



#### HOUSING

- Roomy condo/ pen
- washable rugs
- Litterbox(es)
- Pellet bowl/feeder
- Water bottle/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

#### GROOMING

- Flea comb
- Brush
- Flea products (*consult with vet*)
- Toenail clippers
- Styptic powder

#### SUPPLIES

- Rabbit-safe organic litter (*no aromatic softwood shavings*)
- Storage bins (*for litter and hay*)
- Whiskbroom/dustpan
- White vinegar (*for general cleanup*)
- Hand vacuum
- Chlorine bleach (*for disinfecting*)
- Newspapers

#### BUY A BUNNY A LITTLE TIME

Time is all it takes for a rabbit to be discovered by the right human. When their time is up at the animal shelters, rabbits with your support can be placed in foster homes until adoptive matches are made.

Your enrollment in the House Rabbit Society and all additional donations help provide needy rabbits with food, housing, veterinary care, and enough time to find them permanent homes.

#### LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES

**ALABAMA**  
205/942-9589

**ARKANSAS**  
870/867-0179

**CALIFORNIA**  
510/970-7575  
(National)  
707/964-7250  
619/718-7777  
916/863-9690  
310/713-2478  
650/994-1012

**COLORADO**  
303/469-3240

**FLORIDA**  
305/666-BUNN  
813/891-6144

**GEORGIA**  
678/526-8884

**ILLINOIS**  
847/266-0068

**INDIANA**  
317/767-7636

**IOWA**  
563/326-3430

**KANSAS**  
913/897-4412

**KENTUCKY**  
859/291-1141

**LOUISIANA**  
985/649-8990

**MD/DC/NO VA**  
410/889-4104

**MASSACHUSETTS**  
781/665-9962

**MISSOURI**  
816/537-7601  
636/349-0606

**NEVADA**  
888/887-4010

**NEW JERSEY**  
732/583-0278

**NEW YORK**  
315/797-9835  
914/337-6146

**NORTH CAROLINA**  
910/798-0103

**OHIO**  
740/797-7616  
614/895-0004

**OREGON**  
503/617-1625

**PENNSYLVANIA/DE**  
302/683-9009  
412/635-0660

**RHODE ISLAND**  
401/623-1340

**SOUTH CAROLINA**  
843/852-0277

**TENNESSEE**  
865/ 856-0371

**TEXAS**  
512/469-9809

**UTAH**  
435/689-1664

**VIRGINIA**  
434/831-1315

**WASHINGTON**  
206/365-9105

**WISCONSIN**  
608/232-7044

#### INTERNATIONAL

**AUSTRALIA**  
612 9885 0925

**CANADA/BC**  
604/612-7699

**HONG KONG**  
rosy@rosybunny.com  
9581-3632

**ITALY**  
333-1234231

NATIONAL WEB SITE: [www.rabbit.org](http://www.rabbit.org)

ADDITIONAL LOCAL NUMBER

CHAPTER HEADQUARTERS

#### MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT

Includes the semi-annual House Rabbit Journal.

USA: \$18 \_\_\_ Outside USA: \$25 \_\_\_ National-Local: \$33 \_\_\_

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## HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY

148 Broadway, Richmond, California 94804



## Living with a House Rabbit

#### Why a House Rabbit?

Perhaps you've just adopted your first rabbit, or maybe you already have a rabbit and would like more information to help you understand her better. The House Rabbit Society, a national nonprofit organization, recommends that you keep your rabbit in the house rather than outdoors. Rabbits are intelligent, social animals who need affection, and they can become wonderful companion animals if given a chance to interact with their human families.

#### The benefits of spay and neuter

Although most rabbits will use a litterbox, hormones may cause unneutered males and unspayed females to "mark territory." Spaying or neutering your rabbit improves litterbox habits, lessens chewing behavior, decreases territorial aggression, and gives your rabbit a happier, longer life. Have your male neutered at age 3-6 months depending on sexual maturity, and your female spayed at age 6-8 months, by an experienced rabbit veterinarian.

For rabbits more than 2 years old, get a veterinary checkup first.



### Housetraining

Rabbits may have free run of the home. However, it's best for most—and necessary for some—to start with a cage or pen. To make cage/pen time learning time, fasten a litterbox to the fencing in the corner that your rabbit chooses for a “bathroom.” As soon as he uses the box consistently, you can give him some freedom. Place one or more large litterboxes in corners of the running area outside the pen.

Use only positive reinforcement (treats and praise)—never punishment

### Bunny-proofing

Bunny-proofing your home is part of living with a house rabbit. It is natural for rabbits to chew on furniture, rugs, drapes, and, most deadly of all, electrical cords. Cords must be concealed so that the rabbit cannot reach them. Exposed cords can be encased in vinyl tubing (found at hardware stores). By splitting the tubing lengthwise with a utility knife the cord can be pushed inside it.

Give your rabbit enough attention, safe chewables, and toys, so that she is distracted from chewing furniture and rugs. A cardboard box stuffed with hay makes an inexpensive play box. Young rabbits (under a year) are more inclined to mischief and

require more confinement and/or bunny-proofing than mature rabbits.

### House rabbits and other animals

House rabbits and indoor cats can get along fine, as do rabbits and well-mannered dogs. Dogs should be trained to respond to commands before being trusted with a free-running rabbit, and supervision is needed to control a dog's playful impulses (this is especially true for puppies). Adding a second rabbit is easiest if the rabbits are neutered/spayed adults, and they are introduced for short periods in an area unfamiliar to both 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; petroleum laxative if synthetics have been swallowed.

**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 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