

Animal Care Handouts: Rabbits

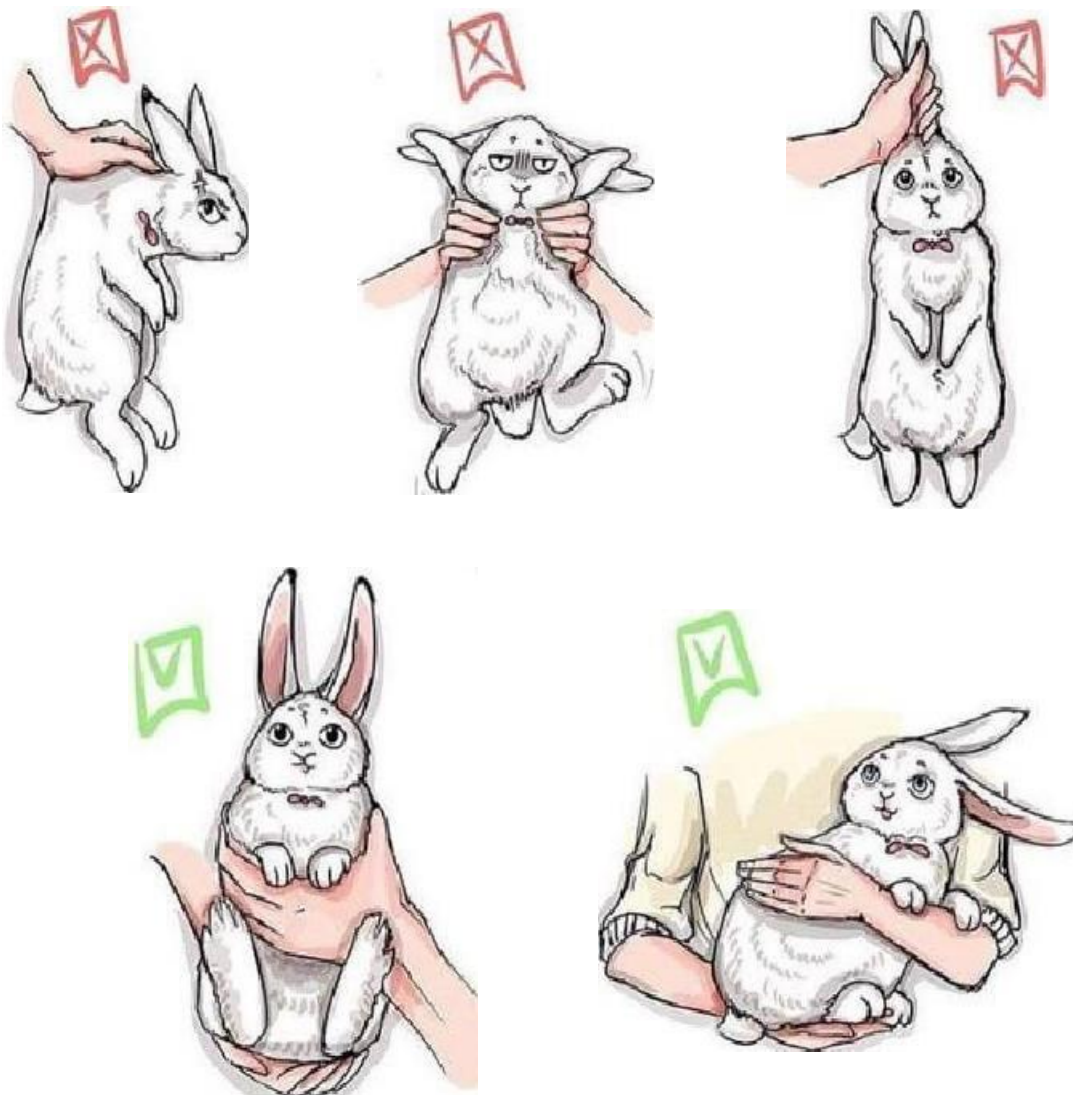
The following topics in this animal care guide are as follows:

- Rabbit Handling & Care
- Rabbit Feeding
- Rabbit Housing
- Rabbit Enrichment
- Litter Training Rabbits
- Introducing Rabbits
- Spay & Neuter
- Litter & Bedding: [SP-020-Recommended Small Mammal Litter and Bedding](#)

Proper Ways to Hold a Rabbit

If a rabbit doesn't want to be picked up or handled then put them down immediately!

Rabbits are very fragile and can hurt themselves or scratch you if they don't want to be handled.

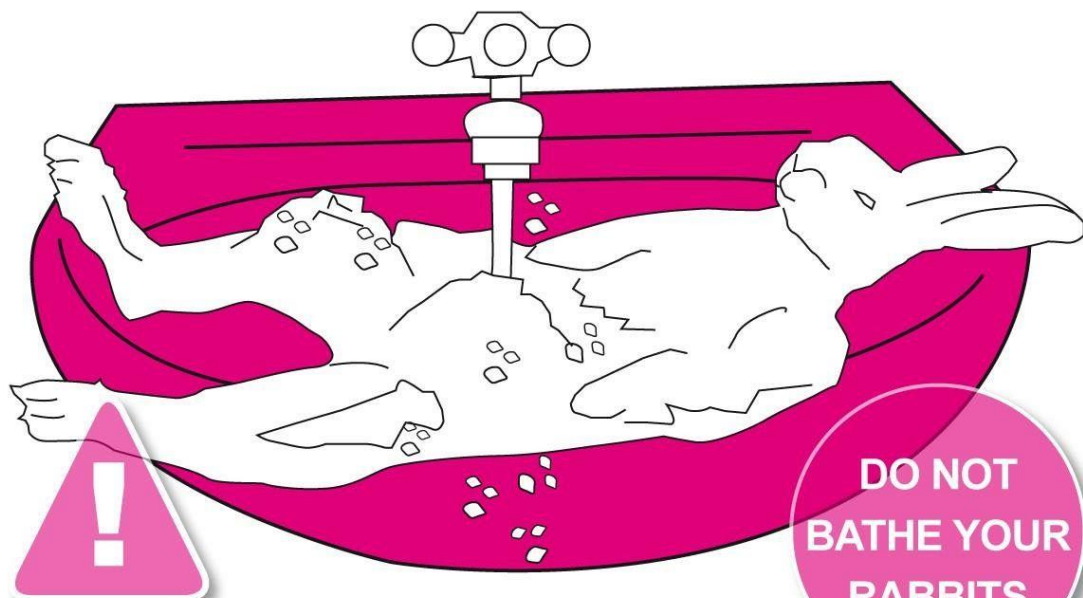


Hold the bunny correctly

как правильно держать кролика

sever.416

This is torture...



... and it can KILL

Unless your rabbit has a medical condition, he does NOT need to be bathed. Even with a medical condition, the way to clean a rabbits rear is to gently support him over a sink and sponge his dirty areas.

Rabbits are like cats, they groom themselves to stay clean, by all means please give your rabbits a brush to help remove loose hair but never, never immerse them in water! Rabbits can easily die of shock and hypothermia.

The rabbit in this well known internet image has been 'tranced' this is a condition where the rabbit goes into temporary paralysis, the origins are from its wild counterpart - when a rabbit is under attack he will 'play dead' this rabbit is paralysed and in fear of his life!



ACTION for Rabbits

It's time to make things happen!

www.actionforrabbits.co.uk info@actionforrabbits.co.uk

**80% of an adult rabbits
diet should be hay.**



Always have a fresh bowl of water available.
A message from bunnybunch.org

"A Non Profit, No Kill Rabbit Rescue and Education Organization." *The Bunny Bunch*, www.bunnybunch.org/.

Fruits For Rabbits

These fruits are safe to give to pet rabbits as treats:

Apple (no stems or seeds)

Apricot

Banana (no peel)

Blueberries

Cherries (no pits)

Currants

Kiwi

Mango

Melons (peel & seeds ok)

Nectarine

Orange (with peel)

Papaya

Peach

Pear

Pineapple (no skin)

Plum (no pits)

Pumpkin

Raspberries

Star Fruit

Strawberries



"Pet Rabbit Diet: Bunny Food & Nutrition." *Exotic Animal Supplies*, 25 Apr. 2019, [exoticanimalsupplies.com/pet-rabbit-diet-bunny-food-nutrition/#fruit_for_rabbits](https://www.exoticanimalsupplies.com/pet-rabbit-diet-bunny-food-nutrition/#fruit_for_rabbits).

Feeding Chart For Rabbits

Leafy greens should make up about $\frac{3}{4}$ of your rabbits vegetable meals each day. Veggies with an asterick* are high in oxalic acid and should be rotated and limited to 1 per day.

Arugula	Kale (all types)
Basil (all types)	Mache
Beet Greens*	Mint (all types)
Bok Choy	Mustard Greens*
Borage Leaves	Parsley* (flat leaf recommended)
Carrot Tops	Radicchio
Chicory	Radish Tops*
Cilantro	Raspberry Leaves
Clover	Red or Green Lettuce
Collard Greens	Romaine Lettuce
Cucumber Leaves	Spinach*
Dandelion Greens & Flowers	Spring Greens
Dill Leaves	Swiss Chard*
Endive	Turnip Greens
Escarole	Watercress
Fennel (base & leafy tops)	Wheatgrass
Frisee Lettuce	Yu Choy
Bell Peppers (all colors)	Carrots
Broccoli (leaves & stems only)	Chinese Pea Pods (flat kind without large peas)
Broccolini	Summer Squash
Brussel Sprouts	Zucchini Squash
Cabbage (all types)	



"Pet Rabbit Diet: Bunny Food & Nutrition." *Exotic Animal Supplies*, 25 Apr. 2019, exoticanimalsupplies.com/pet-rabbit-diet-bunny-food-nutrition/#fruit_for_rabbits.

Safe Wood For Rabbits

Apple Wood
 Arbutus
 Ash
 Aspen
 Bamboo
 Blackberry
 Cholla
 Cottonwood
 Crabapple
 Dogwood
 Grapevine
 Hackberry
 Hazelnut
 Kiln Dried White
 Manzanita
 Maple
 Mesquite
 Pecan
 Poplar
 Sycamore
 Willow



Toxic Wood For Rabbits

Alder
 Almond
 Apricot
 Balsam Fir
 Beech
 Birch
 Boxwood
 Cashew
 Cedar
 Cherry
 Citrus
 Cypress
 Elderberry
 Elm
 Eucalyptus
 Fig – Fir
 Fresh Pine
 Juniper
 Magnolia
 Mahogany
 Maple
 Nectarine
 Oak- Olive
 Peach
 Plum
 Plywood
 Prune
 Redwood
 Rosewood
 Spruce
 Walnut

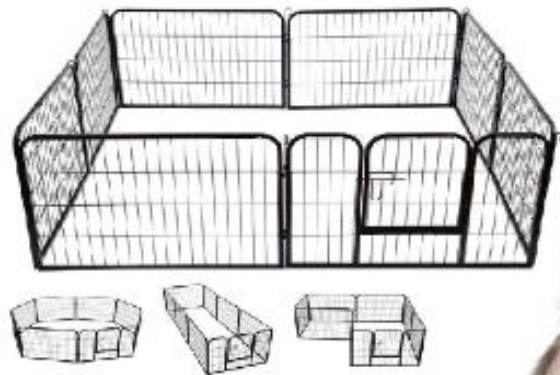


Recommended Rabbit Cages



**Play pens, rabbit rooms,
or free range**

**The more space you can give your
rabbit, the happier they will be!**



**Rabbits do better in pairs!
Consider adopting two!**



Housing NOT Recommended for Rabbits



Wire bottom cages— Unsafe for rabbit's feet. They can get severely hurt from getting their feet stuck in between the wires or a nail getting stuck in their feet.

Multi-level cages— Without having proper barriers/walls they could fall and get severely hurt or worse. Also, rabbits need more space to run around rather than climbing.

Store bought cages— These cages are often extremely too small for rabbits (or any small mammal). Rabbits may be small but they love to run around and stretch out. Rabbits can also start to guard their cages if they feel like they have no space to get away/hide or are often picked up to be taken in and out of their cages.



Hutches— These are often made out of wood which can be hard to properly clean. Resulting in becoming an unsanitary environment for rabbits. They also often are extremely too small for rabbits (or any small mammal), which can cause guarding issues. (As listed above in store bought cages)

Outdoor cages— Domesticated Rabbits should NOT be housed outside. They can not regulate their body temperature as well as a wild rabbit can. They could catch fleas or ticks with being outside. There are also many predators that can get to a rabbit even if they are in a cage.



Rabbit Enrichment

Changing up the enrichment
is fun for both the human
making it and the rabbit enjoying it!



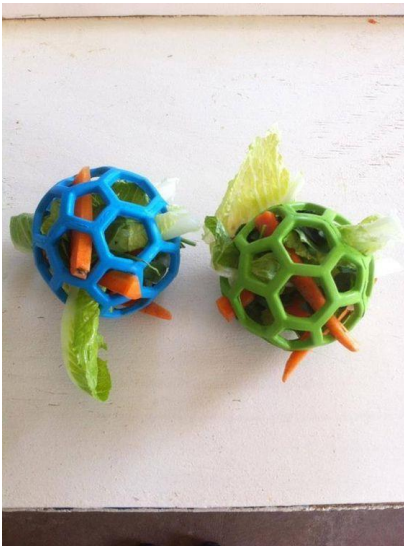
Paper lunch bag with hay



Pet grass/untreated grass



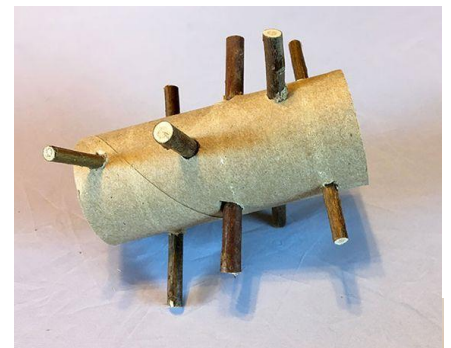
Clothespin with veggies on
natural twine



Frozen veggies/fruits



Toilet paper rolls with
hay or chew sticks



Hay/veggie
feeder



Litter Boxes for Rabbits

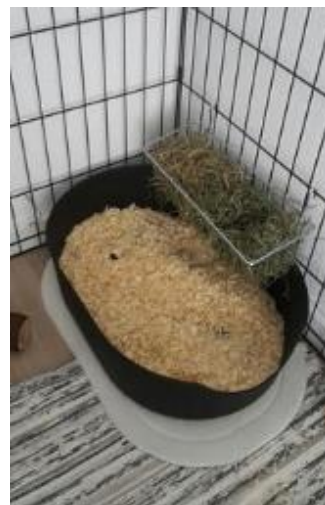
For litter box training-

Put litter boxes in every corner of the room/cage where you are keeping the rabbit(s).

Then remove the ones the rabbit(s) aren't using.



The larger the litter box, the better!



Put a hay rack near the litter box or above it!

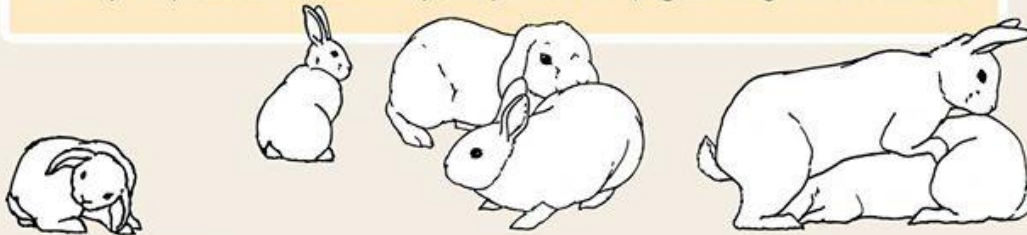
Behaviour: When Two Bunnies Meet

By Tamsin Stone

www.theRabbitHouse.com

Neutral Territory

Rabbits must be introduced on neutral territory - a space neither rabbit usually has access to - to prevent territorial aggression. When rabbits meet they have to establish whether the other rabbit is there to challenge them for territory or to form a social group, and if it's the latter where they fit in the social hierarchy. This process can take several days, and you'll see them progress through different behaviours.



Ignoring

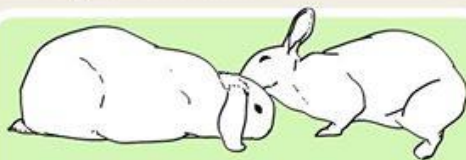
Rabbits may begin by completely ignoring each other. Despite appearances, they are actually paying close attention, waiting to see what the other rabbit will do and signalling they aren't a threat by being non confrontational.

Chasing

Most introductions involve some chasing. The chasing rabbit is saying 'I'm the boss', and if the other rabbit moves out the way they acknowledge this. Chases are usually short dashes and slow hops interspersed with more ignoring.

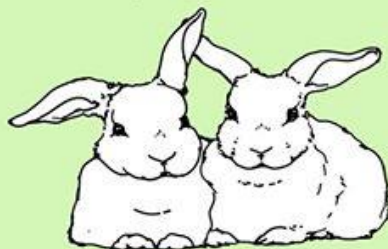
Mounting

Both male and female rabbits (even when neutered) use mounting to establish hierarchy. It's normal and will lessen over time. Mounting backwards (as pictured) should be discouraged though, to prevent bites to sensitive areas!



Requesting Grooming

Grooming is often the first sign of friendship. Rabbits ask to be groomed by stretching their head forward, chin on the floor. Sometimes a request will be ignored and sometimes one rabbit will do all the grooming. Either way, that they are thinking about grooming at all is a sign they are quite relaxed.

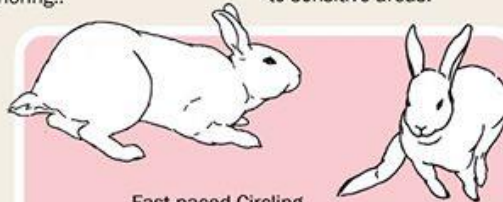


Snuggling

Once rabbits have made friends they frequently rest in contact with each other or close by.



Bonded: Happy in each other's company they can move to their permanent living space.



Fast-paced Circling

If both rabbits attempt to chase each other they can end up rapidly circling almost nose to tail. This can turn into a fight, so it should always be interrupted and the rabbits separated.



Fighting

Rabbit fights are fast-paced as they spin and tumble over each other biting and kicking. Rabbits should immediately be separated and checked for injury.



Separate: Aggressive towards each other - seek expert advice before continuing.

"Welcome to The Rabbit House." *The Rabbit House - A Guide to Rabbit Hutches, Runs and Rabbit Cages*, therabbitthouse.com/.

Spay & Neuter Your Rabbits

Help reduce the over population of homeless Rabbits!



**All Rabbits adopted from HSHV will be
spayed or neutered before going to
their forever home.**

FEMALES

can be spayed between 4-6months old

size and breed may be a factor in when they should be fixed

Eliminating risk of ovarian/uterine cancers and other uterine diseases such as pyometra (infection in the uterus) in females. The risk of developing cancers of the uterus increases as the rabbit ages.

MALES

can be neutered between 3-5months old

size and breed may be a factor in when they should be fixed

Eliminating the risk of testicular cancer.

For both genders fixing your rabbit helps prevent...

Sassy behaviors like charging, lunging and not wanting to be handled as much as before reaching sexual maturity