Treatments

Vaccination

It is important to vaccinate rabbits against calicivirus, which causes massive internal bleeding to many organs, of which there is no cure and death is thecommon outcome.

Calici vaccinations should be administered every six months or, if your rabbit is under 12 weeks of age, booster vaccinations are required every four weeks.

This can be done in any Petstock store with a Petstock Vet clinic.

Worming

Rabbits should be wormed every three months with a small animal wormer.

Mites

Regular examination for fur and ear mites is required.

Mite and lice sprays can be used in minor outbreaks; however veterinary treatment must be sought if the condition worsens.

Nail Trimming

Rabbits nails can grow very long and sharp, they need to be checked on a regular basis and trimmed as necessary.

Heat Stroke

Rabbits do not tolerate heat well and can die from being overheated. On very hot days provide relief through frozen plastic bottles of water, a fan and frozen fruit and vegetables.

Desexing

Female rabbits have a high chance of getting endometrial cancer if they are not neutered. Desexing males will limit aggression. Males and females live very well together if both are desexed.

tip: Toilet train your Rabbit to ensure no messy accidents occur.



rabbit checklist

- [ ] Hutch
- [ ] Hay (for food)
- [ ] Straw (for bedding)
- [ ] Shredded newspaper
- [ ] Treats
- [ ] Food pellets
- [ ] Water bottle/bowl
- [ ] Food bowl
- [ ] Toys
- [ ] Toys to chew
- [ ] Secure carrier

This brochure contains general information only.
Please consult your vet for specific pet health advice.

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your rabbit care guide



petstock



Rabbits make fantastic pets, who develop wonderful personalities and can become very affectionate.

Shelter & Housing

These pets generally need a very hardy structure called a hutch, with two sections:

- A fully enclosed area for protection from the elements and for sleeping.
- An activities section.

Ensure your pet's hutch has good ventilation and allows them to avoid direct sunlight, as they are much more sensitive to heat than cold and are susceptible to heat stroke. It is best to position the hutch off the ground, with adequate shelter.

The rabbit's hutch should be long enough for three hops (approx. 1.5 - 2m) and high enough for them to stand upright on their back legs. A wire or solid bottom is required to stop them burrowing out. If wire is chosen you need to disinfect regularly and it is best to cover with hay or straw as the wire can hurt their feet.

If indoors, rabbits just need a secure cage to restrain them at night or when you are not present. Litter trays can be provided as rabbits can be trained to use these. Wood or paper based litter is best.

Rabbits are sociable animals and ideally should live with another desexed rabbit.

Mosquito proof your hutch!

Ensure your rabbit is kept in a mosquito proof enclosure if you live in an area where Myxomatosis is present (your local vet clinic will be able to inform you). Mxyomatosis is very contagious and there is no treatment or vaccination to protect against it in Australia. If your rabbit is free roaming, try to keep them away from water where mosquitos are likely to be breeding and limit their access outside at dawn and dusk, when mozzies are most active.

We Like to Chew

Rabbits will chew carpet, furniture, shoes and more. Serious hazards include electrical wires and poisonous plants. Rabbit teeth grow continuously and they need to chew to wear them down so the mouth closes properly. Always provide gnawing toys, we have a great range available at Petstock.

Feeding Requirements

Your rabbit must have a constant supply of fresh water and be fed a daily diet of hay and high quality rabbit pellets (with ratio 80% hay and 20% pellets).

Fresh vegetables should also be fed daily. It is recommended you offer three types from the following list: broccoli, carrots (small amounts only), cucumber, brussel sprouts, capsicum, dandelion greens and parsley.

Note: Rabbits should not be fed cabbage, cauliflower, raw beans and rhubarb. Do not feed your pet lettuce. It is non-toxic but often causes diarrhoea.

Fruit such as bananas, apples, oranges, strawberries and raspberries are good treats however feed only small amounts of fruit to rabbits (one – two teaspoons) as it can cause diarrhoea and make them fat. Additionally, your rabbit can be fed fresh grass, however if your pet is under six months old it should not be fed much grass as it causes gastrointestinal upsets.

Vitamin drops for small animals should also be administered in their water on a daily basis.

It takes weeks for a rabbits digestive system to adjust to a new diet so any changes should be done slowly.

tip: Ensure fresh water is available in special, non-drip bottles with stainless steel nozzles, as wet bedding may cause moist dermatitis and the parasitic disease coccidiosis.

Handling

Rabbits should be held firmly with one hand under the chest and the other cradling and supporting the back legs and rump. This is extremely important as rabbits can kick out and break their backs. Never hold them by the ears.

Bedding

The flooring should consist of hay or soft straw (please be mindful that hay bedding may be eaten away and will need replenishing). Sawdust should be avoided as it is too fine and can irritate the eyes, nose and ears. Small animal paper based bedding is also available. Create a sleeping area with something like a bird nesting box, filled with hay or soft straw.

Exercise

Play pens and exercise pens are available from Petstock, which are ideal for rabbits to run around on grass on a daily basis.

Ensure you keep your rabbit under constant supervision if bringing them inside to run around.

Note: Due to legislation, Rabbits can not be kept as pets in Queensland.

