

BRINGING YOUR NEW BUNNY HOME

Dutchie Buns Rescue



KEY THINGS BEFORE YOU BRING YOUR BUNNY HOME:



VET CARE

Find a local exotic rabbit savvy vet that specializes in bunny care. You will want to have this info BEFORE you emergencies.

We have a list of local rabbit savvy vets we can provide you.



BUNNY PROOFING YOUR HOME

Determine what your home needs in order to be a safe place for your bunny and for your items in your home.

Cord protectors, baby gates, and baseboard covers might all be great items for your home.

LIVING SPACE NECESSITIES:

- X Pen (At least 4x4 space for a single bunny)
 - Cord covers and baseboard covers if doing freeroam
- Tunnel Hidey House/ Hidey Box
- Bed/Pillow
- Litter box
- Food Bowl
- Water Bowl (No Water bottles!)

You can find a list of product recommendations here our website

EVERYDAY CARE SUPPLIES

- Nail Clippers
- Grooming brushes
- Hard shell carrier

REOCCURRING NECESSITIES

- Veggies (See our veggie list below)
- Hay
- Pellet food (recommended brands: Oxbow, Sherwood, Small Pet Select, Supreme Pet)
- Litter (Paper pellets, kiln dried pine pellets, paper bedding litter)
- Chew Toys
- Treats
- Vet visits (yearly check, yearly vaccination, and emergency checks)

MAKING A SMOOTH TRANSITION:

We are just as excited as you are to bring your new bunny home! We want to remind you the best thing you can do is to give them space and quite time for their first few days to adjust to the new environment. If you are giving them freeroam, block off space to let them get adjusted and plenty of hidey spots. When they are ready, allow them to come to you by sitting calmly in their area.

BUNNY HEALTH CHECK

SIGNS YOUR BUNNY MAY REQUIRE A VET VISIT:



EARS

CHECK FOR:

- DIRT
- MITES
- LUMPS
- DISCHARGE



EYES

CHECK FOR:

- SQUINTING
- SWELLING
- DISCHARGE
- REDNESS



NOSE

CHECK FOR:

- DISCHARGE
- SNEEZING



TEETH

CHECK FOR:

- OVERGROWN INCISORS
- BUMPS OR LUMPS ON FACE
- EXCESSIVE GRINDING



FEET

CHECK FOR:

- MATTED FUR
- BLISTERS OR SWELLING ON FOOT PADS
- CURLED NAILS



BEHAVIOR

LOOK FOR CHANGES IN:

- APPETITE
- FECAL MATTER
- PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
- INCREASED SCRATCHING
- HEAD TILT
- IRRITABILITY

EMERGENCY ITEMS TO KEEP ON HAND

- Critical Care
- Baby Gas X
- Gauze pads
- Q-tips
- Styptic powder
- Syringes and eyedropper
- Towels
- Hand sanitizer
- Saline solution
- Vaseline or petroleum jelly
- Heating pad
- Ice pack/Ice Pad
- Antibiotic cream (don't use creams that include pain relief)
- Thermometer
- Blunt tipped scissors and tweezers
- Disinfectant Solution (Like Vitericyn)
- Gloves
- Brushes and flea comb

EMERGENCY KIT TIPS

Critical Care

If there is one item on this list that you should prioritize adding to your first aid kit, it's Critical Care. This is a formula used to force-feed rabbits in emergency situations. It gives them the nutrients they need to remain healthy and keeps their digestion going.

Critical care is a powdered formula that is used to force-feed rabbits when they are ill or recovering from illness. The powder is mixed with water to create a mixture that you can use to syringe feed your rabbit. This may be necessary to keep your rabbit's digestive system going and give your rabbit enough calories.

Gas Drops

Rabbits have a sensitive digestive system and can suffer from a gas build-up. To help ease your rabbit's discomfort and prevent GI stasis, you can give your rabbit a few drops of simethicone, also known as infant gas drops. This is sold in most grocery or drug stores in the baby aisle.

If you notice your rabbit is sitting uncomfortably, pressing their belly onto the floor, they may be suffering from gas. Try to give them 1 mL of the simethicone formula every hour for 4 hours. If there is no improvement after this time, and your rabbit has not been eating or pooping for the past 10 to 12 hours, then you should treat it as an emergency situation and get your rabbit to the vet immediately.

Thermometer

You can take your rabbit's temperature at home. This will give your vet more information when you call to make an appointment for your rabbit. You will need to get a rectal thermometer for this procedure since that's the only way to get an accurate reading with rabbits.

You'll also want to get some Vaseline or petroleum jelly to use as a lube for the thermometer. This will make sure the rabbit is comfortable during the whole procedure. When taking your rabbit's temperature, you'll want to make sure it falls into the normal range of 101.5°F and 103.5°F.

Gauze pads, Q-tips, Bandages

Gauze pads and cotton pads are used for cleaning the area surrounding the wound and applying a disinfectant. Q-tips can be used for cleaning the area around the eyes or even cleaning out a rabbit's scent glands. You'll want to get self-adhesive or non-adhesive bandages. These are the types that will not stick to your rabbit's fur and cause pain or fur loss later on. The self-adhesive bandages tend to be easiest to apply to pets because the bandage will easily stick to itself.

Disinfectant Solution

Include a disinfectant solution in your first aid kit that you can apply to cuts and scrapes.

Vitericyn is a trusted and often recommended brand. You can also use hydrogen peroxide and dilute it with water. Add 1 part hydrogen peroxide to 20 parts water and mix the solution. This would look like ¼ cup of hydrogen peroxide added to 5 cups of water. You can put the solution in a spray bottle, or apply it on with your cotton pads.

Syringes & Eyedropper

The eyedropper is used on the occasion that your rabbit has an eye irritation. This can help flush out any foreign object or gunk and remove it from your rabbit's eye.

It's a good idea to keep at least one syringe on hand so that if your rabbit ever needs to be fed critical care or given medicine or water for hydration, you will have the tools available.

Styptic Powder

Styptic powder is most often used to clot up a bleeding toenail. Sprinkle a small amount of the styptic powder on the bleeding nail and put some pressure on the area using a gauze pad or cotton pad. Once the bleeding has stopped, gently wash the styptic powder off of the area so that your rabbit does not ingest it. You can also choose to use corn starch. This is a much cheaper option since corn starch is available in bulk at the grocery store. Just pour some of the corn starch into a container and keep it with your rabbit emergency kit. It's also a little safer because rabbits can ingest it in small amounts.

Heating & Ice Pads

A heating pad can be a potential life saver in your first aid kit. When rabbits get stressed, their body temperature falls, making it more difficult for their body to function properly. On these occasions, it is necessary to externally heat up your rabbit using a heating pad.

You always want to keep the heating pad at a low setting. Place it near your rabbit or with a towel wrapped around the heating pad (never directly against your rabbit). You should also always make sure your rabbit has the option to move away from the heating pad if they want to.

You can use a heating pad to help your rabbit stay warm if they have gone into shock, are recovering from surgery, are suffering from hypothermia, or if they have GI stasis. This should only be a temporary solution to help your rabbit while you get them to a qualified veterinarian.

Ice pads or frozen water bottles can be used to help your rabbit stay cool in the summertime. They will be essential if your rabbit starts to overheat, giving your rabbit a cool place to lay against and lower their body temperature.

Antibiotic Cream

Antibiotic creams can be used on rabbit cuts or scrapes to prevent infection. Topical creams like this can be found at a drugstore (e.g. Neosporin), but don't use the creams that also include pain relief. Since rabbits are so much smaller than humans, the pain relief element in these drugs can have negative side effects. You want to use only a small dab of the antibiotic cream on your rabbit and then cover it with a bandage temporarily. This will prevent your rabbit from licking it and ingesting the cream.

Blunt Scissors & Tweezers

Scissors and tweezers are versatile tools to add to your first aid kit. They can be used to cut bandages or trim the fur around a cut (carefully!). Scissors can also help to open up the frustrating packaging of other supplies when time is of the essence. Tweezers can be used to remove a lodged splinter.

SAFE/UNSAFE WOOD

BUNNIES LOVE TO CHEW! IT'S AN ESSENTIAL PART OF YOUR PET RABBIT'S HEALTH TO HAVE APPROPRIATE OUTLETS FOR THOSE CONSTANTLY GROWING TEETH. BUT WITH SO MANY POTENTIAL DANGERS FROM TOXIC WOODS AND SPLINTERS, HOW DO YOU PICK SAFE CHEWING OPTIONS?

GET READY TO LEARN EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SMART WOOD CHEWING FOR YOUR FLOPPY-EARED FRIEND! WE'LL EXPLORE EXACTLY WHERE RABBITS DISCOVER TEMPTING WOOD IN YOUR HOME, THE SERIOUS RISKS OF LETTING THEM NIBBLE ON THE WRONG TYPES, AND 10 GREAT WOOD CHOICES THAT WILL HAVE YOUR RABBIT HAPPILY GNAWING AWAY. YOU'LL ALSO GET EXPERT TIPS ON PREPARING OUTDOOR TWIGS AND BRANCHES FOR SAFE CHEWING. LET'S HOP RIGHT INTO THIS MUST-READ GUIDE FOR PROVIDING YOUR BUNNY WITH CHEWING BLISS!

SAFE

Willow

Willow is a very popular wood choice for rabbit chews and toys. The wood is soft but sturdy, making it easy for rabbits to gnaw and shred. It typically does not splinter significantly. Willow wood also contains salicylates similar to aspirin, which may naturally benefit dental health. Just be sure untreated, non-toxic willow wood is sourced for rabbits.

Apple & Pear

Apple and pear tree trimmings make excellent safe wood chews. These fruit wood branches have a pleasant natural scent that attracts rabbits. The wood is relatively soft and tends not to splinter easily. Be sure to offer untreated clippings from trees that have not been sprayed with pesticides.

Kiln-Dried Aspen

Aspen wood from the poplar tree family can be a good option for rabbit chews when it is harvested responsibly and kiln-dried to sterilize. Make sure aspen chew products do not have any glues, preservatives, or artificial scents added. The light color of aspen also makes tooth markings easy to monitor.

Birch & Poplar

Birch trees provide wood that is dense but pliable for chewing. Leaves and small branches can be offered fresh for foraging, while birch twigs and logs make intriguing chews. Similar poplar wood is versatile too. Just confirm both birch and poplar wood is untreated.

Rose Bushes

The thin, flexible stems of rose bushes are irresistible to many rabbits. Rose wood is appealing to chew and gnaw on for dental health. Thornless varieties are ideal, but be sure roses are organic without chemical residue from sprays or treatments.

SAFE

Maple

Maple is a hardwood that can stand up well to rabbit chewing. Smaller pieces and sticks are less likely to splinter. The wood also contains antioxidants. Be sure maple has not been treated in any way before offering to rabbits.

Cottonwood

The cottonwood tree yields a soft wood that rabbits tend to enjoy chewing. Fresh cottonwood branches should be dried first to prevent mold. Ensure the wood does not have any bark or sap which could be toxic.

Raspberry & Blackberry Bushes

Birch trees provide wood that is dense but pliable for chewing. Leaves and small branches can be offered fresh for foraging, while birch twigs and logs make intriguing chews. Similar poplar wood is versatile too. Just confirm both birch and poplar wood is untreated.

Kiln-Dried Pine

Pine wood can be acceptable for rabbits when it is responsibly harvested and kiln-dried. The heat from kiln drying removes sap and sterilizes the wood. Avoid pine shavings and sawdust as well as treated pine

Untreated pine can be made safe for chewing if it is sustainably harvested and kiln-dried to remove sap and sterilize. Avoid pine shavings, sawdust, and lumber with preservatives. Make sure kiln-dried pine has no glues, varnishes, or resins added either.

UNSAFE WOODS

IT CAN BE VERY DANGEROUS AND HARMFUL IF A RABBIT CHEWS ON OR INGESTS AN UNSAFE TYPE OF WOOD. SOME WOODS CAN BE TOXIC, CHEMICALLY-TREATED, OR MAY SPLINTER AND CAUSE INTERNAL DAMAGE.

ONE OF THE BIGGEST RISKS OF RABBITS CHEWING AND EATING UNSAFE WOODS IS GASTROINTESTINAL STASIS OR BLOCKAGES. THE INDIGESTIBLE WOOD PIECES CAN GET STUCK IN A RABBIT'S TEETH OR INTESTINAL TRACT, LEADING TO AN OBSTRUCTION AND A POTENTIALLY LIFE-THREATENING CONDITION. SIGNS OF GASTROINTESTINAL STASIS OR BLOCKAGES INCLUDE LACK OF APPETITE, SMALL OR NO FECAL DROPPINGS, STOMACH BLOATING, OR LETHARGY. THIS CONDITION REQUIRES IMMEDIATE VETERINARY TREATMENT.

IN ADDITION TO BLOCKAGES AND STASIS, WOOD TOXICITY IS A MAJOR CONCERN. CERTAIN WOOD TYPES NATURALLY CONTAIN DANGEROUS COMPOUNDS, WHILE OTHERS ARE TREATED WITH TOXIC STAINS, GLUES, RESINS, PRESERVATIVES, OR PESTICIDES. EVEN A SMALL AMOUNT INGESTED THROUGH CHEWING CAN CAUSE SERIOUS NEUROLOGICAL, LIVER, KIDNEY, OR RESPIRATORY DAMAGE.

- Alder
- Almond
- Apricot
- Avocado
- Beech
- Cedar
- Cherry
- Citrus
- Cypress
- Elder
- Elm
- Fir
- Holly
- Oak
- Olive
- Peach
- Pine (Fresh)
- Plum
- Redwood
- Rosewood

RECOMMENDED VEGGIE LIST

ALWAYS INTRODUCE NEW FOODS SPARINGLY TO SEE HOW YOUR RABBIT RESPONDS BEFORE GIVING IN LARGER AMOUNTS.

IT IS ALWAYS PREFERABLE TO BUY ORGANIC PRODUCE IF POSSIBLE. IF COLLECTING WILD PLANTS, MAKE SURE THEY ARE FROM A PESTICIDE-FREE AREA. ALL APPROVED PLANTS SHOULD BE WASHED OR SCRUBBED BEFORE SERVING THEM TO YOUR RABBIT.

DIET DAILY NEEDS:

- 80% - FRESH HAY
- 10% - VEGGIES/HERBS
- 5% - APPROVED PELLETS
- 5% - FLOWERS/ FRUIT/ TREATS

NOTE: IF YOU DO NOT SEE A PLANT ON THIS LIST, IT IS BEST TO AVOID AND TALK WITH YOUR VET BEFORE GIVING TO YOUR BUNNY.

Leafy Plant Greens

LEAFY GREENS 1

(High in oxalic acid - Only 1 out of these varieties should be given daily)

- Beet greens
- Mustard greens
- Radish tops
- Spinach
- Sprouts
- Swiss chard

LEAFY GREENS 2

(Low in oxalic acid)

- Arugula
- Bok Choy
- Carrot tops
- Chicory
- Cucumber Leaves
- Dandelion Greens
- Endive (Escarole)
- Fennel (Leafy tops & base)
- Frisee Lettuce
- Mache
- Radicchio
- Raspberry leaves
- Red Leaf Lettuce
- Green Leaf Lettuce
- Romaine Lettuce
- Spring Greens
- Turnip Greens
- Watercress
- Wheatgrass
- Yu choy

Non-Leafy Plants

- Bell peppers (any color)
- Carrots (Small slices, good if your rabbit needs to gain weight)
- Celery (Small pieces, sparingly. The threads can get caught in their teeth if not in small pieces)
- Chinese pea pods (the flat kind without large peas)
- Kohlrabi (sparingly)
- Pumpkin (good if your rabbit needs to gain weight, otherwise sparingly)
- Summer squash
- Zucchini squash

Herb Plants

- Basil (any variety)
- Cilantro
- Coriander
- Dill leaves
- Lemon Balm
- Mint (any Variety)
- Nettle (ONLY Dried)
- Oregano
- Parsley
- Rosemary
- Sage
- Tarragon
- Thyme

Flowering Plants

- Borage
- Caraway
- Chamomile
- Chervil
- Clover (Limited, check source for pesticide use)
- Comfrey
- Hibiscus
- Lady's Smock
- Lavender
- Lovage
- Nasturtiums
- Pansies
- Roses
- Salad Burnet

Fruits

Small slices/amounts given as treats only

- Apple (any variety, remove stem, core & seeds)
- Apricot (remove pit)
- Banana (remove peel, small pieces)
- Berries (any type, uncooked)
- Cherries *any variety, without the pits)
- Currants
- Kiwi
- Papaya
- Pear
- Peach (remove pit)
- Pineapple (remove skin)
- Plum (remove pit)
- Mango
- Melons (any can include peel)
- Nectarine (remove pit)
- Star Fruit

FEEDING YOUR BUNNIES

FOOD PLAYS AN ESSENTIAL ROLE IN YOUR RABBIT'S' HEALTH AND WELLBEING. THE WRONG DIET CAN CAUSE ALL SORTS OF HEALTH PROBLEMS, SUCH AS DENTAL ISSUES AND OBESITY. THESE ISSUES CAN EVEN BE FATAL IF LEFT UNADDRESSED. IT IS IMPORTANT TO ALWAYS INTRODUCE NEW FOODS SPARINGLY TO SEE HOW YOUR RABBIT RESPONDS BEFORE GIVING IN LARGER AMOUNTS. POO DROPPINGS ARE A GOOD INDICATOR OF DIGESTION ABNORMALITIES.

VEGGIES:

IT IS BEST PRACTICE TO WASH ALL VEGGIES PRIOR TO SERVING THEM TO YOUR BUNNY. IF YOU DON'T SEE A PLANT ON THIS LIST, BEST TO NOT CHANCE IT OR TALK WITH YOUR VET OR ONE OF OUR COORDINATORS. SEE IMAGE TO THE RIGHT FOR A GREAT LIST.

TREAT RECOMMENDATIONS:

RABBITS HAVE A GIGANTIC, SWEET TOOTH! THEY WILL ABSOLUTELY LOVE YOU IF YOU GIVE THEM SOME YUMMY TREATS, BUT WE NEED TO BE CAREFUL THAT WE DON'T GIVE THEM TOO MANY. RABBITS HAVE A SENSITIVE DIGESTIVE SYSTEM AND TOO MANY SWEET TREATS CAN EASILY MAKE THEM SICK. IT'S NOT ALWAYS OBVIOUS WHAT KIND OF TREATS ARE GOOD FOR RABBITS THOUGH. IT CAN BE VERY CONFUSING FOR FIRST-TIME RABBIT OWNERS.

THE HEALTHIEST TREATS FOR RABBITS ARE DRIED HAY-BASED TREATS (SUCH AS THE OXBOW BRAND, SMALL PET SELECT, SELECT SUPREME TREATS). FRESH FRUITS ARE ALSO HEALTHY AS LONG AS THEY ARE GIVEN IN SMALL AMOUNTS. YOU SHOULD ONLY GIVE YOUR RABBIT APPROXIMATELY 1 TABLESPOON WORTH OF TREATS IN A SINGLE DAY.

ANOTHER TYPE OF TREAT YOU CAN LOOK FOR IS BLENDS OF DRIED HERBS TO GIVE YOUR RABBIT. THESE TREATS ARE GREAT FOR USING IF YOU HAVE A PICKY RABBIT WHO NEEDS TO EAT MORE HAY. YOU CAN SPRINKLE AN ENTICING BLEND OF DRIED HERBS AND FLOWERS INTO THEIR PILE OF HAY, AND BY DOING SO ENCOURAGE YOUR RABBIT TO EAT MORE OF THEIR HEALTHY HAY WHILE THEY FORAGE FOR TREATS.





BUNNY DAILY CHECKLIST



	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
PELLETS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HAY - AM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WATER - AM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DAILY VEGGIES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LITTERBOX CHECK	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HAY - PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WATER - PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PLAYTIME	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Weekly Checklist

- LITTERBOX DEEP CLEAN
- RUNSPACE DEEP CLEAN
- GROOMING/BRUSHING
- BASIC HEALTH CHECK

1-2 Month Checklist

- NAIL TRIM
- SCENT GLAND CLEANING

New Food Introduction Tracker

Food Item	Date	Amount	Notes
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