

# Rabbit Care Sheet



Rabbits are fascinating creatures found all around the globe! While they originally hail from Europe, Africa, and parts of Asia, they've happily made homes in places like Australia, New Zealand, and Chile. Their incredible eyesight and sharp hearing make them wonderfully alert to their surroundings. To create a cosy home that reflects their natural habitat, it's important to focus on a few key areas: providing a comfortable setting, a balanced diet, fun activities, and the companionship of another rabbit. These affectionate animals truly thrive on interaction and will delight in your company. Bringing a rabbit into your life can be a joyful, rewarding experience!

## Enclosure

Rabbits are lively and social animals that thrive in spacious environments where they can play and explore to their heart's content! For two medium-sized rabbits, it's best to provide a living area of at least 3m x 2m and 1m high, which should encompass both their shelter and exercise space. A cosy shed, hut, or playhouse with a connected exercise area is an excellent choice for their home. Rabbits appreciate having distinct spaces within their shelter for eating, resting, and toileting, ensuring they feel secure and comfortable.

It's essential to ensure that their hutch is safe and secure, with shaded areas for them to relax during warmer weather. Additionally, raising the shelter off the ground can help protect them from predators and prevent dampness. To enhance their exercise opportunities, consider attaching a run to the hutch, just be sure to cover it adequately to keep them safe while allowing for fun adventures. With the correct setup, you'll create a delightful home that supports your rabbits' active lifestyle.

## Get to know

Creating a bond with your rabbit is a rewarding journey! Since rabbits can be a bit timid, it's essential to approach them with patience and gentleness. Spend time sitting quietly with your bunny, allowing them the space to feel safe and comfortable around you. Move slowly and calmly as you begin to build trust. When you first bring your rabbit home, give them a few days to acclimate to their new surroundings and the various sounds they'll encounter. As you invest time together, you'll discover their unique personality, and they'll learn to recognise you as their loving protector and caregiver.

## Exercise

Rabbits are such delightful little creatures and are most active during the magical hours of dawn and dusk! These are the perfect times for bonding and playtime. It's essential to let your furry friend enjoy at least one to two hours of outdoor time daily. With plenty of space to hop, jump, and interact with you, your rabbit will feel joyful and thrive! To create a safe environment, be sure to rabbit-proof their space by hiding electrical wires, removing any toxic plants, and blocking off tight spots they might sneak into. Supervision is key to preventing any nibbling or digging mishaps. Consider attaching a run to your hutch, giving your rabbit the freedom to exercise and have fun whenever they please! Don't forget to sprinkle some joy into their routine with engaging toys, such as balls, tunnels, and climbing structures.

## LIFESPAN

8 to 12 years  
in captivity

## SIZE

8inches

## TEMPERATURE

The preferred temperature  
range is between 15°C and  
21°C.e

## HUMIDITY

0%

## Environment

**Substrate:** Creating an inviting bedding area for your rabbit is a great way to ensure their comfort. Use warm, edible materials like straw or hay, and consider adding safe, absorbent layers such as newspaper or dust-free wood shavings.

**Enrichment:** Consider creating a fantastic play area for your rabbits! They'll love a platform to hop on, a sand pit to dig in, and cosy cardboard boxes to explore. Add some delightful toys, safe chewables, and treats. You can also get creative by filling a hay rack, using cardboard tubes, or repurposing empty egg boxes. For a playful twist, hide their food in fun places to inspire their natural foraging instincts!

**Cleaning:** Maintaining a clean hutch is crucial for your rabbit's well-being and happiness. Aim to clean it at least once a week, and be attentive to signs that it may need more frequent care. While cleaning can be a bit stressful for your furry friend, you can make it easier by adding a bit of the old bedding back in; this helps them feel secure with familiar smells.



## Diet

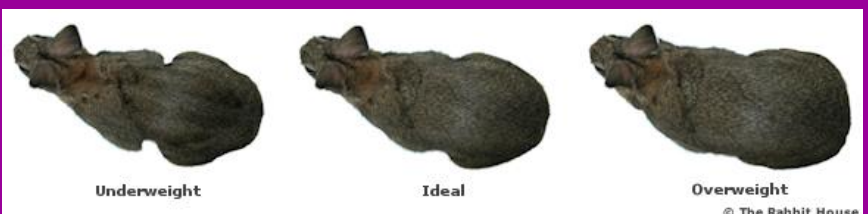
**Feeding:** A rabbit's diet is vital for their overall health and happiness! Good-quality pellets are a fantastic way to provide essential nutrients; aim for one-fourth cup per day for adult rabbits. Fresh greens are a delightful addition to their daily meals, offering approximately 2 cups of options such as beet tops, cilantro, carrot tops, mustard greens, watercress, and romaine lettuce. It's also fun to offer healthy vegetables and fruits as treats, up to 3 teaspoons daily, for bonding and training. And don't forget about hay, which should be available at all times for their well-being. While many believe carrots should be a staple, it's essential to keep these sugary delights as occasional treats.

**Water:** It's essential to provide your rabbit with fresh water every day! A hanging water bottle can be a great option, but a bowl can work too; just be careful to prevent spills. For extra peace of mind, consider offering both. Don't forget to clean them regularly to keep your furry friend healthy and happy.

## Rabbit's weight

The weight of a healthy rabbit can vary significantly depending on the breed, ranging from less than 1kg for adorable dwarf breeds to over 10kg for those gentle giants! Most domestic rabbits usually fall within a delightful range of 2-6kg. It's essential to research your specific rabbit breed to understand their ideal weight. Regularly weighing your furry friend is a great way to ensure their health. If you can easily feel their ribs and spine, they may need a little extra care. Difficulty feeling their ribs could indicate that they might be a tad overweight.

## Rabbit's weight and shape





## Health & Welfare

A healthy rabbit radiates vitality with bright eyes, an alert expression, dry nostrils, and a lovely, shiny coat. They enjoy a hearty appetite and produce firm, round droppings in their resting space. To ensure your furry friend stays in top shape, regular health checks are essential, focusing on the eyes, nose, ears, teeth, fur, feet, and bottom. If you ever spot any signs of illness, please reach out to a veterinarian right away. Your rabbit's well-being is worth it!

## Grooming

Rabbits are wonderfully clean animals that take great pride in grooming themselves! While it's best to avoid bathing them unless necessary, since it can cause stress or shock, they do benefit from a little extra care. Regular brushing, once or twice a week, helps manage shedding, especially during their major shedding season, which occurs every three months, when daily brushing is ideal. This not only keeps their fur lovely but also prevents them from swallowing loose fur, which can cause health issues. Don't forget about their nails! Trimming them every four to six weeks is essential. Using small trimmers, carefully clip only the clear tips of the hair. Additionally, providing a rough surface in their hutch can help keep their nails naturally filed down. If you're ever unsure, rabbit vets can also assist with nail trims. With a bit of love and attention, your furry friend will thrive!

## Diseases and Concerns

Rabbits are such resilient little creatures, often trying to hide any signs of illness to avoid appearing vulnerable to predators. This means that even minor changes in their behaviour can be an important clue that something is not quite right. One common concern is dental issues; since a rabbit's teeth grow continuously, it's essential to provide plenty of chewable items to help keep them filed down. If you notice any misalignment in their teeth, don't hesitate to consult a vet! Addressing these issues promptly is crucial to ensure they can eat comfortably and avoid complications. Another condition to be aware of is Snuffles, an upper respiratory infection often caused by bacteria like *Pasteurella*. Symptoms such as nasal discharge and sneezing can indicate this issue, which, if untreated, may lead to pneumonia.

Being aware of these potential health concerns will empower you to recognise the signs and take prompt action. Always seek advice from a veterinarian instead of attempting to treat your pet on your own. With the proper care and attention, you can help your furry friend thrive and feel their very best! Remember, your proactive approach can make all the difference in their happiness and health.



## Transport

Travelling with your furry friends is an exciting adventure, and their safety and comfort should always be your top priority. Ensure their travel box provides ample space for your rabbit to stretch out and feel secure. If it's their first trip, try draping a cloth over the box to create a cosy, calming space. Always prioritise ventilation to keep them safe while ensuring the box remains secure. And don't forget about keeping them cool—air conditioning and a shaded spot in the vehicle will keep them happy and comfortable.

# Rabbit

