

shopping list for needed supplies

- appropriately sized habitat
- book about Rabbits
- high-quality Rabbit food
- timothy hay
- treats
- bedding
- food bowl and water bottle
- hideaway place
- toys
- hay rack
- wood and mineral chews
- litter box and litter
- indoor playpen
- brush

sources

Ask an associate about the Petco library of books on Rabbits and the variety of Petco Brand products available for the care and happiness of your new pet.

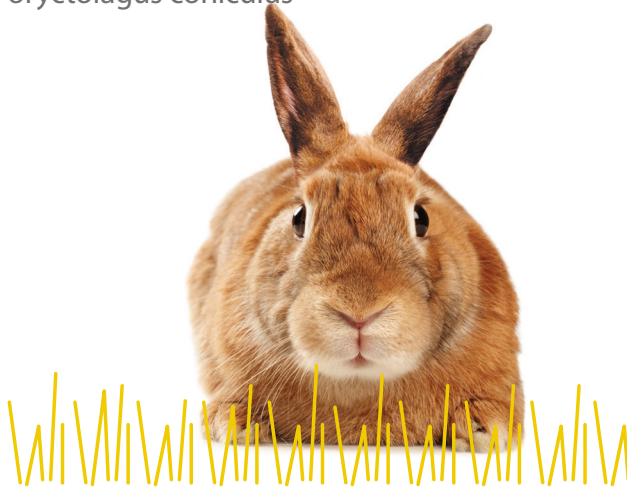
Because all Rabbits are potential carriers of infectious diseases, always wash your hands before and after handling your pet and habitat contents to help prevent the potential spread of diseases.

Pregnant women, children under the age of 5 and people with weakened immune systems should contact their physician before caring for a Rabbit and should consider not having a Rabbit as a pet. Go to the Centers for Disease Control at cdc.gov/healthypets for more information about Rabbits and disease.

This Care Sheet may cover the care needs of other species. Go to petco.com/caresheet for more information.

rabbit

oryctolagus coniculus



care sheet

Rabbits are intelligent, affectionate and social animals that need daily interaction with humans or other Rabbits. Spayed or neutered rabbits tend to be healthier, live longer and are better companions.

rabbit facts:

average adult size: 12+ inches long
average life span: up to 10+ years
with proper care
diet: herbivore

Note: The information in this Care Sheet is not a substitute for veterinary care. If you need additional information, please refer to the sources on the following page or contact your veterinarian.

diet

The majority of a Rabbit's diet should be composed of grass hay (any variety) which is rich in Vitamins A & D as well as calcium, protein and other nutrients. Eating hay promotes health and should be available at all times. Avoid the use of alfalfa after a Rabbit has reached approximately 7 months of age as it is very high in calcium and protein and more than a Rabbit needs.

Feeding quality pellets along with hay and other green leafy vegetables is important in the rabbit's diet to add the nutrients not readily available in hay. A well-balanced Rabbit diet consists of:

- High-quality Rabbit food, timothy hay and limited amounts of fruits and vegetables.
- Clean, fresh, filtered, chlorine-free water, changed daily.

Do not feed chocolate, caffeine or alcohol as these can cause serious medical conditions. Avoid sugar and high-fat treats.

feeding

Things to remember when feeding your Rabbit:

- Fresh food, timothy hay and water should always be available.
- Vegetables and fruits not eaten within several hours should be discarded.

- Many house plants are toxic and a rabbit should not eat grass treated with pesticides.
- Remember, treats should not exceed 10% of total food intake.
- It is normal for rabbits to eat cecotropes—soft, black feces filled with minerals and nutrients (Coprophagy). This practice generally happens early in the morning which is why pet parents rarely notice.

housing

- Rabbits acclimate well to average household temperatures, not to exceed 80°F. Be cautious of extreme temperature changes. The habitat should never be in direct sunlight or in a drafty area.
- Habitat should be at least four times the size of the Rabbit, escape-proof with an area that has a solid surface and plenty of room for exercise and play. It is best to provide the largest habitat possible.
- 1-2 inches of bedding should be placed in the habitat. Proper bedding includes high-quality paper bedding, crumbled paper bedding or hardwood shavings. Cedar-based products are not recommended.
- Rabbits may be kept in mixed-sex pairs, if spayed or neutered, or same-sex pairs, if they are raised together. Otherwise, keep

adult Rabbits housed separately. Different types of small animals should not be housed together.

normal behavior

- Always exercise caution when handling a Rabbit as they do not like to be handled. Ensure you are fully supporting the body, especially the hind legs. It is best to keep them on the floor for human interaction.
- Rabbits can be litter box trained.
- Rabbits chew on objects to maintain all their teeth, which grow continuously. Ensure your Rabbit has plenty of chew sticks available.
- Rabbits can chew on apples, willow, aspen branches, pine firewood, cotton towels, untreated fresh pine lumber attached to cage, a basket with hay inside (let the rabbit chew the basket as well as the hay) and compressed alfalfa cubes.
- Not all wood can be given to Rabbits. Do not give Rabbits apricot or peach fruit tree branches.

habitat maintenance

- Clean the habitat and its contents at least once a week with mild soap and water. Rinse and allow to dry completely before placing the Rabbit back into the habitat.

grooming & hygiene

- Rabbits stay clean and rarely need baths, but may be bathed using shampoo designed for rabbits and kittens, if necessary. Clean outside the ears frequently with a cotton ball.
- It is good to brush Rabbits regularly to remove hair that is shedding, to help prevent hairballs and to keep long-haired Rabbits from matting. Short-haired Rabbits should be brushed once a week and long-haired Rabbits can be brushed twice a week.
- Consult your veterinarian if a Rabbit's teeth or nails seem too long. Nails should be clipped often so they don't become curled.

signs of a healthy animal

- Active, alert and sociable
- Eats and drinks regularly
- Healthy fur and clear eyes
- Breathing is clear and walks normally
- Communicates by making soft noises

red flags

- weight loss
- abnormal hair loss
- diarrhea or dirty bottom
- distressed breathing
- lethargic
- eye or nasal discharge
- skin lesions
- overgrown teeth

If you notice any of these signs, please contact your animal veterinarian.

common health issues

Issue	Symptoms or Causes	Suggested Action
Diarrhea	Loose stool caused by poor diet, stress, internal parasites, unclean housing or other illness.	Consult with your veterinarian to determine cause and treatment.
Heat Stroke	Emergency condition; can occur if rabbit is left in a hot room. Symptoms include heavy panting, seizures and loss of consciousness.	Can be fatal; consult with your veterinarian immediately.
Malocclusion	Overgrown teeth.	Visit your veterinarian to have teeth trimmed regularly.
Mites	External parasites that cause rabbits to lose patches of hair.	Consult with your veterinarian for treatment.
Tumors	Abnormal lumps.	Consult with your veterinarian.