

Bunny Care 101: Complete Bunny Beginner Guide

Bunny Care 101 began for me at 2 a.m., when my rescue rabbit Daisy thumped, refused to eat, and stared at me like I had suddenly become useless. I thought a cage, a bowl of pellets, and a few carrots would be enough. I was wrong, and Daisy made sure I learned fast. Over years of hands-on rabbit care, and more than 30+ rabbits later, I have a clear rule: good rabbit care is simple, when you know what truly matters.

This Bunny Beginner Guide is written like I would explain to a friend who is bringing home their first rabbit. It is practical, detailed, and easy to follow. You will get a ready rabbit care sheet, step-by-step instructions, solutions for common problems, and 10 FAQs that answer the questions people actually search for. Read this, use the care sheet, and your rabbit will thank you in binkies and soft flops.

What this guide covers, and why it matters

This guide teaches you how to take care of a rabbit for beginners, including Bunny essentials, diet, housing, newborn rabbit care, behavior, training, health, and problem solving. The goal is not to overload you with theory, but to give clear, actionable steps that keep your rabbit healthy and happy. If you remember nothing else from Bunny Care 101, remember these two points: hay first, and observe your rabbit daily.

1. Problem identification and validation, why new owners struggle

New rabbit owners often ask the same things, they worry, they feel guilty, and they make avoidable mistakes. The three most common problems I see are:

1. Confusion about diet, many owners overfeed pellets and treats, and underfeed hay.
2. Space and housing mistakes, rabbits are kept in too small cages and do not get exercise.
3. Late detection of illness, rabbits hide sickness well, and by the time symptoms appear, it can be serious.

I still remember Hero (one of my rescued rabbits), who stopped eating after a car journey. By the time I noticed, he had [GI stasis](#), which became an emergency. That moment changed how I teach owners to monitor appetite and droppings every single day. If you learn one habit from this guide, check your rabbit's food and droppings every morning.

2. Background and context, the why behind Rabbit Care

Rabbit physiology and behavior, in plain language

Rabbits evolved as prey animals, which affects their behavior and health. They are quiet, alert, and good at hiding pain. Their digestive system is built for constant fiber, and their teeth grow continuously. If they do not get enough hay, their gut slows, and their teeth can overgrow.

Common misconceptions

- Carrots are not a main food, they are a sweet treat.
- A small cage is not enough, rabbits need space, exercise, and enrichment.
- Rabbits are low maintenance, they require routine, vet care, and mental stimulation.

Understanding these basics will help you make better choices and avoid many common problems described later in the Rabbit care sheet.

3. Detailed solution and guide, the rabbit care sheet

This is the heart of Bunny Care 101. Follow each subsection, and you will have a clear plan to care for any domestic rabbit, from kit to adult.

A. Before you bring your bunny home, planning and costs

Essentials checklist

- A safe enclosure, exercise pen, or a rabbit-proof room.
- Lots of fresh hay, hay feeder or hay rack.
- Heavy ceramic food bowl, water bowl or gravity bottle.

- Rabbit-safe litter and litter box.
- Chew toys, cardboard, apple sticks.
- Hiding place or tunnel, soft bedding.
- Grooming brush, nail clippers.
- Emergency vet contact, first aid basics.

Cost overview

Startup costs vary by country and preference, estimate a reasonable setup for the cage and supplies. Monthly costs include hay, pellets, vegetables, and litter. Budget for emergency vet care, which can be expensive.

Pro tip

Buy hay in bulk if you can, it is cheaper and ensures a steady supply. Cheap or dusty hay causes respiratory issues, so choose quality.

B. Housing and environment, Bunny essentials explained

- **Indoor v/s Outdoor housing, which to choose**
Indoor housing is safer from predators and extreme weather, and it helps bonding. Outdoor runs need extreme predator proofing and good shelter. For beginners, indoors is recommended.
 - **Space requirements**
Ideal exercise space is at least 4 feet by 4 feet pen, with additional outside-pen time. Rabbits need room to hop, stretch, and binky. Avoid wire floors, they hurt rabbit feet, use solid flooring with soft bedding or mats.
 - **Bedding and litter**
Use paper-based or pelletized litter, not clumping cat litter or cedar. Provide a litter box and fill it with hay, since rabbits prefer to eat where they go. Clean spot messes daily, deep clean weekly.
 - **Bunny-proofing**
Cover wires with tubing, move breakables, secure houseplants, and use barriers for rooms you want to protect. Rabbits chew to wear their teeth, so offer safe alternatives.
 - **Pro tip**
Set up a “safe corner” with a hide box, hay, and water, this becomes their comfort zone and reduces stress.
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C. Diet and feeding, the core of the rabbit care sheet

The dietary proportions

- Hay, unlimited, at least 80 percent of diet. Timothy or meadow hay is ideal for adults.
- Leafy greens, 10 to 15 percent, are introduced gradually. Use romaine, cilantro, parsley, and avoid salads high in water content like iceberg.
- Pellets, 5 percent, use plain high-fiber pellets, measured by weight, not volume.
- Treats, occasional fruit or small safe treats.

Why hay is essential

Hay keeps digestion moving, prevents GI stasis, and helps grind down teeth. A rabbit without hay equals teeth and gut problems over time.

Feeding guidelines by life stage

- Kits and young rabbits have slightly higher pellet needs, but always with access to hay. Refer to a baby bunny food chart for exact weights.
- Adult rabbits need constant hay, measured pellets, and daily greens.

Water

Clean fresh water must always be available. Bowls are preferred, they encourage natural posture, but bottles are acceptable if checked daily.

Foods to avoid

Avoid chocolate, avocado, processed human foods, potatoes, onion, and other toxic items. Also avoid seeds and nuts.

Pro tip

If a rabbit is picky, try different hay types or chop greens to make them more appealing. Never suddenly change diet, introduce new foods over several days.

D. Caring for newborn rabbits, how to take care of newborn rabbits

If your rabbit gives birth

Provide a quiet nesting box filled with hay and soft shredded paper. Do not disturb the nest during the first two days unless necessary. The mother often feeds kits once or twice daily, that is normal.

When to intervene

Only if the mother is absent or clearly rejects her kits, contact a rabbit-savvy vet. Hand-rearing requires specialized formula and frequent feedings. It is difficult and risky without guidance.

Weaning schedule

Kits start nibbling hay early and are usually weaned by 8 to 10 weeks, depending on their development. Track weight daily in the early weeks to spot growth problems quickly.

Pro tip

Keep a growth log for kits, small weight drops can indicate illness, and early detection increases survival.

E. Handling, behavior, and bonding, what to expect**Safe handling**

Always support the hindquarters, never pick by ears. If a rabbit struggles, use a towel to make a calm wrap, which reduces stress.

Reading body language

- Thumping means alarm.
- Binky is a happy jump.
- Flop means contentment.
- Grinding teeth usually signals pain.

Bonding

Bonding is gentle and slow, using floor-level time, hand feeding, and patient interaction. Build trust over weeks, do not force contact.

Training

Litter training is often fast, place a hay-filled litter box in the chosen corner, reward with treats. Do not punish accidents, clean with enzyme cleaner, and reinforce good behavior.

Pro tip

Short, consistent sessions are better than long forced handling. A calm approach goes a long way.

F. Health, preventive care, and common problems**Common health issues**

- GI stasis, gut slowdown, urgent if appetite and droppings drop.
- Dental disease, overgrown teeth from poor diet.

- Flystrike in hot or unhygienic conditions, a serious emergency.
- Parasites such as mites and fleas.

Preventive measures

Spay or neuter to reduce hormonal aggression and reproductive cancers. Regular checkups with an exotic animal vet are important. Keep the living area clean, and monitor droppings daily.

When to call a vet

No appetite for more than 8 to 12 hours for an adult, continuous lethargy, breathing difficulty, dramatic changes in droppings, or severe pain signs require immediate veterinary attention.

Pro tip

Create an emergency plan with your vet, know the fastest route, and keep a small recovery kit with syringe, favorite hay, and emergency contact numbers.

4. Advanced tips and insights, long term and seasonal considerations

Bonding rabbits

Introduce pairs slowly in neutral territory, using scent swapping and supervised short sessions. Same sex spayed or neutered pairs usually match well. If fights occur, separate and try again slowly with shorter sessions.

Seasonal care

Rabbits tolerate cold better than heat, so keep indoor temps below about 26°C. Provide shade, cool tiles, or frozen water bottles in summer. In monsoon or humid climates, keep living spaces dry to avoid fly problems.

Exercise and enrichment

Aim for 3 to 4 hours daily outside the pen, gradually increase as the rabbit becomes comfortable. Rotate toys every week, create treat puzzles, and set up a digging box to mimic natural behaviors.

Breed variations

Dwarf breeds may be nervous and need slower introductions. Larger breeds need more space and more calories. Adjust housing and diet to the breed's needs.

Preventive metrics

Weigh your rabbit weekly, and note a 5 to 10 percent weight change. Keep a simple health log for appetite, droppings, and activity.

5. Troubleshooting, Bunny Care 101 problems and fixes

This section answers practical problems, with steps you can act on immediately.

My rabbit won't use the litter box

Problem, your rabbit leaves droppings everywhere.

Solution, clean the litter box daily, add hay inside or beside the box because rabbits like to eat where they go, reward them when they use it, and temporarily confine the rabbit to a small area to encourage correct habits.

If your rabbit frequently urinates or has accidents outside the box, check for urinary tract issues with your vet, and increase the number of litter boxes, one for each main area plus one extra.

My bunny bites me

Problem, nipping or biting during handling or play.

Solution, do not punish, rabbits do not link punishment to the cause, learn body language to understand whether the rabbit is fearful, annoyed, or in pain. Use redirection to chew toys, and consider spaying or neutering if hormone-related aggression is present.

If bites are sudden and severe, check for dental pain, ear infections, or other causes that make the rabbit irritable.

My rabbit stopped eating pellets

Problem, ignore pellets.

Solution, this is acceptable if hay intake is strong, pellets are a supplement, not the main food. Reduce pellets rather than force feed, ensure a variety of hay, and offer small amounts of fresh greens. If total intake drops and droppings decrease, contact a vet.

My rabbit chews furniture and wires

Problem, destructive chewing.

Solution, offer multiple safe chew toys, use apple sticks and untreated wood, cover wires with protective tubing, and block access to treasured items. Ensure sufficient mental stimulation, as chewing can be boredom or dental wear.

My rabbit seems lethargic or hides a lot

Problem, withdrawal and reduced activity.

Solution, check appetite, droppings, and temperature. Monitor food and water intake for 12

hours, observe stools, and call a vet if appetite or droppings decline. Lethargy is a red flag in Bunny Care 101.

My rabbit sprays urine

Problem, marking territory with urine.

Solution, neutering typically reduces spraying, provides multiple litter boxes, clean marked areas with enzyme cleaner to remove scent cues, and reduces stressors that trigger territorial behavior.

My rabbit has loose stools

Problem, diarrhea or soft stools.

Solution, remove high sugar items like fruits and treats, increase hay, and contact a vet if soft stools persist. Diarrhea can quickly lead to dehydration, so monitor water intake and stool frequency.

My rabbit is losing weight

Problem, unexplained weight loss.

Solution, check for dental issues, internal parasites, or GI problems. Weigh weekly, and if you see a 5 to 10 percent drop, seek a vet assessment immediately.

6. Bunny Care FAQ, 10 essential questions answered clearly

These are common Google searches, answered so your readers get value and your post gains a chance at featured snippets.

Q1, How do I know if my rabbit is happy?

Happy rabbits are binky, they jump and twist with joy. They flop onto their side relaxed, explore with curiosity, and show steady appetite and normal droppings. Regular playfulness and grooming behavior are positive signs.

Q2, Can rabbits live outside?

They can, but there are risks. Outdoor rabbits face predators, parasites, and extreme weather. If you keep a rabbit outside, provide a secure, predator-proof run, sheltered housing, and regular checks. For most owners, indoor housing is safer and encourages bonding.

Q3, Do rabbits need baths?

No, do not bathe a rabbit. Rabbits groom themselves, and full baths cause stress and hypothermia. For spot cleaning, use a damp cloth to remove dirty fur, and for severe soiling, consult a vet.

Q4, Can kids take care of rabbits alone?

No, adult supervision is essential. Rabbits are fragile, and pulling, dropping, or rough handling can severely injure them. Kids can help under supervision, with tasks like feeding under adult control.

Q5, How long do pet rabbits live?

Most well cared for rabbits live 8 to 12 years. Proper diet, housing, preventive vet care, and spaying or neutering influence longevity.

Q6, How often should I take my rabbit to the vet?

At least once a year for a health check, and immediately if you notice changes in appetite, droppings, breathing, or behavior. Seek a rabbit-savvy or exotic pet vet.

Q7, How do I litter train a rabbit?

Place a litter box with paper-based litter where your rabbit prefers to go. Put hay in or beside the box, reward success, and confine the rabbit to a smaller space during training. Clean accidents with enzyme cleaner.

Q8, What is GI stasis and how do I prevent it?

GI stasis is the slowing or stopping of gut movement. Prevent it by offering unlimited hay, maintaining hydration, ensuring daily exercise, and avoiding sudden diet changes. If your rabbit stops eating and droppings reduce or change, call a vet immediately.

Q9, Do rabbits need to be spayed or neutered?

Yes, spaying or neutering prevents reproductive cancers, reduces hormone behaviors like spraying and aggression, and often improves personality. Consult your vet for timing and recovery care.

Q10, What should I do if my rabbit stops eating for more than 12 hours?

Contact your vet immediately, monitor droppings, try to encourage hay or a favorite green, but do not force food. Many rabbit problems escalate quickly when appetite drops, so fast vet attention is essential.

7. Conclusion and next steps

Bunny Care 101 is not a list of demands, it is a path to a rich relationship with your rabbit. Start with the rabbit care sheet in this guide, keep hay first, check appetite and droppings daily, and provide space and enrichment. Rabbits give loyal companionship, and with the steps in this Bunny Beginner Guide, you will be ready to give them the best life.

Immediate actions

- 1, Set up the housing and litter box, with hay near the box.
- 2, Buy quality hay and a small bag of pellets, and schedule a vet check.
- 3, Create a daily five minute health check routine, note appetite and droppings.

If you want, download a printable one-page rabbit care sheet from [Rabitz](#), and share your rabbit's name in the comments so I can give you one tailored tip.