

Post-adoption & Settling Advice: Rabbits



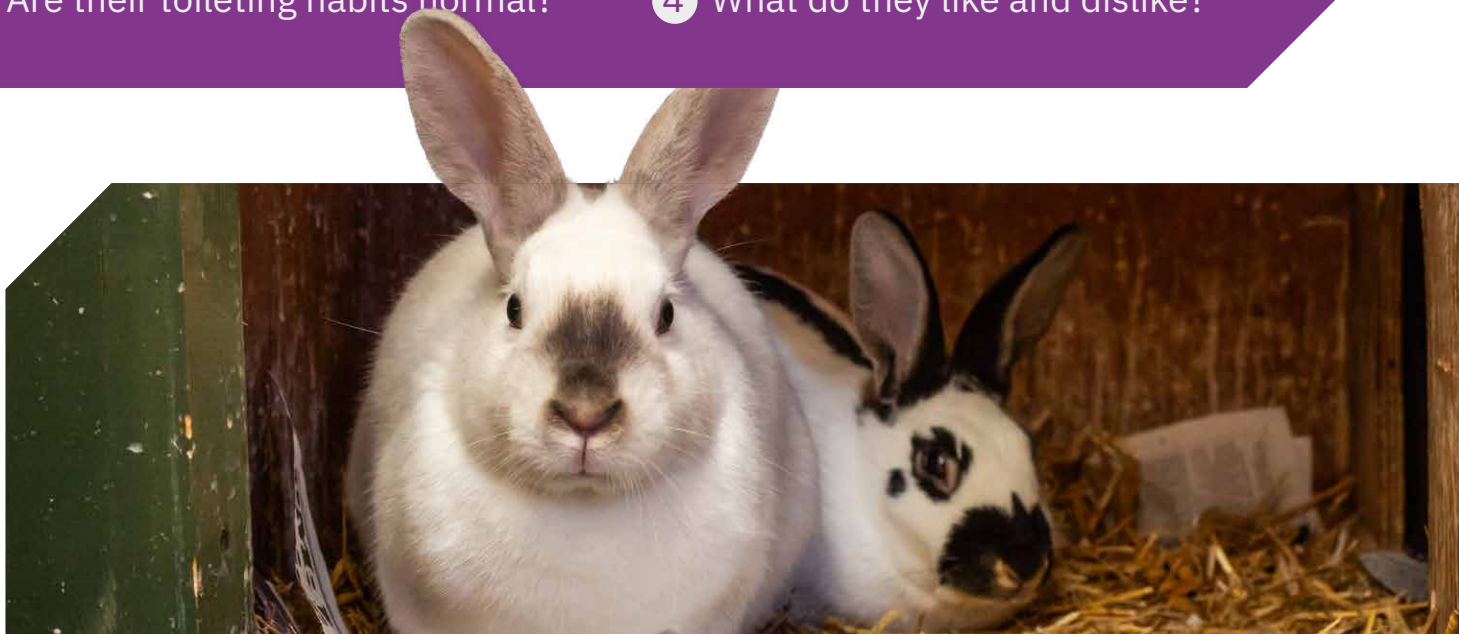


Congratulations on adopting your rabbit! ! We hope you both settle well but we know that this time can sometimes be a bit stressful for both you and your new companion. To help make this transition as smooth as possible, here is some advice to help you and your new rabbit:

- On the day you take your rabbit home, make sure you keep them in their carrier the whole journey home and you take them straight home. To help them feel more relaxed, we recommend covering the carrier with a blanket during the journey and if they have a familiar item or bedding from the centre, this can be placed in the carrier to help them as well.
- Upon arriving home, take your rabbit straight to their new enclosure. Place the carrier in there, after ensuring their enclosure is secure. Open the carrier and allow the rabbit to come out and explore in their own time. We recommend placing some of their litter or bedding in their new home, so it smells more like them.
- Remember rabbits are a prey species and coming into a new environment can be very overwhelming. We advise giving them plenty of time and space to explore their new environment, and do not force any interaction.
- It's important to avoid crowding your new rabbit. We recommend that if you have young family members, discuss with them beforehand about the importance of giving your rabbit space to settle and remaining calm to avoid frightening them.

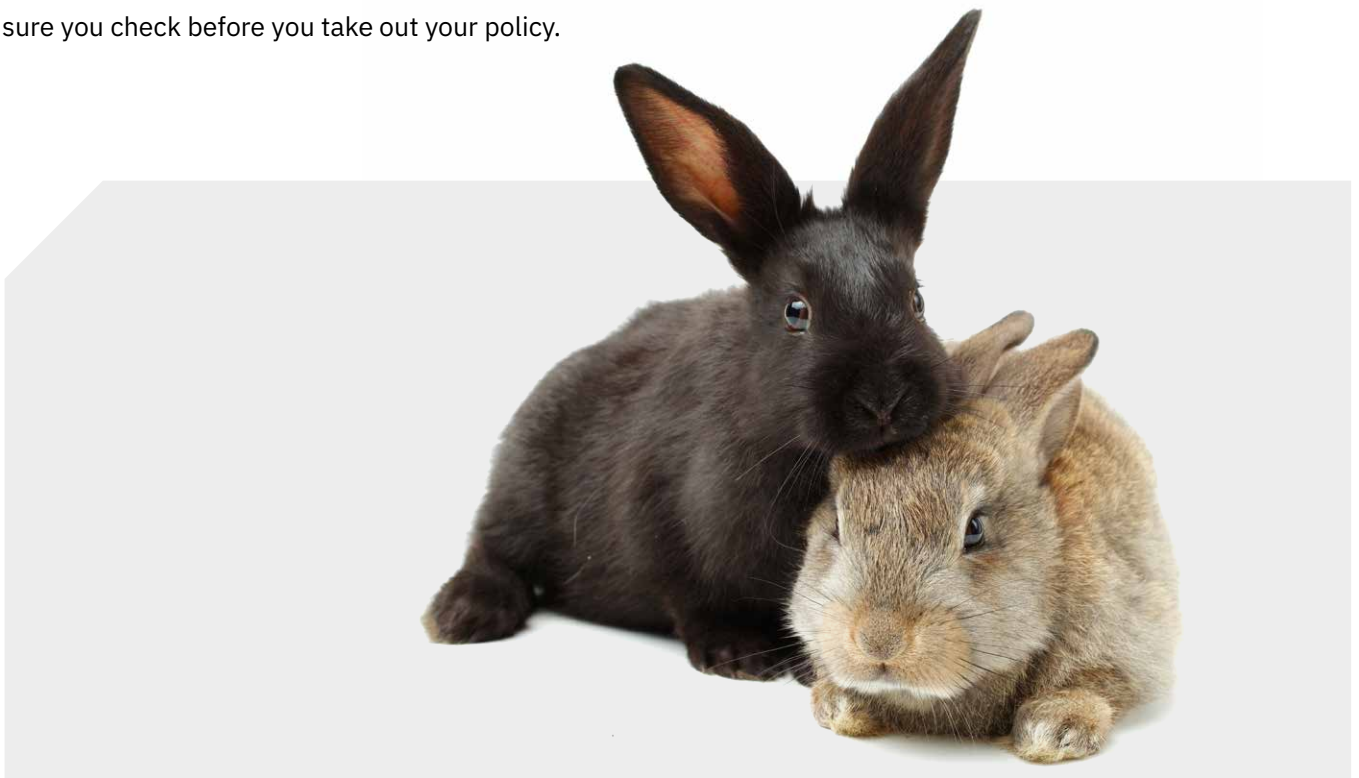
In the first week, the main priority is getting your rabbit settled into a new routine and comfortable with household members. Whilst they settle in, be mindful of the following questions:

- 1 Are they eating OK?
- 2 Are their toileting habits normal?
- 3 Are they sleeping enough?
- 4 What do they like and dislike?





- Be mindful that it can take weeks for a rabbit to fully settle. We advise that it is always better to take things too slowly than too quickly. Rabbits thrive on a routine so make sure their days are predictable and feed at the same time to help them settle quicker.
- If you plan on allowing your rabbit to free roam in your home, start off with a smaller space and gradually increase this to build their confidence.
- To encourage your rabbit to explore as they're getting more comfortable in their new home, we recommend hiding treats around their enclosure. Place them close by to start with, then hide them further away as they grow more confident in their new surroundings.
- Expect territorial marking as they explore during their first few weeks - this is likely to occur even for a rabbit who is litter trained. This usually reduces as the rabbit becomes more familiar with their home.
- If you are introducing to an existing rabbit, speak to our team and follow our "introducing rabbits" advice to know how to do this safely.
- As you've adopted through the Scottish SPCA, you get 4 weeks free PetPlan insurance. However, we strongly advise you to maintain a pet insurance plan for both physical health and any future behaviour support your rabbit may need.
- We never advocate punishing your rabbit, if you need behavioural support for your rabbit, we advise looking at Animal Behaviour Training Council Practitioner register. This is covered by most pet insurance so make sure you check before you take out your policy.



If you need any further advice on how to take care of your rabbit or want to find more information, please refer to your rabbit care guide or visit our website:

www.scottishspca.org/advice/rabbits/