

ideal as they promote optimum digestive health with their high fibre content - a mix of these provides the healthiest diet for your rabbit.

Another staple for rabbits is fresh vegetables such as bok choy, coriander, Chinese celery, xiao bai chye, romaine lettuce, basil leaves, wheat grass and chye sim and should be given about two cups (three to four varieties) daily. Look for dark leafy vegetables and root vegetables. Stay away from beans and potatoes. An occasional treat (in small amounts) of carrots or fruits (apples, pears, papaya, etc) is acceptable.

It is important to soak vegetables in water for at least 30 minutes as there could be traces of insecticide which could harm your pet.

Fresh water, contained in a heavy ceramic bowl must be made available at all times.

### Health

Being a prey animal, your rabbit may hide an illness until it is too severe and it becomes evident. If your rabbit is eating less, not eating and is not active, bring him to your veterinarian immediately. Do the same if he has watery diarrhoea. Gastro-Intestinal stasis (slowing/shutting down of the gut movement) is a common killer of rabbits.

Other common ailments include ear infections, urinary tract infections, abscesses, tooth problems (incisor malocclusion and/or molar spurs), upper respiratory infections (sneezing or runny eyes/nose) and skin problems (e.g. scabies, fur mites).

A rabbit's anatomy is different from that of dogs and cats. When in doubt about your rabbit's health, always consult a rabbit-savvy vet as soon as you can.



### Adoption Information:

To find out more about adopting a hamster from the SPCA, please visit us at [www.sPCA.org.sg](http://www.sPCA.org.sg) or call us at 6287 5355 ext. 24 during office hours.

As a pet is a lifetime of commitment with considerable responsibilities involved, the SPCA prefers that the whole family comes down and view the pet. If you are unsure of the responsibilities involved, you may ask to speak to an Adoption Counsellor.

### Location of the SPCA:

31 Mount Vernon Road, Singapore 368054  
MRT Station: Bartley (Circle Line)  
Bus Services: 28, 93, 158

### Contact Information:

Telephone: 6287 5355  
Web: [www.sPCA.org.sg](http://www.sPCA.org.sg)

### Opening Hours (Adoption Area):

- Mon/Tue/Wed/Fri/Sat: 10.00am to 4.00pm
- Sunday and Public Holiday: 11.00am to 3.30pm
- Thursday: Closed (Unless it is a public holiday)

**PLEASE REMEMBER YOUR PET NEEDS YOU TO BE RESPONSIBLE AND COMMITTED. A PET IS FOR LIFE.**

### Biodata of the Rabbit:

Reproduction Age : Between 3 and 6 months old  
Gestation Period : About 31 days  
Average Litter : 4 and more (depending on the size of the rabbit)  
Weaning : About 5 to 7 weeks  
Lifespan : 5 to 10 years

For more information on rabbit care, you can also visit House Rabbit Society of Singapore's website at [www.hrss.net](http://www.hrss.net).

# Care of your Pet Rabbit



FRIENDS FOR LIFE®  
092011

## Important Information:

### Sterilisation

Rabbits are social animals. While it is best to keep a pair of them, they must be sterilised to prevent uncontrolled breeding and possible fighting (rabbits are territorial). Many abandoned pet rabbits are received by the SPCA because owners were not aware of this.

### Carrots

It is a myth that rabbits can live on carrots alone. What a house rabbit needs is a balanced diet consisting of unlimited hay, some fresh vegetables and a little commercial pellet food. Certain fruits and vegetables like carrots are high in sugar. They do not offer the full nutritional benefits your rabbit needs.

### Cage

Rabbits are often kept in hutches and cages, but the preferred housing is either a playpen set-up or free roaming within the house. Rabbits can be litter-trained.

## General Information:

Rabbits make wonderful pets. Contrary to the common misconceptions that rabbits are simple-minded animals, easy to care for and good starter pets, they are actually highly intelligent, social and require almost as much effort as taking care of a dog. Rabbits are not recommended for small children.

Many pet rabbits are abandoned and end up at the SPCA, some in very poor health and with skin problems, because their owners do not know how to properly care for these delicate creatures.

Rabbits generally do not like to be held but do spend some time daily petting and grooming your rabbit. If it is necessary to carry your rabbit, start by petting him first (to

calm him down) before picking him up with one hand over his chest and supporting his bottom firmly with the other hand. A rabbit has a heavy bottom; a strong kick could potentially fracture his back. Hold him close to your body.

## Housing:

A spacious living area would make your rabbit happy. There are two preferred housing options for your rabbit - a playpen or free roam in the house.



A playpen can easily be bought from a pet shop and pieced together. You should provide your rabbit with a place to hide (e.g. a box), willow toys and a litter box besides his food and water bowls. If the floor is smooth, you may wish to put a rug at the corner away from the litter box. Do not use wired flooring as it could injure your rabbit's feet.

When your rabbit is litter-trained, you can let your rabbit roam freely in the house. It is extremely important to bunny proof the house - encase or hide all cables (rabbits are chewers) and put away all potentially dangerous objects or substances.

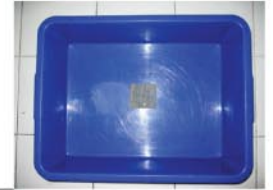
## Litter-training:

Rabbits are immaculately clean animals and naturally dispose their waste in one or several places. To litter train your rabbit, try putting a litter box where your rabbit naturally chooses to defecate. Accidents outside of the litter box can be cleaned up with white vinegar. Clean the litter box regularly. With some trial and error and patience, your rabbit will soon be litter-trained.

Never use pine or cedar shavings as litter as they could potentially be harmful for your rabbit. Here's some good litter brands for rabbits: Breeder's Select, Care Fresh, Cat Country, Critter Country and Pet's Preference.

Step 1:

Prepare a plastic box



Step 2:

Line with newspaper



Step 3:

Put a layer of cat litter on a side of the box



Step 4:

Place a plastic mat on top with hay in a box at the opposite end



Courtesy of HRSS

## Diet:

Your rabbit needs a balanced diet that consists of hay, fresh vegetables, pellets and water. Pellets should be high in fibre (18% minimum) and give only two tablespoons daily. Timothy pellets are a healthier alternative. Alfalfa pellets are suitable for bunnies no more than six months old. Avoid colourful pellet food as they are usually high in sugar and carbohydrates, which can cause digestive problems.

Unlimited amounts of hay must be made available to your rabbit all the time. Timothy and orchard grass hay are