



Are You Rabbit Ready?

A Quick Guide to Companion Rabbit Readiness

02 Is a Rabbit the Right Companion for You?

What a rabbit is...

- Beautiful
- Quiet
- Curious
- Intelligent
- Affectionate
- Gentle
- Fun loving
- Entertaining
- Excellent home companion

03 Is a Rabbit the Right Companion for You?



If you are looking for a companion to go on walks with, chase a frisbee, or ride on a boat, a dog is the best choice.



If you are looking for a companion who thinks he's independent, enjoys sitting on kitchen counters, is irresistibly cute, and brings you "gifts", a cat is the best choice.



If you are looking for a companion who is quiet, fastidious, intelligent, funny, loving, and a total homebody, a rabbit is the best choice.

04 Where to Find Your Rabbit

Here's where to look:

- your local animal shelter
- your local animal rescue organizations
- Some organizations you can contact are:

Bunny Brigade SC at www.bunnybrigadesc.org

House Rabbit Society at www.rabbit.org

Friends of Rabbits at www.friendsofrabbits.org

Izzie's Pond at www.izziespond.org

05 Preparing for your Rabbit's Arrival

It's all in the planning

1. Before getting a rabbit, make sure you have researched rabbit savvy vets in your area.
2. Bunny-proof your home! Everything within your rabbit's reach is fair game for chewing. Pillows, draperies, upholstrey, wood, carpet fringe, and electrical cords are a few of their favorites.
3. Determine where your rabbit will live within your home. Will she have the run of the whole house, or sepcified areas only?
4. Selet a location for the rabbits "home base" which includes her food and water dishes, litterbox, and sleeping crate or kennel.



Acclimating your bunny to her new home

1. Put your rabbit in her closed crate or pen (as in the photo) in the area you have designated as her "home base".
2. To house break your rabbit, keep her in the closed crate or pen area for the first five days. Make sure you keep her fed, watered, and cleaned daily during this time. At the end of the five days, open the crate door and let her begin exploring on her own. Her "home base" is her safe place where she will return to rest, eat, and use her litter box.



07 Dietary Requirements

What to feed your rabbit... bread, potato chips, ice cream? No way! Rabbits require large amounts of fiber to remain healthy. An improper diet is the main cause of many diseases. Chronic soft stools, liver and kidney disease, gastrointestinal disorders, dental disease, and obesity are all attributed to improper diet. Obesity can cause a rabbit to develop diabetes and heart disease.

For detailed information on diet, please read "Feeding Rabbits For Optimal Health" by Cynthia K. Wheat, DVM, which can be found on our web site and is the source for information found in this presentation.

So What's a Bunny to Eat?

In order of importance in the rabbits diet are:

1. **Hay - Make available to your rabbit 24/7.** Hay helps with proper digestion, and normal tooth wear. Grass hays like Timothy, Bermuda, and Prairie are best. Alfalfa is high in calories and should only be used sparingly. Hay cubes are an acceptable choice too.
2. **Fresh raw vegetables - Feed your bunny fresh veggies every day!** Selections like kale, mustard greens, beet tops, carrot tops, endive, carrots, Brussel sprouts, cabbage, broccoli and broccoli leaves, mint, collards, and parsley - to name a few. Be sure veggies are clean and pesticide free before serving.



08 Dietary Requirements



So What's a Bunny to Eat? *continued...*

3. Pellets - Commercial rabbit pellets are high in calories and low in fiber. They are designed to grow rabbits quickly for commercial purposes like meat or fur.

Pellet portions depend on the rabbit's weight, as follows:

2 - 4 pounds = 1/8 cup

5 -7 pounds = 1/4 cup

8 -10 pounds = 1/2 cup

11 -15- pounds = 3/4 cup

Dont forget that your bunny needs plenty of fresh, clean water 24/7 also!



Why is this important?

It is a good idea to spay or neuter your rabbit, even if you have only one. Your rabbit will be healthier since spaying prevents uterine cancer, and neutering prevents testicular cancer. Additionally, your rabbit will be more content, and unwanted behaviors such as spraying urine will be eliminated.

Other health considerations:

Your bunny should have an annual wellness checkup too. Have your rabbit savvy vet check the following:

- Eyes - should be clear and bright
- Ears - should be clean, no ear mites
- Teeth - could need trimming
- Nails - could need trimming



2020 Edition



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