

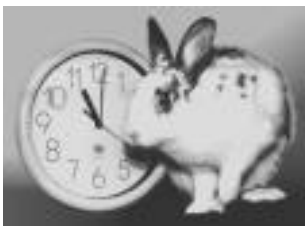
## HAVE LIST

HOUSING	n Wood (for chewing recreation)
n Roomy cage	
n Resting board	n Multiple enzymes (digestive aid)
n Litterbox (in cage)	
n Pellet bowl or feeder	n Petroleum laxative (when needed for passing hair)
n Water bottle/crock	
n Toys (chew & toss)	
n Pet carrier	GROOMING
RUNNING SPACE	n Flea comb
<b>Indoors:</b>	n Brush
n Bunny-proofed room(s)	n Flea products safe for cats (NOT frontline)
n Litterbox	
n Toys (chew & dig)	n Toenail clippers
<b>Outdoors:</b>	SUPPLIES
n Fenced patio/porch/playpen (with floor)	n Dust-free litter (not wood shavings)
CONSUMABLES	n Pooper scooper
n Limited pellets daily	n Whiskbroom/dustpan
n Fresh water	n White vinegar (for urine accidents)
n Hay /straw (for digestive fiber and chewing recreation)	n Hand vacuum
n Fresh salad veggies/fruit (add gradually)	n Chlorine bleach (for disinfecting)
n Barley/oats ( <i>very small amounts</i> )	n Newspapers

## BUY A BUNNY A LITTLE TIME

Time is all it takes for a rabbit to be discovered by the right human. When their time is up at the animal shelters, rabbits with your support can be placed in foster homes until adoptive matches are made.

Your enrollment in the House Rabbit Society and all additional donations help provide needy rabbits with food, housing, veterinary care, and enough time to find them permanent homes.



## LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES

ALABAMA 256/447-9125H	MINNESOTA 651/768-9755H
ARKANSAS 870/867-0179	MISSOURI 816/537-7601H
CALIFORNIA 510/970-7575 (national) 415/388-2790H 650/994-1012H 916/863-9690H 707-643-2852H 831/648-1893H 559/641-2869H 619/718-7777H	NEW HAMPSHIRE 603/569-9372H NEW JERSEY 732/583-0278H 609/324-9151 NEW YORK 315/797-9835H 914/337-6146H NORTH CAROLINA 252/247-6550 OHIO 740/797-3085 H 614/895-0004 H OREGON 503/590-1096 H PENNSYLVANIA 215/468-3134H 856-678-1105H RHODE ISLAND 401/397-6377 TENNESSEE 901/837-9709 TEXAS 512/469-9809 VERMONT 802/527-1175 VIRGINIA 804/831-1315 703/830-8359 757/483-6250 WASHINGTON 206/365-9105H WISCONSIN 608/232-7044H
CANADA 604/731-6026 BC 250/389-0407 BC	
COLORADO 303/469-3240H	
FLORIDA 305/284-3977 H 813/891-6144 H	
GEORGIA 770/623-8403H	
IDAHO 208/388-1121H	
ILLINOIS 847/266-0068H 217/398-9192H	
INDIANA 317/328-1428H	
LOUISIANA 985/649-8990	
MARYLAND/DC 410/889-4104H 703/241-0867 301/570-9152	
MASSACHUSETTS 781-665-9962H	
MICHIGAN 616/375-7516H 248/476-9728	

WEB SITE  
[www.rabbit.org](http://www.rabbit.org)  
ADDITIONAL LOCAL NUMBER  
H CHAPTER HEADQUARTERS

## HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY GUIDELINES

# LIVING WITH A HOUSE RABBIT



## Why a House Rabbit?

Perhaps you've just adopted your first rabbit, or maybe you already have a rabbit and would like more information to help you understand her better. The House Rabbit Society, a national nonprofit organization, recommends that you keep your rabbit in the house rather than outdoors. Rabbits are intelligent, social animals who need affection, and they can become wonderful companion animals if given a chance to interact with their human families.

## The benefits of spay and neuter

Although most rabbits will use a litterbox, hormones may cause unneutered males and unsplayed females to "mark territory." Spaying or neutering your rabbit improves litterbox habits, lessens chewing behavior, decreases territorial aggression, and gives your rabbit a happier, longer life. Have your rabbit

## MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT

Includes the quarterly *House Rabbit Journal*.  
USA: \$18 \_\_\_ Outside USA: \$25 \_\_\_ National-Local: \$33 \_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

STREET NO. \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

CHECK (U.S. BANK ONLY) \_\_\_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_\_\_ MC \_\_\_\_\_ AE \_\_\_\_\_

ACC# \_\_\_\_\_ EXP \_\_\_\_\_

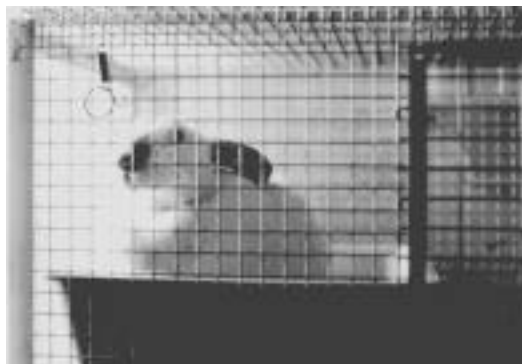
HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY  
148 BROADWAY RICHMOND CA 94804

neutered between ages 3½ to 6 months, depending on sexual maturity, by an experienced rabbit veterinarian.

For rabbits more than 2 years old, get a veterinary checkup first.

### Housetraining

Rabbits may have free run of the home. However, it's best for most—and necessary for some—to start with a cage. To make cage time learning time, fasten a litterbox in the corner of the cage that your rabbit chooses for a “bathroom.” As soon as he uses the box



consistently, you can give him some freedom. Place one or more large litterboxes in corners of the running area outside the cage.

Use only positive reinforcement (treats and praise)—never punishment.

### Bunny-proofing

Bunny-proofing your home is part of living with a house rabbit. It is natural for rabbits to chew on furniture, rugs, drapes, and, most deadly of all, electrical cords. Cords must be concealed so that the rabbit cannot reach them. Exposed cords can be encased in vinyl tubing (found at hardware stores). By splitting the tubing lengthwise with a utility knife the cord can be pushed inside it.

Give your rabbit enough attention, safe chewables, and toys, so that she is distracted from chewing furniture and rugs. A cardboard box stuffed with hay makes an



inexpensive playbox. Young rabbits (under a year) are more inclined to mischief and require more confinement and/or bunny-proofing than mature rabbits.

House rabbits and other animals

House rabbits and indoor cats can get along fine, as do rabbits and well-mannered dogs. Dogs should be trained to respond to



commands before being trusted with a free-running rabbit, and supervision is needed to control a dog's playful impulses (this is especially true for puppies). Adding a second rabbit is easiest if the rabbits are neutered adults of opposite sexes, and they are introduced for short periods in an area unfamiliar to both rabbits.

### Major Health Problems

**Intestinal blockages:** Because rabbits groom themselves constantly, they get furballs just as cats do. Unlike cats, however, rabbits cannot vomit, and excessive swallowed hair may cause a fatal blockage. If your rabbit shows a decrease in appetite and in the size of droppings, get advice from a rabbit veterinarian.

**Prevention:** keep bunny brushed (less hair is swallowed); provide exercise time/space—at least 30 hours a week; give a

fresh handful of hay daily; add fresh vegetables gradually to the diet; give petroleum laxatives during a heavy molt or if synthetics have been swallowed.

**Bacterial balance:** A rabbit's digestive tract is inhabited by healthful bacteria. If the “good” bacteria balance is upset by stale food or a sudden change in diet, harmful bacteria can take over the digestive track and kill the rabbit.

Keep all rabbit food in a cool dry place and make dietary changes slowly, giving a new food in small amounts. If no abdominal gurgling or loose stool results in 24 hours, the food may be offered again. If your rabbit goes outside, check for pesticides and toxic plants. (A list is available from your local poison center.)

**Infectious bacteria:** Many rabbit diseases are caused by bacteria, not viruses, and can be treated with antibiotics. If your rabbit shows symptoms of a “cold,” take him to a veterinarian familiar with antibiotics that can be safely used in rabbits. Oral drugs of the Penicillin family, such as Amoxicillin, should NOT be given to a rabbit, since there is risk of destroying good intestinal bacteria.

**It's up to you:** Find an experienced rabbit doctor before a problem develops. If your rabbit has been harassed by a predator, take him to a veterinarian even if no injuries are apparent.

When it is over 80°, keep your rabbit cool with nearby wet towels or ice.

Regularly check eyes, nose, ears, teeth, weight, appetite, and droppings.

### Danger Signs

Don't waste valuable time Call your veterinarian immediately if you see:

- n **Diarrhea with listlessness**
- n **Sudden loss of appetite with bloat and abdominal gurgling**
- n **Loss of appetite with labored breathing**
- n **Loss of appetite with runny nose**
- n **Head tilt**
- n **Incontinence (urine-soaked rear legs)**
- n **Abscesses, lumps or swellings anywhere**
- n **Any sudden behavior change**