

Spay/Neutered Rabbit

Oryctolagus coniculus



CARE SHEET

Developed with and approved by a Qualified Veterinarian

Rabbits are intelligent, affectionate and social animals that need daily interaction with humans or other rabbits. However, chewing is a rabbit's favorite hobby, so make sure your home is rabbit-proofed! Rabbits spayed or neutered by a veterinarian tend to be healthier, live longer, are better companions and help prevent unwanted rabbits.



Is a spayed/neutered rabbit the right companion animal for you?

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Check "Yes" or "No" after reading the following statements:

- I have an appropriate location and space for a rabbit.
- I understand that spaying and neutering this rabbit is an important part of responsible pet ownership.
- I will provide daily, supervised time for this rabbit outside the habitat.
- I can commit to providing proper care for this rabbit.
- A mature person will provide responsible and primary care for this companion animal.

If you answered, "Yes" to these statements, a spay/neutered rabbit may be the right choice for you! Continue reading about how to care for a rabbit and consult with a PETCO associate to learn more. PETCO is committed to responsible companion animal care.

Before deciding to purchase a rabbit, consider adoption! Your local PETCO will be able to provide you with additional information.

Average Size 12+ inches long **Life Span** Up to 10+ years with proper care

Diet High-quality rabbit food
 Provide constant supply of fresh timothy hay and small amounts of fruits and vegetables
 Treats should not exceed 10% of total food intake
 Clean, fresh, filtered, chlorine-free water changed daily
 Do not feed chocolate, alcohol or caffeine as these can cause serious medical problems

Feeding Fresh food and water should always be available
 Fruits and vegetables not eaten within 24 hours should be discarded
 Many house plants are toxic and a rabbit should not eat grass treated with pesticides

Housing Rabbits acclimate well to average household temperatures; be cautious of extreme temperature changes; habitat should never be in direct sunlight or in a drafty area
 Habitat should be at least four times the size of the rabbit, escape-proof with an area that has a solid surface; it is best to provide the largest habitat possible. Use baby gates or an indoor play yard during play time, while house training or if your house is not rabbit-proofed
 1–2 inches of bedding should be placed in the habitat; proper bedding includes hardwood shavings or pelleted or recycled product; cedar-based bedding may cause harm and is not recommended; rabbits can be trained to use a litter box.

Different types of small animals should not be housed together

Recommended Supplies	<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriately sized cage	<input type="checkbox"/> Ceramic food bowl	<input type="checkbox"/> Toys
	<input type="checkbox"/> Bedding	<input type="checkbox"/> Water bottle	<input type="checkbox"/> Chew stick
	<input type="checkbox"/> High-quality rabbit food	<input type="checkbox"/> Vitamins	<input type="checkbox"/> Indoor play yard
	<input type="checkbox"/> Book about rabbits	<input type="checkbox"/> Timothy hay	<input type="checkbox"/> Litter box / litter

Spay/Neutered Rabbit

Oryctolagus cuniculus



CARE SHEET

Developed with and approved by a Qualified Veterinarian

Normal Behavior and Interaction

Always exercise caution when handling a rabbit as they do not like to be handled; ensure you are fully supporting the body, especially the hind legs; it is best to keep them on the floor

Can be litter box trained

Chew on objects to maintain incisor teeth, which grow constantly; ensure have plenty of chew sticks available

Habitat Maintenance

Remove wet spots daily; change bedding weekly or more often, if necessary

Clean the habitat and its contents at least once a week with mild soap and water, rinse and allow to dry completely before placing rabbit back into the habitat

Grooming and Hygiene

Rabbits stay clean and rarely need baths but may be bathed using shampoo designed for rabbits and kittens, if necessary; clean outside the ears frequently with a cotton ball

Consult with a veterinarian if a rabbit's teeth or nails seem too long

Because all rabbits are potential carriers of infectious diseases, always wash your hands before and after handling your rabbit and/or the habitat contents to help prevent the potential of spread of diseases.

Pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems should contact their physician before purchasing and/or caring for a rabbit and should consider not having a rabbit as a pet. For more information regarding rabbits and disease, contact the Center for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/> and PETCO at <http://www.petco.com/pet-care/info/companion-animal-care-sheets>.

Signs of a Healthy Animal

- Active, alert, and sociable
- Eats and drinks regularly
- Healthy fur
- Communicates by making soft noises
- Clear eyes
- Hops normally

Common Health Issues

Health Issue	Symptoms or Causes	Suggested Action
Diarrhea	Loose stools caused by poor diet, stress, internal parasites, unclean housing or other illness.	Consult with an exotic animal veterinarian to determine cause and treatment.
Heat Stroke	Emergency condition; can occur if rabbit is left in hot room. Symptoms include heavy panting, seizures and loss of consciousness.	Can be fatal; consult with an exotic animal veterinarian immediately.
Malocclusion	Overgrown teeth.	Consult with a veterinarian to possibly have teeth trimmed regularly.
Mites	External parasite that causes rabbits to lose patches of hair.	Contact an exotic animal veterinarian for treatment.
Tumors	Abnormal lumps.	Consult with an exotic animal veterinarian for treatment.

Red Flags

- Weight loss
- Abnormal hair loss
- Diarrhea or dirty bottom
- Distressed breathing
- Lethargic
- Eye or nasal discharge
- Skin lesions
- Overgrown teeth

If you notice any of these signs, please contact your exotic animal veterinarian.

Sources

Choosing a Small Mammal by Dennis Kelsey-Wood
Dwarf Rabbits by Monica Wigler
Rabbits as a New Pet by Barry Martin
House Rabbit Handbook by Marinell Harriman

Note: The information on this Care Sheet is not a substitute for veterinary care. If you need additional information, please refer to the above sources or contact your veterinarian as appropriate.