

Enrichment

It's very important to provide our rabbits with things to do via enrichment. None of us would have survived lockdown in an empty house with nothing but a bed, toilet and kitchen. Providing items to hop in, over, on, under

and through all help to keep our buns physically active, and help provide a stimulating environment. Adding toys which can be thrown around and items like chewable willow toys all help to keep minds and bodies active. Hiding treats in stacking cups, or adding dried forage to hay baskets are all great ideas.

Other Important Things



House Plants - Many house plants are poisonous to rabbits and it's vital that we keep these well out of reach of nibbling noses. Putting plants high up or removing them from the room entirely.

Vaccinations - It is a myth that house rabbits aren't at risk of contracting myxomatosis or RVHD. These deadly viruses can enter our homes and infect our rabbits regardless. The only way to protect them is via annual vaccines.



Electric Cables - Also known as spicy hay, they are a favourite nibble of house rabbits. Resembling the roots of plants in their natural borrow environments, rabbits seem drawn to chew on cables. Protecting your wires via trunking is the best way to protect your buns and your wires!



Our Guide to



House Rabbits

How much space do rabbits really need?



The rabbit hutch is a Victorian invention, designed to store a live rabbit, until fat enough for the pot. We wouldn't keep our pet rabbits in a kitchen cupboard, so we shouldn't keep them shut in hutches either. Rabbits need to have plenty of space to hop, jump, run and binky. Keeping them confined to small spaces can lead to muscular and skeletal problems and to boredom and depression.



Rabbits are most active at dawn and dusk and must have constant access to a large exercise area, which needs to be high enough for a rabbit to stand on their hind legs and binky.

The minimum size for optimal welfare is 60ft square and is most commonly visualised as 6ft x 10ft with a height of 3ft

Creating a Suitable Space for your Rabbits

When it comes to house rabbits, there are three housing options available: creating a dedicated rabbit room, sectioning off part of a room or allowing your rabbits to free-roam around the house. All three options have their own pros and cons and you will have to decide which is most suitable for you, your home and your rabbits. Regardless of your choice, you will still need to provide a minimum space of 60ft square.

Dedicated Room



Enclosure



Free Roam



What to include

Litter Trays and Hay Feeders

Did you know that rabbits like to have a snack while they are on the loo? It's true! Placing litter trays under hay feeders helps to encourage rabbits to use litter trays, making it easier for us to keep areas clean. As fresh clean hay should always be available using hay feeders is vital. Our favourite hay rack hacks are wire hanging baskets, letter box cages and plastic bag holders. These can be attached to sides of runs and snuggle areas. You should provide at least two different stations within the enclosure.



Snuggle Space

It is important to provide a snuggle space to give a feeling of safety and provide somewhere for rabbits to get retreat when needed. You can use large cardboard boxes or add some custom made rabbit castles.



Bedding



It will be a surprise to many to learn that shavings aren't the most suitable bedding to use for rabbits. It is very dusty and the oils released from the wood can cause respiratory problems. We use shredded cardboard bedding at the rescue and top this with uneaten hay from hay racks. You can use paper based pellets or just line areas with newspaper topped with hay or straw.

Bottles vs Bowls - research has shown that rabbits will drink more from bowls compared to bottles. We therefore recommend a heavy ceramic bowl to provide access to fresh water.

