

# RABBIT ADOPTION GUIDE

Congratulations on adopting a rabbit from Pasadena Humane! Here is a basic care guide to help you give your new pet the best life in your home.

## Rabbit Basics

- Rabbits live about ten years on average. This varies depending on breed, size, and proper care.
- Rabbits need a lot of space to exercise and provide enrichment in their lives.
- Rabbits eat a mixture of hay, healthy veggies, and pellets.

## Housing

- Rabbit cages or hutches are not ideal for permanently housing a rabbit. X-pens are a great way to give your rabbit additional space while keeping them safe from dangerous household items.
- If using a cage, they should not have wire bottoms to avoid injury to feet.
- Enclosure size should be 4'x2' at minimum. Bigger is always better.
- When your rabbit roams freely in your home, it's important to bunny-proof by securing all wires, moving toxic plants, covering unsafe surfaces and using rabbit-safe bitter spray for surfaces that cannot be secured.
- Due to the highly contagious and deadly rabbit hemorrhagic disease, it is not recommended to house rabbits outside.
- Rabbits are naturally clean animals and prefer to go potty in just one place. Placing a litter box in the area in which they prefer to urinate and defecate filled with shredded newspaper and timothy hay is a great way to start litter training your rabbit.
- Provide places for your rabbit to hide, such as hides, wooden houses or critter "igloos." Rabbits are prey animals, and providing hiding spots is important for them to feel safe.
- Rabbits are very sensitive to temperature. Their home shouldn't exceed 80°F. Giving your rabbit a frozen water bottle to lay against is a quick, easy, and safe way to cool down your rabbit in hotter temperatures.

## NEW RABBIT SHOPPING LIST

- Rabbit Enclosure (4'x2' or larger)
- X-Pen or puppy pen
- Food & water bowls
- Rabbit hide / house
- Timothy hay
- Rabbit pellets
- Greens and veggies
- Non-toxic chewable toys (willow balls, bamboo sticks)
- Enrichment toys (snuffle mats, scratch & dig boxes, hay balls and various non-toxic toys)
- Litter box
- Bedding for litter



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## Diet

- Diet for a rabbit consists of 80% hay (timothy hay, plus some oat, meadow, or orchard hay), 10% leafy greens, 5% pellets and less than 5% treats.
- Alfalfa hay can be given to young and growing rabbits.
- Arugula, carrot tops, leafy lettuces (red, green, romaine), turnip greens, dandelion greens, mint, basil, cilantro, watercress, dill, and bok choy are great staple greens.
- Pellets should not exceed one tablespoon per pound of rabbit weight per day.
- Fruits, carrots and other high-sugar foods should be given sparingly and only as a treat.

## Enrichment

- Rabbit teeth grow continuously, so it is important to provide regular hay and hard, non-toxic, chewable surfaces to wear down their teeth.
- Safe wood, such as willow balls, rings, and bamboo sticks, are great toys for playing and chewing.
- Rabbits love to dig, scratch, and use their nose. Snuffle mats and scratching posts are great items to give your bunny for enrichment.
- Most rabbits do not like being picked up or held. Instead, sitting on the floor and allowing them to go into your lap is a great way to interact with them.

## Health

- Online resources such as [aemv.org](http://aemv.org) (Association of Exotic Mammal Veterinarian) are available to help find an exotic veterinarian.
- Take your rabbit to the veterinarian annually for a checkup, just like cats and dogs.
- Getting the RHDV2 vaccine annually is important to keep your rabbit safe from rabbit hemorrhagic disease.
- It is very important to not bathe your rabbit. It is very stressful for them and can quickly cause hyperthermia (extreme cold). Instead, use pet wipes and completely dry your rabbit if they become dirty.

