

CARE OF YOUR NEW BUNNY

THE FIRST FEW DAYS

For the first few days, try to keep the bunny in a quiet area and keep things low key until she gets settled in. Let her get used to her new surroundings and cage before introducing a lot of activity. Rabbits are prey animals and are scared by loud noises and quick movements. Hold off on introducing other family pets until the new bunny is comfortable with you and her surroundings. When holding your bunny, make sure you have one hand under her bottom so she feels secure.

FEEDING

Your bunny's main diet should consist of a quality rabbit pellet and hay. A good pelleted food has all the things essential to your rabbit's diet. You can buy quality foods at feed stores, such as Agway, Blue Seal, a Farmer's Co-op, etc. and some pet stores. Avoid the food that has colored pieces and bits of corn and seeds, as these are low quality foods and are very expensive. Buy only enough food for 2-3 months at a time so it stays fresh. Hay is a good source of fiber and may be given freely. Water should be available at all times.

If you decide to feed a different food than what your bunny is now eating, make sure you switch it over slowly by mixing in a little of the new food with the old, increasing the amount of new food every couple of days.

If your bunny is a baby you can let her have all the pellets she will eat. At 6 months start measuring the pellets – the general rule of thumb is one ounce of food per pound of body weight per day. Hay may be given freely at all ages.

Treats:

Once your bunny is at least four months old a small amount of fruit, veggies or other treats can slowly be introduced into the diet. Some things rabbits enjoy are apples, carrots, and dry old-fashioned oatmeal. Please wait until your bunny is at least 4 months old to introduce veggies and fruit (oatmeal can be given at any age). These should be given in small amounts only (for example, a baby carrot or a small slice of apple) and should not make up a large part of the diet. Do not feed produce with a very high water content (iceburg lettuce, cucumbers, celery etc.) as these can cause diarrhea.

HEALTH

If you notice any diarrhea/loose stools, discontinue any treats and add some dry oatmeal to the food. If it does not improve within 24 hours remove the pellets as well and just offer hay. Pellets can be slowly reintroduced once the bunny has been back to normal for a couple of days. Hold off on the produce for a week or so. If your rabbit has loose stools a lot, discontinue any treats other than oatmeal. They are not necessary and diarrhea can kill a rabbit.

Do not be alarmed if you see small, soft feces that look like a bunch of grapes in your rabbit's cage. They are called Cecotropes and the rabbit is supposed to eat them - they contain nutrients and beneficial bacteria. Also, orange or reddish urine is caused by metabolic changes and is not cause for alarm.

Rabbits are very sensitive to heat. They can deal well with the cold as long as they are dry and out of the wind. In fact, rabbits prefer it on the cool side. Take this into consideration when you decide where to keep your bunny. Make sure your rabbit is in the shade and has plenty of water during the summer to prevent heatstroke.

Rabbits' teeth grow continually, so provide a stick, piece of untreated wood or other chew toy so your rabbit can keep its teeth worn down.

You may want to consider spaying or neutering. It is not necessary (unless you have rabbits of different sexes) but it may prevent reproductive cancers and may solve behavioral problems such as spraying urine.

Nails should be clipped every few months with cat/small animal nail clippers.

Enjoy your new bunny!

Weight of adult rabbits by breed

Breed	Adult Weight (lb)
Netherland Dwarf	2 – 2.5
Polish	2.5 – 3.5
Lionhead	2.5 – 4
Jersey Woolly	3 – 3.5
Holland Lop	3 - 4
American Fuzzy Lop	3.5 – 4
Himalyan	3.5 – 4.5
Mini Rex	4 – 4.5

Breed	Adult Weight (lb)
Dutch	4.5
Florida White	5 – 6
Mini Lop	5.5 – 6.5
Standard Chinchilla	6 – 7.5
English Angora	6 – 7.5
Satin Angora	8 – 9.5
French Angora	8 – 10.5
Rex	8 – 10.5

Breed	Adult Weight (lb)
English Lop	9 and up
Californian	9 – 10.5
Satin	9.5 – 11
Giant Angora	9.5 and up
New Zealand	10 – 12
French Lop	10.5 and up
Giant Chinchilla	12 – 16
Flemish Giant	13 and up