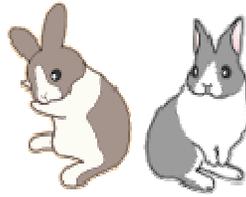


RABBITS



Rabbits are a lifetime commitment with most living 5-8 years. You should know some basic facts before you take the step of adding one to your family.

Rabbits are not appropriate for small children. Rabbits can scare easily and thrust out their rear legs with enough force to break their own backs! On the plus side, rabbits are social, intelligent animals that can be very affectionate if given enough interaction and loving care. We recommend that rabbits have a cage, but be allowed freedom for exercise and play in a “bunny-proofed” room daily.

To make a room safe for a loose rabbit, make sure there is NO access to electrical cords. Rabbits love to chew on the soft plastic coating and can hurt themselves and create a fire hazard. Keep in mind that a playful, mischievous rabbit can get under shelves and furniture. When loose, rabbits should have access to chew toys to try and prevent inappropriate chewing. A rabbit has nothing against chewing on rugs, furniture and drapes.

Rabbits can actually be litter trained if started at a young age. Simply place a litter pan in the corner of the cage the rabbit chooses to use for its bathroom. Add a second box in your bunny-proofed room for easy access.

Spaying and neutering rabbits is recommended. This cuts down on territorial aggression and urine marking. All female rabbits should be spayed when they are young. Recent studies show that 80% of female rabbits develop uterine tumors after 4 years of age. To prevent this, simply have your rabbit spayed, preferably around 4-6 months of age.

Rabbits should be fed lots of timothy hay and a small amount of pellets. Hay helps keep teeth ground properly and maintains normal gastrointestinal function. Greens and veggies can be fed in small amounts, but introduce these items slowly in the diet so that diarrhea does not develop.

Dr. Katie Racek-Peters