

KaninchenInfo EU is guided by the central principle

## Knowledge protects animals

That is why we have made it our mission to educate about rabbits' needs, to promote understanding of these adorable long-eared animals and to enable owners to keep their animals in a species-appropriate manner.

After all, you can only meet their needs by knowing the animals' unique features and characteristics, as well as their biology and physiology.

Keeping them in a species-appropriate manner is not just an imperative of animal welfare.

It is also a very special experience for the owner to see these fascinating animals live out all the facets of rabbit life when they are kept in a species-appropriate manner.



Only appropriate handling lets the "charm of rabbits" come to the fore



For further questions please visit our website

[www.kanincheninfo.eu](http://www.kanincheninfo.eu)

You will find a lot of information and illustrative material about rabbits.

This is offered free of charge and may be printed out and passed on.

You are also welcome to visit us at one of our events or contact us directly.

However, as a matter of professionalism, we do not participate in internet forums, Facebook groups, etc.



We offer special seminars for animal shelters on all topics from intake organisation through quarantine to forming placement groups, as well as further education and exam preparation courses.

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## Lovable rabbits



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## Lovable rabbits



Rabbits are often underestimated as pets because they are by no means the unassuming housemates that they are often referred to as. Rabbits, like any other pet, require a variety of things from their owners and their environment, which must be provided to give them a long, happy and healthy life.

### Social contact - rabbits are communal animals.

Rabbits are sociable animals that live in large groups.

A single animal suffers from being alone! Importantly, only another rabbit can satisfy the need for companionship. Not human beings and also not, as is often mistakenly practiced, guinea pigs. These are different animals that do not understand each other. Rabbits should therefore be kept at least as a couple; a group of 4 to 8 animals is ideal.

### Exercise is fun and keeps them healthy.

It is funny to see rabbits twisting and turning and hopping about. Rabbits have a tremendous urge to move. Caging - even by the hour - is animal cruelty and massively damages the animals' health. To enable species-appropriate movement, an enclosure for two animals must be at least six square meters in size. Rabbits are mainly active at dusk and during the night. A few hours of exercise are not enough. Such an enclosure can be easily built in an indoor environment but keeping them inside is not recommended. Only a well-secured outdoor enclosure is really species-appropriate. The free runs that are commercially available are by no means suitable because they are too small and taking animals out of their usual environment causes considerable stress. Even a so-called "walk" on a leash is by no means animal-friendly!

### Gnawing.

Even though rabbits are not rodents, they have a pronounced urge to gnaw. To wear down their continuously growing teeth, you must provide them with enough material from the forest and the garden to gnaw on.



Hard bread is **not** suitable for tooth abrasion. The "sticks" sold in stores should also not be a part of the rabbits' diet; they are usually made of grains and unhealthy additives and are therefore completely unsuitable. They permanently damage the digestive system and do not help with tooth abrasion. Since the grains are only crushed, but not ground, this results in a poor jaw load on the molars and leads to painful tooth problems.

### Digging.

Digging is a behaviour that is far more than just a pastime. Instead, it is a primal instinct that every rabbit has and is vital in the wild so that it can protect itself from the weather and enemies in a burrow. Rabbits have this correspondingly strong instinct and it is therefore essential that they have the opportunity to dig. Of course, the enclosure must be secured so that none of the animals can escape and no predator can invade.



### Hutches and hiding places.

In the wild, rabbits build channels and tunnel systems to ensure their survival. When an enemy is in sight, they disappear in a flash. Rabbits therefore have a strong urge for protection in a shelter. If this is missing, this creates stress and the rabbits feel discomfort.

### Keeping a look out.

Rabbits like to withdraw, but also have the urge to have an overview of everything. Especially if an enclosure or living space is safe for them and they feel comfortable.



### Variety instead of monotony.

Rabbits kept as pets do not have to struggle to survive. Food is provided, there is no danger lurking in the enclosure, and corners and edges smell the same as always. Rabbit life can quickly get boring in this situation. With a bit of imagination, you can and must counteract this. Boredom makes them sick and leads to behavioural problems.

### Rest.

Given all their urges to stay active, this is also necessary. Rest. Resting spots are shelters and must be respected as such. Rabbits are active at dusk and therefore rest a lot during the day.



### Instincts of flight and prey animals.

Rabbits are **not** cuddly toys and are not suitable for being lifted and carried around. Being "caught" always triggers their flight instinct; their partially motionless poise when they are being held is them being paralysed with fear and is therefore not at all enjoyable for the animals. Under no circumstances should you force them to wear a leash; rabbit show jumping is animal cruelty. If they live in groups in a species-appropriate manner, you can enjoy watching their natural behaviour without the animals having to be held or taken out of the enclosure, and the animals will express their appreciation through loyalty.



### Nutrition.

The healthiest and most important foods are fresh meadow grass, herbs and hay. These must be available 24 hours a day. Quality is especially important. Hay should contain long stalks if possible and not be stale or mouldy. Good hay is available from horse farmers and riding stables. Six to eight varieties of vegetables should always be offered to make sure they get all the nutrients they need. Introducing a new variety always requires **slow familiarization**. Fruit should only be provided in moderation. Fresh water must always be available in a bowl; a nipple drinker is not suitable.



Rabbits need **no** other supplements besides grass, hay and fresh food. The food offered in retail stores or online shops permanently damages the digestive system and leads to an early death. **All** dry food should be avoided. Grain-free dried food, dried vegetables or fruits are just as **unhealthy** as cereals! As a "treat", it is better to give them fresh green fodder.



### Vet.

Rabbits should always have up-to-date vaccinations and be taken to a competent veterinarian at least every 6 months. Since hiding diseases is essential for the survival of flight and prey animals, a conspicuous animal should be taken to the vet immediately.

Please **never** follow tips on internet forums!

**The rabbits will thank you with their health and a long life.**