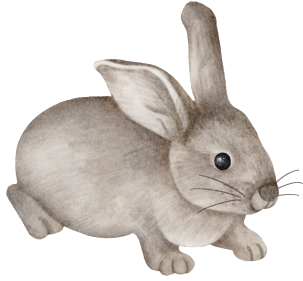


# Steps to Properly Care for Your



# RABBIT

## Step 1: Set Up Safe Indoor Housing

There are several options to house rabbits inside. They can live free reign in a bunny-proofed room/rooms, or they can be contained within a puppy pen, bunny condo, or large rabbit cage. If contained, their space should always be large enough so they can hop around, and they should be let out of their pen for at least a few hours every day for exercise.

Make sure the primary location of your rabbit is not isolated from you and your family. A family room or living room is a good place.

## Step 2: Bunny Proof Your House

Rabbits need space to run around and explore. In order to create a safe space for your bunny and to protect your belongings, you will need to thoroughly bunny proof the area. This includes covering all wires with plastic sleeves or flex tubing or lifting them 3-4 feet out of reach of your rabbit. If you don't want your baseboards gnawed, you can cover them with plastic guards, 2x4s, or furring strips. You'll also have to block off certain areas since rabbits like to chew the undersides of beds, items on bookshelves, house plants, and more. Basically, your rabbit will try to chew everything in reach.

## Step 3: Provide Fresh Hay

A rabbit's diet should mainly consist of hay. Fresh hay should be provided at all times. Baby rabbits should be given alfalfa, and adult rabbits should be fed timothy hay, grass hay, or oat hay. Using a large hay feeder is helpful because it keeps large amounts of hay dry, clean, and accessible.



## Step 4: Provide Fresh Greens, Fiber-Rich Pellets, & Fresh Water

Supplement your rabbit's hay with fresh vegetables, fiber-rich pellets (in limited quantities for adult rabbits), and fresh water daily.

### Great Fresh Veggie Options for Rabbits

Basil	Bok Choy	Broccoli Leaves (stems or tops can make rabbits gassy)
Dandelion Leaves	Celery	Cilantro
Clover	Collard Greens	Carrot Tops (carrots are high in calcium and should be given sparingly)
Dill	Kale (sparingly)	Lettuce - romaine or dark leaf (no iceberg lettuce and no cabbage)
Mint	Mustard Greens	Parsley and Watercress

### Great Fresh Fruit Options for Rabbits

Strawberries	Raspberries	Bananas
Pineapple	Apples (no seeds)	

## Step 5: Set Up a Litter Box

Rabbits have a natural inclination to poop and pee in one area. Take advantage of this by setting up a medium-sized cat litter box or shallow storage bin near their food/water bowls and hay feeder.

Put a thin layer of rabbit-safe, recycled newspaper pellet litter at the bottom of the litter box. Do not use clay/clumping cat litter or wood shavings, as they are not safe for rabbits. Then, put hay on top of the litter. Rabbits like to eat hay and poop at the same time, so this will encourage good litter box habits.

## Step 6: Provide Enrichment

Rabbits can get bored easily. Not only do they need space to exercise, but they also need mental stimulation. Cardboard castles/boxes are great because rabbits spend hours chewing new windows and doorways. Cardboard castles also provide a quiet refuge for the rabbit when necessary. You can also provide a variety of toys for your rabbit to pique his or her interest.

## Step 7: Groom Your Rabbit

Rabbits are naturally clean animals and wash themselves frequently, but you still need to groom your rabbit on a regular basis. Rabbits go through shedding cycles a couple times a year. It's important to brush your rabbit to remove all the excess fur. Otherwise, your rabbit could ingest it and have serious digestive issues. Regular nail clipping is also important because long nails can get snagged on things or they can curl into your rabbit's paw.

## Step 8: Bring Your Rabbit to a Rabbit-Savvy Vet

Rabbits are prey animals, and so their natural instinct is to hide any symptoms of illness. You must keep a watchful eye to ensure your rabbit is eating, drinking, pooping, and peeing regularly. If you notice any change in behavior, it is important to call your veterinarian immediately. In addition to responding to illness, it is also essential to bring your rabbit in for regular veterinary checkups. The vet can check the ears, eyes, teeth, and gut to make sure the rabbit is in good health.



## Veterinarian offices near the York area who see rabbits

### **Shiloh Veterinary Hospital**

717-767-0180

110 Morgan Ln, York, PA 17406

### **East York Veterinary Center**

717-840-1025

1997 Industrial Highway, York, PA 17402

### **Yorkshire Animal Hospital**

717-755-4935

3434 E. Market St, York, PA 17402

### **Good Hope Animal Hospital**

717-766-5535

6108 Carlise Pike #120, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

## **York County SPCA**

## **Contact Information**

717-764-6109

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3159 N Susquehanna Trl, York, PA 17406



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