

Lifting Your Rabbit

Most rabbits do not like being picked up or held. They have fragile skeletons and must be handled carefully to prevent serious or fatal injury. Place one hand between the forelegs and one under the rump and bring bun to your chest. Squat down to put rabbit back on the floor – hold firmly and do not let them jump – we see many broken bones from this. Children under 12 should not pick up a rabbit - their hands are too small for support.

MONTHLY RABBIT CARE

*Clip nails (or visit groomer) every two months. Long nails get caught and can result in the painful loss of the entire nail and toe!

*Check the bottoms of feet for sores, teeth for overgrowth (called malocclusion), eyes, ears and nose for crust or discharge and the fur around the mouth for drool marks which indicates teeth problems. Check bun's body for lumps. Dandruff indicates fur mites. If anything looks abnormal – consult your vet!

*Check for fleas/ticks/mites: Use Advantage or Revolution (vet prescription) DO NOT USE Frontline/over the counter applications – it can kill your rabbit.

MEDICAL AND INTESTINAL ILLNESS

Rabbits hide their illnesses – watch for any changes in eating, pooping, posture or personality. Not taking a usual treat, not eating a meal or any change in activities or poops is a signal for a rabbit-savvy vet visit. A low temperature (normal is 101-103) is also a sign of an emergency – the bun needs to be warmed. Get help immediately – rabbits can die quickly and there are simple ways to save them. Read the health articles at houserabbitga.org to learn how to take their temperature, use simethicone and to prevent and care for digestive and other medical problems. Our website also has a listing of rabbit-savvy vets near you. Be sure to take your rabbit for yearly checkups.

ADOPT – DON'T BUY!

The House Rabbit Society rescues abused, abandoned and neglected domestic house rabbits. We spay/neuter, foster and find them great forever homes. We provide the information you need to make having a rabbit a wonderful member of the family. Also available are adorable, bonded pairs of rabbits for adoption. We believe having a pair of rabbits is ideal – however they *must* be compatible or they may fight and injure themselves – please read about bonding rabbits on our website/Care. Adopting a rescued rabbit saves two lives - yours and the next one we rescue. You are a life saver!

VISIT THE RABBIT CENTER

2280 Shallowford Road
Marietta GA 30066
678-653-7175

- Adoptions by appointment
- Board your rabbit/s with us while out of town! They enjoy spacious pens and daily exercise - you enjoy the peace of mind your bun is in loving, experienced hands!
- Shop for high quality food, hay, treats and rabbit related supplies. We have everything you need to set up a humane and safe habitat for your new bun/s!
- Grooming services including nail trims, hygienic areas and brushing.
- Bunny 101 offered monthly – check houserabbitga.org for dates/times.
- Volunteers Needed and Appreciated!

Check houserabbitga.org for *Open Hours* and how to *Become a Member* and receive a 10% discount on all goods and services. We are a non-profit (501c3) organization and all proceeds from the Rabbit Center go directly for food, care and vetting of our foster rabbits. Donations are greatly appreciated and accepted - we depend on donations and volunteer help to maintain our rescue and educational efforts.

For More Information/Emergencies

Edie Sayeg: 770-826-2732 Marietta

ediesayeg@houserabbitga.org

Ronda Churchwell: 678-848-6440 Cartersville

hrrsadoptions@hotmail.com

Nancy McConville: 678-471-3808 Roswell

chesterbunny1@bellsouth.net

GEORGIA HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY



Rabbit Care Guide

This guide gives you the basic information needed to care for your rabbit – there is much more to learn to ensure your rabbit lives a long life (10-12 years.) Be cautious of buying a pet store/breeder rabbit-baby rabbits need special care/diet and should never be taken from their mother before 8 weeks old. All rabbits must be spayed/neutered for health, behavior and reproductive reasons.

Adopt a Rescued Rabbit!

For More Information

houserabbitga.org.

FEEDING YOUR RABBIT

Hay: 60% of your rabbit's diet *must* be fresh (no mold) Timothy or grass hays and it *must* be available at all times for both adult and baby rabbits. A young rabbit under 6 months can have alfalfa hay - it is too high in calcium and protein for adults. Timothy is the best hay for adults - add other grass hays for variety.

Vegetables: About 20% of your rabbit's diet. Feed 2- cups of *fresh, washed* greens each day (remove all pesticides and dirt.) Cilantro, parsley, carrot tops, mint, herbs, romaine and other dark leafy green veggies and lettuces – *no iceberg* - houserabbitga.org has a complete recommended list. *Do not feed cabbage, rhubarb, onion, or potatoes/ skins.* For best nutrition – offer three different veggies daily. Fruits/Carrots: only tiny amounts as a treat and never feed carrots and fruit on the same day – some rabbits can't handle the high sugar content.

Pellets: About 20% of your rabbit's diet. An adult rabbit weighing about 4-5 pounds should only eat about 1/4 cup of plain brown pellets per day. Over feeding will result in an overweight, unhealthy bun. A rabbit less than 6 months old needs pellets at all times. Adult rabbits do well on a Timothy hay based pellet. Babies and some senior rabbits need a higher protein, alfalfa hay pellet. For an adult rabbit - read labels and make sure the protein count is less than 14% and fiber is more than 20%.

Caution: Never feed human food, yogurt drops, sweets or "gourmet" pellet mixes containing corn kernels, nuts and seeds. They are NOT healthy for bunnies and can lead to a severe, life threatening illness called stasis.

Water: *Fresh, clean water at all times!* Bowls/bottles must be washed and filled with fresh water daily. We recommend water be filtered and offered from heavy crocks to encourage buns to drink more water! This makes for a healthier bunny and that means less vet bills. (If you must use a bottle, ensure the sipping tube is working by tapping your finger against the nozzle.)

HOUSING YOUR RABBIT

All domestic rabbits should be housed indoors in heated/air-conditioned areas of the home. Housing your rabbit outdoors leads to illness, misery and in most cases, early death of the rabbit. (See houserabbitga.org for great indoor housing ideas.)

How About a Habitat – Not a Cage! The ideal situation for a house rabbit is to have free run in a large area of your home. However, it is best to start your bunny out with an enclosure such as a dog exercise pen that will be their home base. This will encourage good litterbox habits and allow the bun to earn freedom as they learn to chew and dig where you prefer –not your furniture or rugs. Cages sold as rabbit housing in pet stores are just too small.

NEVER house a rabbit on a wire bottom – it is very painful and causes injury to the rabbit's feet –a plastic bottom will cause splay leg – bunnies must have traction to hop. The rabbit's habitat must be large enough for a large litterbox, water bowl, food bowl, toys, cardboard hidey box, and still have enough floor space (a min. of 4 times the rabbit's stretched-out length) to hop about. The bigger - the better! And remember - baby rabbits can grow very big!

Caution – you must Bunny Proof your home for the safety of the bun and your home – all buns will eat wires of all types and most will eat plants, chew furniture and dig in carpet – this is natural for rabbits. We have all the solutions at houserabbitga.org!

Important Litterbox Tips

*Please give your rabbit a large litterbox – not one of those tiny corner or square ones. Use a litter that is made from plant material such as paper or wood pellets. *Caution: Do not use litter containing pine or cedar shavings (causes liver damage) or "scoopable" or "clumping" cat litter—if eaten, it will cause a painful/life threatening blockage. Rabbits, unlike cats, cannot regurgitate inedible material and this leads to digestive intestinal illnesses.*

*Add fresh eating hay twice a day to a corner of the box to encourage buns to eat hay while doing their business. This is called creating a kitchen and bathroom section of the box. Hay not eaten can be used to cover poops!

*Inspect poops daily – it can save your bunnies life! There should be lots of soft, brown poops that break apart easily. If poops are small, hard, dry and/or strung together (or none) – get medical attention!

* Buns love a clean litterbox and a tidy living area (even if some are very good at redecorating and deconstruction.) White vinegar will completely remove rabbit urine – it is a bunny owner's best friend!

DAILY RABBIT CARE

Grooming: Brushing/combing your rabbit daily will teach your bun to enjoy grooming and bonding with you. Rabbits shed about every 3-6 months and you *must* remove it to prevent ingestion and potential blockages. Rabbits are very clean and groom constantly – a blockage can be fatal (rabbits cannot throw up hairballs –eating plenty of hay (fiber) and drinking plenty of water will keep their digestive system moving contents out!)

Exercise: Rabbits *must* be allowed out of their enclosures for at least 4-6 hours a day for exercise to prevent muscle atrophy and socialization to prevent depression. Rabbits are most active at dawn and dusk. They frequently nap during the day and enjoy early morning and evening activity with you. It is a delight to watch your rabbit exercise as they run over the couch and through the legs of chairs (the bunny 500!) And there is nothing like watching the special fast turns/jumps in mid-air dances called binkies. When tired - bunny will flop beside you for pets and if you're lucky – give you kisses!

Petting: Daily sessions of petting will increase the bond between you and your bun. Petting them earns their love and trust! Relaxing petting sessions can also help to you to remove loose fur, check for unfamiliar and potentially dangerous lumps and provide stress relief for you (studies show it will reduce your blood pressure.)

Toys: Rabbits love toys and chew treats! Alternate toys so they get something new each day. Here's a list of playthings to start you off: toilet paper roll stuffed with hay, canning jar lids, natural grass ball with bell, cardboard box with two rabbit-sized doors cut out, newspaper, phone books or packing paper to shred, plastic baby keys, disposable grass mats or pieces of untreated wood (2"x 2"x 6" also great for bunny proofing), untreated straw baskets, and paper bags