

# RABBIT CARE

## Nutrition

- Unlimited grass hays - timothy, orchard, meadow, oat and coastal bermuda
- Vegetables - one packed cup per two pounds of body weight, daily
- Pellets - high quality with no seeds or treats mixed in, follow directions on the bag, daily
- Treats - one to two small pieces, daily
- Fresh water, recommend providing in a large bowl rather than a bottle



## Housing

- Minimum 8 square feet of living space for singles and small breeds
- Minimum 10 square feet for living space for pairs and large breeds
- Solid flooring, no wire bottom
- Indoors only - preferred 60-75 degrees if possible
- Space to move, play and sleep



### Housing Suggestions

- Exercise pen, recommended 30-36" height
  - Flooring should be added to protect hardwood floors and carpet
  - Tops are available for purchase
- Dog crate, recommended XL for the most square footage
  - Shelf can be added for more space
  - Completely enclosed and can be locked, ideal for homes with other animals

### What to include in your enclosure

- Rectangular litter box, hay provided in box or a rack above box
- Fleece blanket flooring (watch for chewing)
- Cardboard house for hiding and playing
- Toys for playing
- Food and water bowls

## Litter Training

- Provide a large rectangular litter box, a simple cat box works well
- Use multiple boxes until your rabbit is trained
- Provide hay in and over the litter box
- Clean with distilled white vinegar, also great for accidents on carpet
- Clean regularly to reduce smell
- Use a rabbit safe litter - shredded paper, pelleted sawdust, pelleted paper, pelleted straw, newspaper or aspen shavings
- Do not use - clay cat litter, pine or cedar shavings, wheat, corn cob, or any scented litter
- Grated litter boxes work well for diggers



# Bunny Proofing

- Cover and block all electrical cords
- Block off or monitor under beds and furniture
- Ceramic tiles in corners can stop carpet digging
- Provide toys to chew to distract from chewing woodwork, door trim and furniture
- Remove items such as shoes, remotes, books and other items from the floor to prevent chewing
- Many common houseplants are toxic



## Enrichment

- 2-4 hours out of enclosure daily for exercise and exploring
- Provide toys that encourage rabbit's natural behavior - digging, chewing, foraging
- Plastic toys should only be used when supervised
- Remove toys if they are being ingested or become unsafe
- Rabbits should be closely monitored while outdoors and protected from predators, including birds of prey
- Rabbits should be vaccinated against RHDV2 before playing outdoors
- Talk to your vet about monthly treatment for fleas and ticks if your rabbit has outdoor play



## Handling and Grooming

- Most rabbits do not enjoy being held or carried, as prey animals their instinct is to get away
- Sitting on the floor with a rabbit and letting them come to you is a great way to build trust; don't follow them if they hop away
- Treats and positive reinforcement are a great way to build a relationship
- Rabbits do not need baths
- Brush and pet your rabbit to remove excess hair
- Trim nails regularly
- How to pick up your rabbit:
  - Place one hand under their chest
  - The other hand will support their hind legs and back
  - Lift and securely hold them against your body
  - Never pick up by their ears or scruff

## Vet Care

- Rabbits need to see an exotics veterinarian
- Physicals are recommended annually for young rabbits and two times a year for seniors
- Call your vet or an emergency clinic when signs of illness are present
- Watch for changes in appetite or behavior, as this can indicate illness



## Learn More

<https://www.trianglerabbits.org/>

