

# Rabbits

are you a rabbit person?

## rabbits rise in popularity

Forty percent of small animal households own rabbits and there are 5.3 million companion rabbits owned by 2.2 million households in America.

## who should own a rabbit

Rabbits make great pets...for the right person. Just like there are cat people and dog people, there are also rabbit people.

Rabbits make great pets for adults who enjoy observing their animal as much as they do handling it, seeing as some rabbits do not enjoy being picked up and carried.

Rabbits and children can be a risky match. Young children enjoy cuddling and holding rabbits, making the animal insecure and frightened. The animal can also scratch the child and wiggle loose or be dropped. Some adults buy their children a rabbit to teach responsibility. Once the novelty wears off, though, and the child realizes just how much of a commitment the animal is, many rabbits are neglected or brought to a shelter. It is possible for the two to coexist peacefully, but it's important that they are supervised and that the adult is the primary caretaker for the animal.



Rabbits are the **3<sup>rd</sup>** most frequently surrendered animals at shelters, right behind dogs and cats. Their cute, cuddly appearance prompts people to buy them on an impulse. All too often people are unaware of how to properly care for their rabbit and just how big of a commitment owning a rabbit can be, in both time and money.

With the proper care and maintenance, rabbits make **exceptional** companion animals.

If you've decided that a rabbit would fit into your lifestyle, make **adoption** your first choice.

They're cute & cuddly, but  
**would a rabbit fit into  
your lifestyle?**



rabbits make great companions —  
for the right people



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# the Bunny Brief

## They're fun

Rabbits have distinct personalities just like cats and dogs. Some are energetic and goofy, while others are more reserved and independent. They're also intelligent, capable of learning their names and simple commands. Not only that, but the fact that they can be litter trained makes them even better house pets.

## They're diverse

Rabbit breeds vary dramatically in size, color, temperament, and appearance. There are over four dozen recognized breeds of domestic rabbits and they can weigh anywhere from two pounds to over 20 pounds.

## They're inexpensive to purchase

Because the initial cost to buy a rabbit is quite low, all too often people buy a rabbit on an impulse. When considering if a rabbit is right for you, it's important to take into account the daily cost of caring for the animal.

## They're clean

Neutering your rabbit (at about four to six months of age) will eliminate certain negative behaviors, such as spraying. The neutered rabbit will make it a point to keep his living quarters clean, a behavior that helps in litter training.

## They make good indoor pets

Rabbits adapt very well to the high activity level indoors and enjoy being with their human families. Their activity levels also fit well into many peoples' schedules because they are crepuscular, meaning that they are most active in the morning and evening hours.

## They can live with other pets

If given the time to adjust, some rabbits will tolerate, and even enjoy, the company of other pets, like cats and dogs. It can be difficult to pair two or more rabbits together, though. Neutered male and female pairs usually bond more easily, but same-sex pairs can also get along nicely if they are both neutered.

## Their diet is important

Rabbits don't just eat carrots. They should be provided with grass hay and leafy, green vegetables. High-fiber rabbit pellets can be given in small quantities. Fresh food and water should be provided daily.

## They require general maintenance

Rabbits should be brushed regularly. Their nails should also be clipped, preventing them from breaking and possibly becoming infected.

## They require daily monitoring

Rabbits suffer from various health problems just like everything else. In order to catch abnormalities that may indicate an illness, the rabbit's behavior, eating and drinking habits, and activity levels should be checked daily.

## They need plenty of exercise

In order to stay healthy and happy, rabbits should be allowed several hours a day to exercise freely. Toys are also recommended to keep your rabbit entertained. A simple towel or cardboard carton can keep your rabbit entertained and out of trouble for hours.

## They have a long life-span

Many people assume that rabbits don't live for very long. If cared for properly, rabbits can live 7-10 years.

