying/neutering your rabbit is not only healthier for them, but will help with many of these behavior challenges seen in intact rabbits.

Check out this link for more information on troubleshooting destructive behavior:
<https://bunnylady.com/rabbit-behavior-problems/>



Grooming Habits

Regular grooming is essential to keep rabbits healthy and comfortable. Brushing helps remove loose fur, prevents matting, and reduces the risk of hair ingestion — especially important since rabbits cannot vomit. Long-haired breeds may need daily brushing, while short-haired rabbits usually need grooming once or twice a week.

- Rabbits go through heavy shedding (molting) cycles a few times a year, during which fur loss increases significantly. During these periods, more frequent brushing is important to prevent intestinal blockage from swallowed fur and to help keep their coat clean. Gentle grooming also helps you check for skin issues, parasites, or sore spots.
- Nail trimming should be done every 4–8 weeks depending on the rabbit’s activity level and flooring. Overgrown nails can catch on surfaces or cause painful foot posture changes, so regular trimming keeps them safe and balanced. Use small animal nail clippers and trim carefully to avoid the quick or bring to a veterinarian for help if you’re unsure.
- Rabbits should not be given baths, as being submerged in water can cause extreme stress, panic, and even dangerous drops in body temperature. Their skin is delicate and can tear easily when wet, and the shock of a bath can lead to serious health issues like GI stasis. Rabbits keep themselves very clean through natural grooming.
- If a rabbit becomes dirty, you can use a **dry bath** (cornstarch-based powder) or do a **spot clean** with a damp cloth. For fecal buildup or urine scald, gently trimming the soiled fur or consulting a veterinarian is safer than bathing.

Check out this link for more information on safe rabbit grooming: <https://rabbit.org/care/grooming-handling/grooming/>



Resources

<https://bunnylady.com/category/care/>

<https://www.iowarabbitrescue.org/house-rabbit-care.html>

<https://houserabbit.org/>

<https://rabbitresource.org/rabbit-care-information-and-resources/housing/what-to-expect-living-with-a-rabbit/>

<https://howcast.com/guides/1187-how-to-take-care-of-a-pet-rabbit/>

<https://www.youtube.com/@TheBunnyLady>

<https://bunnylady.com/rabbit-care-guide/>