

Caring for your rabbit

M&L Pets World
(01978) 755955



CARING FOR YOUR RABBIT

Choose a good quality, well constructed hutch of at least 4ft in length. Ensure that the hutch is weatherproofed and positioned in a damp free and draught free area of the garden. It is vitally important that the hutch is kept securely fastened. An outside run is welcomed by rabbits as this allows them to exercise and the harder concrete surfaces can be useful in helping to keep their claws shorter. Teeth and claws should be checked regularly.

IMPORTANT: Never leave rabbits unattended in the run.

Rabbits are now being readily accommodated indoors and special rabbit cages are available.

THEIR BEDDING

Lay about an inch of wood shavings (not sawdust) on the floor of the cage or hutch. Ensure that an ample supply of good quality dust free hay is provided daily. During colder weather, straw should be given as well as hay to provide extra bedding.

Clean out any soiled shavings and stale food daily. Use a suitable animal safe disinfectant. The cage should be cleaned thoroughly **at least once per week** and the old bedding replaced with new.

THEIR DAILY DIET

Rabbits should have access to rabbit food and fresh hay at all times. Although rabbits will enjoy small amounts of fresh vegetables, too much often leads to diarrhoea.

It is important that you keep to the same food your rabbit has been fed on for the first few weeks. If a baby rabbit's food is changed, there is the danger they will stop eating. In these circumstances, it is possible that the rabbit will develop bloat, which is usually fatal. Please make any changes to the diet very gradually.

NEVER FEED lettuce or rhubarb As this normally upsets the rabbit's stomach. With a young rabbit or a rabbit that is not used to fresh food, introduce vegetables gradually, perhaps trying a small piece of carrot, initially. Hay is an important part of their daily diet and they enjoy Redigrass as a treat. Fresh drinking water should always be available from a water bottle and should be changed daily. Once a month, the bottle should be cleaned with a bottle brush.

VACCINATIONS

We recommend that rabbits are vaccinated against Myxomatosis and VHD (Viral Haemorrhagic Disease). Consult your vet.

SHOPPING LIST:

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| Hutch or cage | Water bottle |
| Disinfectant | Mineral stone |
| Shavings (sawdust is too fine) | |
| Straw (needed in cold weather) | |
| Hay | Rabbit food |
| Food dish | Book |
| Brush/comb | |

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Special Requirements

Teeth

Rabbits' teeth should be checked regularly as sometimes the teeth grow out of line and therefore need to be trimmed. In some cases, where there is a problem, they may need trimming as often as every two weeks. We can offer advice on this subject, or consult your vet.

Claws

Their claws should be checked regularly, also, and will usually need cutting two or three times a year.

Fur Mites

Sometimes, rabbits can get fur mites. This is when the rabbit appears to have dandruff on the skin and sometimes the fur can fall out easily. This can be treated with a small animal mite spray, spot on drops, or you can consult your vet.

Handling

When you pick your rabbit up, it is very important to support the back legs, as they can often kick out and hurt themselves. Once you have hold of your rabbit, bring the rabbit towards you straight away, and don't let it jump over your shoulder as, if it falls from a great height, it will hurt itself. When you put the rabbit back in its hutch, put it in backwards, this way it won't kick out.