



Living with a House Rabbit

BUY A BUNNY A LITTLE TIME
 Your House Rabbit Society membership provides needy rabbits with food, housing, veterinary care, and enough time to find them permanent homes. When funds are available, grants are awarded to shelters, rescue groups, and chapters to assist in major confiscations. As of 2016, your support has helped over 35,000 rabbits!

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MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT

Includes the semi-annual House Rabbit Journal.

USA: \$20 _____ Outside USA: \$25 _____ National-Local: \$40 _____

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HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY www.rabbit.org
 148 Broadway, Richmond, California 94804

HOUSING

- Roomy condo/pen ~8-sqft
- washable rugs
- Litterbox(es)
- Pellet bowl/feeder
- Water bowl/crock
- Hay rack/tub
- Chew toys (*baskets, dried wood, straw*)
- Roll-and-toss toys (*balls, rings, spoons*)
- Pet carrier

RUNNING SPACE

- Indoors: bunny-proofed room(s) or hallway
- Outdoors: Enclosed patio/porch or a covered playpen (*with floor*)
- Litterbox(es)
- Large exercise toys (*tunnels, ramps/steps large boxes*)

CONSUMABLES

- Fresh water
- Unlimited grass hay
- Fresh salad veggies (*lots—introduced one at a time*)
- Fresh fruit (*small amounts*)
- Limited pellets

Why a House Rabbit?

The House Rabbit Society, an international non-profit organization, recommends rabbits housed indoors as a member of the family, rather than outdoors. Rabbits are intelligent, social animals needing attention and affection. They are wonderful indoor companion animals when set up for success by their human families.

The benefits of spay and neuter

Spaying or neutering your rabbit improves litterbox habits, lessens destructive chewing behavior, decreases territorial aggression, reduces the risk of reproductive tract cancer resulting in a long, happy life. A rabbit-savvy veterinarian will examine your rabbit. She will neuter males when the testicles descend at 3-4 months of age and spay females at 4-6 months of age.

HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY



Buy a bunny a little time.



House-training

Provide a litterbox with rabbit-safe litter in the bottom and a generous pile of hay in the front of the litterbox or in a hay rack positioned over the litterbox. Rabbits defecate where they graze; they are immediately set up for success! When the rabbit is reliable in the living area, provide more freedom and additional litterboxes - 1 for each room the rabbit runs in.

Bunny-proofing

Our rabbits evolved from the wild European rabbit; they are natural diggers and chewers, so bunny-proofing is a must! Supervise your rabbit and provide enrichment opportunities: safe chewables, toys, cardboard boxes with entrance and exit, tunnels, ramps, hidey boxes. Electrical cords are dangerous. Conceal by encasing in vinyl tubing a minimum of ½ inch in diameter, split the tubing lengthwise and stuff the cord(s) inside.

Approaching a rabbit

Most rabbits love gentle petting. However, do not put your hand/fingers in front of a rabbit's face or nose for them to sniff. They consider this an insult and may box or bite the hand.

House rabbits and other animals

House rabbits and indoor cats can get along fine, as can rabbits and well-mannered dogs. Dogs should be trained to respond to commands, and supervision is needed to control a dog's playful impulses (this is especially true for puppies).

Use your judgment about whether to allow your dog and rabbit to be together without supervision. Adding another rabbit? rabbit.org/faq-bonding-multiple-rabbits/

Major Health Problems

Intestinal blockages:

Because rabbits groom themselves constantly, they get furballs just as cats do. Unlike cats, however, rabbits cannot vomit, and swallowed hair along with low-fiber feed may cause a fatal blockage.

If your rabbit shows a decrease in appetite and in the size of droppings, get advice from a rabbit veterinarian.

Prevention: High fiber (hay) diet with fresh produce (add new foods gradually); plenty of exercise time/space—at least 30 hours a week; brushing and grooming so that less hair is swallowed; see a rabbit savvy vet immediately if bunny stops eating even her favorite treat.

Bacterial balance: A rabbit's digestive tract is inhabited by healthful bacteria. If the "good" bacteria balance is upset by sweet, starchy or stale food or by a sudden change in diet, harmful bacteria can take over the digestive track and kill the rabbit.

Limit sweet treats to small amounts of fruit (no cookies or refined sugar). Keep all

rabbit food in a cool dry place. If your rabbit goes outside, check for pesticides and toxic plants. (A list is available from your local poison center.)

Infectious bacteria: Many rabbit diseases are caused by bacteria, not viruses, and can be treated with

antibiotics. If your rabbit shows symptoms of a "cold," take him to a veterinarian familiar with antibiotics that can be safely used in rabbits. A few drugs, such as Amoxicillin, should *not* be given to a rabbit, since there is risk of destroying good intestinal bacteria.

It's up to you: Find an experienced rabbit doctor before a problem develops. If your rabbit has been harassed by a predator, take him to a veterinarian even if no injuries are apparent.

When it is over 80°, spray your rabbit's ears with cool water or place ice-filled containers in his resting area.

Regularly check eyes, nose, ears, teeth, weight, appetite, and droppings.

Danger Signs

Don't waste valuable time Call your veterinarian immediately if you see:

- Diarrhea with listlessness
- Sudden loss of appetite with bloat and abdominal gurgling
- Loss of appetite with labored breathing
- Loss of appetite with runny nose
- Head tilt
- Urine scald (inflamed skin due to wetness)
- Abnormal urine (with blood, mucus or sludge)
- Abscesses, lumps or swellings anywhere
- Any sudden behavior change

