

RABBIT



FACT SHEET

Pictured Rabbit : **Dwarf Lop**

Male is called a : **Buck**

Genus : **Oryctolagus**

Specie : **cuniculus**

Female is called a : **Doe**

Young are called a : **Kitten**

Adult Weight : **1-9kg**

The average life expectancy : **6-8 YEARS**
(Some May live up to 12 Years +)

Oestrus : **Only if paired for breeding**

Gestation period : **From 30 to 32 days**

Breeding Life of a male is : **3 - 4 Years**

Breeding Life of a female is : **2 - 3 Years**

Average Litter Size Varies : **2 - 10**

Young are born : **Bare/Bald & Blind**

Birth Weight : **30g - 150g**

(Pending upon breed & type of rabbit)

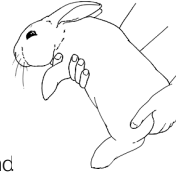
Weaning Age : **5 - 8 Weeks**

(Pending upon breed & type of rabbit)

Eyes open : **from 10-12 days**

HANDLING

When Picking up a rabbit, place one hand under the chest and preferably have one leg seated between your fourth and middle finger and your thumb rested behind the opposite front leg.



As you raise the front of the rabbit upwards place your second hand under there rear and elevate, this is to compensate for the full weight of the rabbit so it is secure and feels comfortable. **DO NOT PICK UP BY THE EARS**

Rabbits can become extremely tame. grooming your rabbit can help build an emotional bond, but remember it takes time and patience.

Then placing a rabbit back down face towards you if possible and place rear first to avoid an unfortunate injury and the withdraw your hand from its chest.

SEXING YOUR RABBIT

To sex a rabbit, when holding have his back to your stomach so it's feet are facing outwards. if needed part the furs around the genitalia.

MALE : will have a rounded area which is the indication of the scrotal sack between the penis and anus, apply gentle pressure above, if done correctly his penis will extrude. you will also notice a male does not have nipples.

FEMALE : will not have a rounded area between the vagina and anus. The anus and vagina will also be closer together and she will have multiple nipples.

FEEDING

Rabbits are herbivores which means they do not eat any meat substances. They need a fresh supply of hay at all times such as ready grass/meadow hay. there diet mostly consists of vegetables, Lettuce should **NOT** be given to the rabbit as it contains **laudanum** which is harmful to rabbits. Most brightly coloured green leaved vegetables contain mostly water and not vitamins to darken leaved vegetables that contain higher nutrients for a rabbit. All fresh foods should be washed thoroughly before giving to a rabbit.

A medium sized rabbit should eat up to 150g of food a day and should be fed first thing in the morning and early evening. Fresh Foods can consist of : **kale, cabbage, swede, spring greens, broccoli and carrots as well as fruit.**

Fresh water should be supplied every day, dispose of old water daily, clean and provide as much as needed.

HOUSING & HUSBANDRY

OUTDOORS : you will need to source a clean preferably new rabbit hutch which has 2 sections. one is an exercise area the other is a sleeping area, when purchasing a hutch remember to get as big of a cage as possible as a rabbit needs to be able to stand on its hind legs and stretch to its full length with room to spare in both sections in all directions. It is in the rabbits best interest to be supplied with a run so it has access to the outside. if so then make sure the area you place the run is free from any pesticides and that there area is always kept clean to help prevent the possibility of ill health.

INDOORS : make sure it is not placed in direct sunlight and also is in an area that is excluded from drafts and again make sure it has plenty of room to stretch with plenty of room to spare.

Enrichment : Make sure it has plenty of things to do as in the wild they spend most of the time walking running and jumping around in grass and eating hay keeping entertained otherwise it could become destructive which could be an issue if kept indoors in your home.

Cleaning

Every day water bottles should be emptied, cleaned, refilled and put back in.

Food (vegetables) to be removed and fresh food to be given. Also make sure there is enough hay to last the day or more.

At least once a week (More frequent if required) replace all bedding and use the correct disinfectants and cleaning apparatus when doing so. Failure to do so could end up in a trip to the vet.

when cleaning always look for mites, fleas and flies and make sure the hutch is still fit to be used and repair/replace if needed.

Bedding : Hay and wood shavings, Try to avoid cedar and pine shavings as they could contain **phenols** which is harmful to rabbits.

Requirements & Equipment when purchasing

Hutch/cage, Run/pen, Food-bowl (not plastic), Water-bottle, Bedding-shavings, cleaning equipment, Hay, Toys, Vitamins, Salt lick, fly strike.

HEALTH CHECK

Always check your rabbit as much as possible to ensure a healthy companion, here is a list of checks to do to maintain a health animal.

Check inner ears : Make sure they are not scaly, red and inflamed and are clean of dirt. if correct breed make sure ears stand on there own also.

Eyes : make sure they fully open and are clear and have no discharge.

Nose : Clean of dirt and discharge and of natural colour and not inflamed.

Mouth : Make sure the rabbit can close his mouth and there is no saliva excretions. as this can be a sign of problems with teeth.

Teeth : Make sure they meet at the tips correctly and are aligned. if they are not this can cause further issue.

Body : Should be firm, check the animal is standing correctly and is moving around without discomfort.

Coat : Make sure the coat is smooth, shinny and not patchy.

Tail & Underside : Lift the tail and check to make sure he does not have diarrhoea or wet Fur from urination.

Anus & Genitals : Check for discharge from the tip of the penis/vaginal/ are and diarrhoea from the anus. also if is a female rabbit check to make sure she does not have a swollen vulva.

Disease / Disorder	Cause	Visual Signs / Symptoms	Treatment / Prevention
Coccidiosis	Caused by protozoan parasites transferred through excitement, Food & soiled bedding.	Loss of Appetite, diarrhoea, weight loss, excessive drinking, develops a harsh coat.	Seek Veterinary advice for Coccidiasot to put in food and water
Ear Mites	Contracted from an infected rabbit	Scratching excessively & head shaking, yellow crust in ears	Over counter remedies will suffice. in extreme cases Seek veterinary assistance
Encephalitozoon Cunicull (E. Cunicull)	A protozoal parasite that can cause severe illness in rabbits	Tilted head, unstable eyes, loss of balance, walking in circles, paralysis, seizures,	Seek veterinary assistance
Enteritis	Poor diet or sudden dietary change	Lethargic, Diarrhoea	Seek veterinary assistance
Fleas & Lice	Ectoparasites	Flea dirt in coat, hair loss, scratching	Rabbit flea treatment
Intestinal Worms	Contaminated Grazing areas	Diarrhoea	Rabbit wormer treatments
Malocclusion Teeth over grown or not aligned	Birth Defect	Loss of Appetite, Discharge from nasal or mouth	Refer to a vet for removal of incisors or grinding down teeth
Myxamatosis	Virus contracted in to the bloodstream by a flea or mosquito	Puss discharge from eyes, lips, nose, genitals. Congested	Vaccination is available from vet called RVHD
Overgrown nails	Not cut on a regular basis	inflammation around rabbits toes, toes not flat and aligned	Check regularly and trim as required
Rabbit Syphilis	Contracted when matting with an infected rabbit	Ulcers on genitals (male & female) spread to anus eyelids, lips & nose	Seek veterinary assistance
Salmonella	Bacteria	Diarrhoea, followed by death can transfer to humans	Seek veterinary assistance
Snuffles	Infection from other rabbits	Sneezing & nasal discharge, nose & face rubbing, mucus matted fur under front legs	Seek veterinary assistance
Sore Hocks	Left to long between cleaning and incorrect bedding	Fur missing on back of legs and are has become inflamed, infected.	Seek veterinary assistance
Haemorrhagic	A fatal disease that attacks adult rabbits. VHD is highly infectious	Causes great suffering. Blood discharge from eyes and nose	Seek veterinary assistance. Vaccinations available
Gut Stasis	Changing diet suddenly	Rabbit wont want to move. Weight loss	Seek veterinary assistance
Fractures	Poor handling	Spinal fracture can cause paralysis. Unusual posture	Seek veterinary assistance
Fly Strike	Bad cleanliness, obesity and diarrhoea	Flies lay eggs in soiled area. Maggots then eat rabbit	Clean frequently. Seek veterinary assistance if rabbit has infestation