

# Rabbits Housing

## Location

Bunnies are curious and need social interactions. Set up their home where you spend time (family room, kitchen, etc.). Rabbits enjoy listening to people and will often position themselves to watch you.

Never keep a rabbit outdoors. There are too many predators, parasites, and insects that can pass diseases. Outdoor rabbits also suffer from undetected illnesses and loneliness. Rabbits are susceptible to heat stroke and will succumb to temperatures in the low 80's. They can also get frostbite in severe cold temperatures.

## Housing Types

### Cage

A good minimum cage size is 48"x18"x24" (LxHxD); bigger is always better. Smaller cages can lead to muscle atrophy, urine scald, and boredom. Do not use aquariums or cages with solid walls. Other great choices are multi-level hutches connected with carpeted ramps.

### Cage free

Baby gates and exercise-pen (x-pens) or pet fences work well to establish an area that will keep your rabbit safe and contained without being limiting. Larger rabbits may be able to scale some pet fences and baby gates. Living "cage free" will reduce the chance of aggressive behaviors and will not make your rabbit feel trapped.

## Things Inside the Housing

A small "cave" should be added so your rabbit has a safe place to lounge when stressed or tired. Cardboard boxes with a hole cut in one end work well.

Place a litterbox inside the housing in a back corner for your rabbit to use. Make sure the litterbox is large enough for the rabbit to comfortably sit in. Rabbits tend to poop while eating hay, so it is best to use a wood or paper pellet litter such as Feline Pine or Yesterday's News and put hay on top of the litter on one side of the litterbox. Toys are also important to keep your rabbit occupied. Rotate toys to prevent boredom. Excellent toys include:

- Plastic Slinkies
- Willow Balls
- Plastic Whiffle Balls
- Plastic Baby Toys
- Hanging Parrot Toys
- Toilet Paper Tubes
- Small Towels
- Hay Tubs for Digging
- Woven Grass Mats
- Baskets or Coasters
- Small Paper Cups
- A Box Stuffed with Paper
- Old Telephone Books
- Tunnels
- Plastic Play Sets
- Cat Playhouses
- Cardboard Boxes
- Shower Rings



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Avoid anything that can get their head or paws stuck, metal pieces, small pieces, soft plastics, and plastics that contain lead-based pigments (electrical wiring, old paint, some ceramics, etc.).

Buy two heavy ceramic crocks for food and water. Hanging bottles may easily become blocked and can often carry bacteria.

Rabbits need things to chew on. Their teeth constantly grow, so they need something to be able to file them down on their own. Wooden blocks or sticks are a good source for this.

## Temperature

Keep your rabbit in a cool room (60-70 degrees °F). On hot days run the air conditioner or place a frozen plastic bottle in the cage with a fan.

## Rabbit Proofing

Often rabbits chew furniture and pull out carpet fibers when they are bored or upset. Provide lots of alternatives both in and out of the cage (see toy list above). It is often safest to keep your rabbit caged or confined when you are asleep or not at home.

## Tips for Electric Cords

- Spiral cable wrap is very flexible so the cords are still manageable after wrapping. It works well with cords that you might have in the middle of the room or might move more often, such as a vacuum cleaner, phone, video game, lamp, and other cords.
- Plastic tubing (similar to that used in fish tanks, or with “swamp coolers”) from a hardware store or aquarium store can be cut lengthwise with a blade and the wire can be tucked safely inside. A harder, black, pre-slit type of tubing is also available.
- Decorative gold and wood-grained wire-concealers stick to the base of walls and come in strips; they work in corners as well so they can follow the shape of the wall.
- Hide wires by running them behind or above furniture.

## Tips for Plants

- Hang them from the ceiling if you have an active rabbit but watch for falling leaves! Many house plants are toxic.

## Tip for Furniture

- A flat cardboard box or frame of 2x4's will keep your rabbit from chewing.

## Tip for Walls

- Clear plastic panels from the hardware store can be affixed to the wall to protect your rabbit from chewing into the drywall or tearing off the wallpaper.

