

Pre-adoption advice: Rabbits





We're delighted you're interested in adopting a rabbit from the Scottish SPCA. To make this transition as smooth as possible for you and your new companion, here is some advice to help you prepare:



- Register with a vet and make sure to ask about out of hours care.
- Although your rabbit will come with 4 weeks free PetPlan insurance, prepare for after this period ends to ensure your rabbit is covered for future medical and behavioural needs.
- Entering a new home can be very stressful for a rabbit so we advise taking your rabbit straight home and having their safe space set up in advance.
- Depending on your situation, you may be choosing to house your new rabbit indoors, or outdoors. Discuss your plans with our team as they will be able to advise on what the rabbit's previous accommodation has been like and where they are used to living.
- Rabbits are very social animals so we always advise rabbits to live with other rabbits, as they need the companionship of their own species, as this cannot be replicated by human company.
- If you have an existing rabbit living in your current enclosure and are adopting a rabbit with the intention of bonding, they will need to be in separate enclosures until the bonding process is completed.
- We recommend doing your shopping in advance of bringing your rabbit home so they can settle into their new home. Here is a list of essential items our team recommends:

■ Housing / accommodation

Whilst we do have minimum sizes for rabbit enclosures to ensure we can meet their welfare needs, there are lots of different ways you can provide this space without buying expensive accommodation, such as repurposing a shed or extending an existing run. Discuss this with our team so we can help you prepare for your new rabbit(s). The minimum run area is 3 metres long, 2 metres wide, 1 metre high, and the minimum hutch area is 1.8 metres long, 0.6 metres wide, 0.6 metres high.

■ Litter trays

■ Litter

Discuss this with our team who can tell you what the rabbit is already using.

■ Heavy ceramic or stainless-steel food and water bowls

■ Water bottle

■ Food

This should consist of pellets, hay (dust free) and rabbit-safe vegetables. Our teams can tell you about their current diet.

■ Rabbit safe bedding

such as hay, dust-extracted straw, blankets, shredded cardboard, paper-based bedding or kiln-dried, dust extracted wood chip.

■ Tunnels & hides

■ Grooming equipment

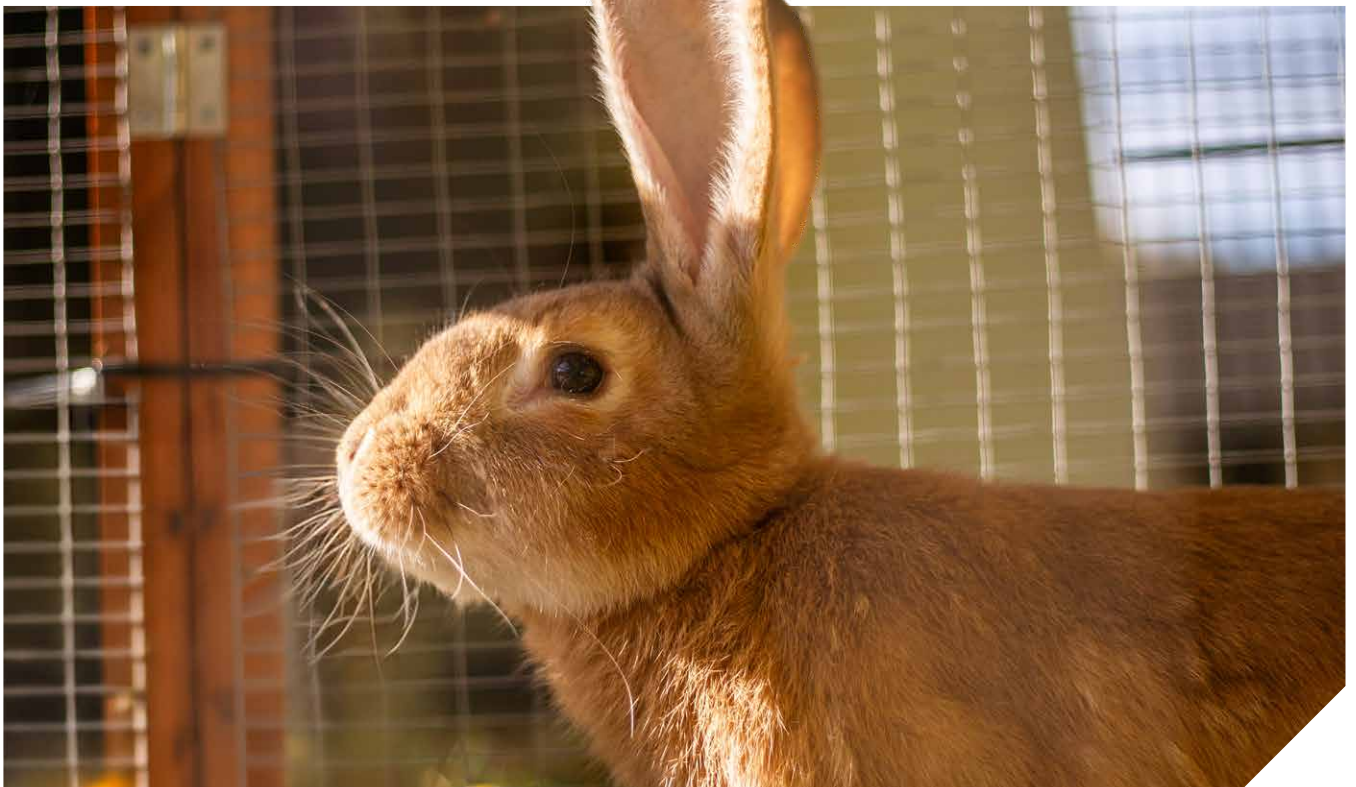


■ Toys and enrichment

■ A secure and sturdy carrier

as you won't be able to collect your rabbit(s) without one!

- Whether your rabbit lives indoors or outdoors, ensure their enclosure is rabbit and predator proof! There should be no access to wires or other dangerous items that they may chew. Regularly check the rabbit's enclosure for any plants that may be toxic to rabbits and ensure items like cleaners or other household products are not accessible.
- It's important that you give your rabbit time to adjust to its new surroundings without adding too many other stresses at the same time. We always advise planning for a quiet first few days with minimal visitors to allow your rabbit time to acclimatise to their new home.
- Introducing your rabbit to another animal can be stressful for all involved. Please discuss this with our team so we can advise you on the best way to introduce your rabbit safely or advise on how you can keep them separate if needed.



For advice on how best to take care of your rabbit, please visit our website:

www.scottishspca.org/advice/rabbits/