

# Rabbit



## *Oryctolagus cuniculus*

Rabbits inhabit every continent with the exception of Antarctica, with more than half of the world's rabbit population residing in North America. In the wild, rabbits live in colonies of burrows called warrens and are crepuscular, meaning they are active during dusk and dawn. In captivity, most rabbit breeds will grow to approximately 12 inches in length and weigh around 5 pounds. They have a lifespan of 10+ years if well taken care of.

### Housing

#### **Size**

You should provide your bunny with the largest cage possible, but a minimum size of 30" x 36" is recommended. The floor of your cage should be solid, not a wire mesh. This will prevent injuries to your rabbit's feet. The cage should be kept out of direct sunlight and temperatures above 80°F should be avoided. Rabbits may be kept in mixed-sex pairs if spayed/neutered. Same-sex pairs should only be housed together if they were raised together.

#### **Bedding**

There are many bedding choices available made from a variety of materials including recycled paper and wood shavings. Cedar-based beddings should be avoided as they can encourage respiratory illnesses. Bedding in your bunny's enclosure should be 1-2 inches deep.

#### **Decor**

A hide for your rabbit is a must to provide a safe, quiet place for it to retreat to like a burrow in the wild. Bunnies love to chew and should have several options for chewing present in their enclosure. There are a myriad of mineral and wood chew types available to serve this function. If you allow your rabbit to roam from its cage, be prepared for it to chew on just about everything. Rabbits can be litter trained, so offering a litter box in a corner of the cage is a good idea. You'll need one of the several types of small animal litters available so you have something different than what lines the cage floor. Platforms and ramps make good surfaces for your bunny to explore and exercise. Toys that can be pushed or tossed around will be appreciated.



## Some products to look for

- Oxbow Bunny Basics Rabbit Food
- Boxo Comfort Small Animal Bedding
- Kaytee My First Home Habitat
- Superpet Critter Canteen Water Bottle
- Living World Ergonomic Dish
- Oasis Vita-Drops Multivitamin
- 8 in 1 Snak Shak
- FM Brown's Timothy Hay Side Salad
- FM Brown's Crisp Stick Bundle



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## Water

Water bowls and water bottles are both options to provide water for your rabbit; however rabbits may sit or play in a water dish. If your bunny does this, you'll need to change the water bowl multiple times a day. A water bottle is a more practical option that will prevent your bunny from making a mess. A chew proof glass water bottle will prevent your rabbit from chewing through it. Fresh water should be provided every day.

## Diet

### Pellets

Pellet food for your rabbit should be high in fiber and low in fat. Foods containing seeds, nuts, and fruit may cause the rabbit to select the tastier parts and leave the healthier pellets. Pellets should make up about 20% of your rabbit's diet.

### Fresh Food

Fresh foods are an excellent supplemental nutrition option. There are many fruit and vegetable options that are safe for your bunny, but some are unsafe; make sure you do your research before offering fresh foods to your bunny. Fresh fruits and veggies, in combination with other treats, should make up no more than 5% of your rabbit's daily food intake. Leafy greens are a good choice as they offer a variety of textures and are a good source of water; you should offer up to one cup of leafy greens a day.

### Hay

Hay is vital to your rabbit's health. You should provide as much hay as your rabbit wants to eat and offering a variety of types is recommended. Hay should constitute up to 75% of your bunny's diet.

### Treats

There are a variety of treats available, but they should only make up a small percentage of your bunny's overall food intake. Some varieties available are yogurt drops, baked pretzels designed for small mammals, and treat bars. High sugar treats should be offered in moderation as they can contribute to obesity.



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