

Rabbit

Average Size: approximately 8" long for dwarf rabbits; 12" or longer, standard rabbits

Life Span: up to 8 years for standard rabbits, up to 12 years for dwarf breeds

Diet and Feeding:

Staple diet: Provide your rabbit with plenty of Timothy hay daily, hay provides the necessary roughage needed to support a healthy digestive system. In addition, a bowl of rabbit pellets should be available.

Hay cubes: These are an easy way to supply rabbits the roughage they need and help keep the rabbit's teeth trimmed by chewing on the cube.

Fruits & vegetables:* Chopped fruits, carrots, and dark green veggies like mustard greens, collard greens or kale may be given daily. Take care not to overfeed these fresh foods. They have high moisture content and too much can cause diarrhea.

Treat sticks & chews: These hard and crunchy treats are yummy and keep your pet's teeth trimmed. Always keep one in the habitat. Treats should be less than 10% of total food intake.

Water: Change and fill your rabbit's water bottle with clean water every day.

*Remember that fresh food items require their own dish and should be removed from the habitat after four hours to prevent spoilage.

Housing/Habitat:

Housing: When adopting a rabbit, please be sure to provide enough space to house the rabbit as they require a large hutch; adult rabbits need at least one square foot of cage floor space per pound of body weight.

Bedding: Line the home with 1"-2" of bedding, and change it weekly or more often if needed.

Cage placement: Place the habitat in a cool, low humidity area, out of direct sunlight.

Normal Behavior and Social Interaction:

Training: Although they are gentle creatures, most rabbits will not do tricks, nor are they as affectionate as a dog or cat. Rabbits will respond to their owners and will enjoy being picked up and petted. Some rabbits even like being walked on a leash.

Social Traits: Rabbits like company, however, two males together may fight. The best combination is two females from the same family. Male rabbits can be neutered by a veterinarian and then can be housed together or with female rabbits.

Grooming: Rabbits do **not** need to be groomed or bathed since they are very clean animals and will do their own grooming. However, brushing rabbits with a soft, wire brush will help with any tangles and help with bonding.

Lifting & handling: Rabbits should not be handled roughly since they are easily excited. *They should NEVER be handled by their ears!* When picking up a rabbit, place one hand under the rump and back legs, and the other under the chest and front legs. Do not let the back legs kick wildly while being held because they can easily get spinal injury.

Spaying & neutering: Rabbits can be spayed and neutered as easily as cats, so this option allows them to be kept together without the risk of "overpopulation."
Note: A male rabbit is called a buck and a female is called a doe.

Health/cleanliness:

Please remember that all pets may bite or scratch, and may transmit disease to humans. Keep your pet's home clean and wash your hands before and after handling your rabbit or cleaning his home. Infants, young children, pregnant women, people with compromised immune systems, and the infirm or elderly are at greater risk of infections and should use caution when in contact with your rabbit(s) or its habitat. Consult your doctor for more information.

The information on this care sheet is NOT a substitute for regular veterinary care.