

# Interesting Facts About Rabbits

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Some people think rabbits and hares are rodents, but the interesting facts about rabbits are that they are not. It has been discovered that rabbits, hares and rodents may have shared a common prehistoric ancestor. Rabbits and hares are from a completely different family. Rabbits and hares have two sets of upper front teeth where the rodent does not.

A rabbit and a hare may look similar and act similar but they are two different species. Some interesting facts about rabbits are that they are highly sociable and live underground in community group. While a hare lives above ground and are solitary creatures. Hares are generally the larger of the two with longer legs and torso.

During the Middle Ages, the French Monks as a food source and for the rabbit's fur kept rabbits. Through selective breeding, the monks produced a variety of colors not found in the wild.

By the 19th century there were twelve different rabbit breeds. It was during the 18th & 19th centuries, Industrial Revolution, that breeding stock became very popular. It was then the idea of breeding rabbits solely for meat was out.

Breeding practices were born to include breed standards, breed clubs, national organizations, shows and good breeding practices.

The first true domestic breed is the English Lop, the rabbits with big floppy ears.

In 1845, the 1st rabbit organization was formed in Great Britain and is called Metropolitan Rabbit Club. The first United States rabbit organization is American Rabbit Breeders Association (ARBA), which started in 1910 and still in business today.

The interesting facts about rabbits are that they were once wild but are now living with humans fully domesticated. Even though they are domesticated, rabbits know they are prey animals.

They use their keen senses to hear or smell if danger is near. Did you know they could move their ears independently of each other? They can, to help them hear if danger is approaching. It's the rabbit's own built-in radar system.

They also have powerful hind legs that they use to get them out of danger. That is why you'll see rabbits darting across a yard very quickly. Wild rabbits can reach speeds of 24 miles an hour.

Rabbits are neat creatures. They groom themselves frequently. This is why you need to be careful of hairballs.

[Rabbits are quiet, but communicate through their body language.](#)

[Do You Know How Long Rabbits Live? Here are some tips.](#)

They are also very territorial; each family has an alpha buck (unneutered male) and an alfa doe (unsprayed female) with lower [ranking](#) males and females under them. There was even a pecking order with my boys who were neutered. Petie was the boss and Oreo was under him. I don't know if it was because Petie was the larger of the two or that Petie was there first. Petie was definitely the Top Bunny.

Even though rabbits have been bred throughout the years to become domesticated, they have kept much of their wild character, such as their physiology, behavior and [temperament](#). This is why we find rabbits to be fascinating to watch and have as wonderful pets.



## **Here are some rabbit care safety tips for your house rabbit**

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Rabbit care is very important to your little bundle of joy. One of the things you need to be aware of is bunny proofing your home. Also see my tips on Rabbit Health Issues.

Since house rabbits love to chew, cords must be out of their way and anything you value should be out of reach. House rabbits love to investigate new surroundings. So rabbit care is very important so your pet rabbit will not get into trouble.

My Foo would chew cords on just one side as far as he could. So I had to tape all my cords up so he could not get to them. The part of the cord I could not tape, I would secure it so it would be out of harms way.

You can buy flexible heavy plastic tubing to put around electric cords so it will be difficult for your house rabbit to chew through. I would from time to time go to the hardware stores looking for new ideas to keep the electrical cords away from my rabbits.

Buying flexible plastic sheets to put around the legs of your tables and chairs is also a good idea. If your tables and chairs are made out of wood, chances are your house rabbit will chew it.

I have miscellaneous furniture items that my boys have put their mark on. You can tell what pieces they liked the best.

Having pet rabbits will make you think of ways to keep them safe. It's amazing how our little bundle of joys can keep us on our toes!

They can and will, squeeze into the tiniest opening. Know that everything at their level is fair game to them. This is why rabbit care is so important; to make sure what they see is not harmful to them.

#### Rabbit Care - Digging

It's natural for a rabbit to dig. In the wild burrowing in the ground makes their dens. So our little furry friends will think a quiet corner of your room is a good place to dig.

The only problem is that it's not dirt they are digging in but your carpet. Make sure the room you allow your house rabbit to roam has the carpet corners secured.

You can put a heavy object in each corner that is easily exposed to your little friend. Another suggestion is to buy plastic chairmats used in offices.

They come in different sizes or you can buy plastic runners. They both have the little "gripping teeth" on the bottom to grab hold of the carpet. This makes it difficult for your rabbit to move them out of their way, which your rabbit will try.

They will dig at your carpet and or chew your carpet, especially if the fibers are high. Since rabbits are so quiet you really need to watch them. Your house rabbit can be headstrong and you'll have to take extra rabbit care precautions.

I would find Foo pulling the rug fibers up as if he was outside chewing on grass. I had to correct this bad behavior. (Telling him "No" or a little squirt of water worked well with him) But he always seemed to find a hide-away corner to chew.

The bad thing about carpet chewing is they will leave a hole in your carpet and they can also get a piece of the carpet fiber caught in their teeth. This happened to Foo and the doctor had a difficult time finding the tiny piece of carpet to remove.

You can also provide a box of dirt for your little friend to dig in. Get a cat litter box, fill it half way or so with dirt and let him go to town. This way he may leave your carpet alone. Since he has a place where he is allowed to dig.

Try shredded paper also, if you shred your important documents instead of throwing away or recycling the paper, give it to your rabbit to play with. He may have a blast with it. He'll be able to dig at it, tunnel through it, and hide in it.

Give your pet rabbit a blanket or bed sheet to crumble up. This is another way to curb their need to dig your carpet. They like to dig at the blanket or sheet and make it just so. I make sure my boys always have a blanket or sheet to play with.

#### Rabbit Care - Toys

A part of your rabbit care should involve some playtime. Yes, rabbits like to play just like our other four-legged friends do. (Our dogs and cats).

It's good exercise for your house rabbit as well as a great bonding experience for you! The nice part about it is you can use household items if you like. There are also toys you can buy at pet supply stores for rabbits.

Don't just look at the rabbit toys. Look at the cat, hamster and small dog toys for your little friend.

Here are some household toy suggestions. An empty pop can with a pebble in it. Place a few pebbles in the can and tape the hole closed. Your house rabbit will enjoy rolling the can around. Make sure there are not sharp edges where your rabbit can get injured.

Use an empty toilet paper roll. Your rabbit will like to toss the roll around. He may even roll it! You can show him how by placing the roll down in front of him and give it a little push. He may follow your lead.

Give your rabbit twigs from fruit trees. He will love to chew on them and toss them around.

Rabbits are playful little creatures as well as little investigators. So take the time to have some fun with your friend. Give him fun, safe toys to investigate and play with. This also keeps your rabbit from getting bored.

Your Rabbit's House- (if you decided not to cage your friend)

I always had and have my bunny rabbits in a separate room. When I lived in an apartment, I set up their bunny home in my spare bedroom. Now in my house, the bunny area is in my laundry room.

My laundry room is between my kitchen and family room. It's basically in the middle of my house. It's not off in a corner someplace. I leave the overhead light on for Oreo during the day and the door is always open.

I do have a gate to keep my dogs out of the room. Not that they will hurt Oreo, they steal his treats. So when I'm not home I make sure the gate is in place so my dogs cannot enter the room.

At night, I fix the gate so Oreo can come out of the room if he wants. The dogs do not bother Oreo. If Oreo comes out of his room during the day, they will just sit and look at him.

My girls (my dogs) will usually tell me Oreo is out by the way they are acting. It's like they are telling me, "Oreo's out"! I just tell them it's ok and to leave Oreo alone and they do. I think my girls are more afraid of Oreo than he is afraid of them. Oreo was here first, so they are used to him.

The laundry room is big enough for Oreo. It has little nooks for him to hide in but where I'm still able to see him. The room has a place for him to stretch out in, a location for his food and water bowls and of course his litter box.

When I remove the gate in the doorway, Oreo has the other side of the room to investigate. It's a place where the furnace is and a workbench. So there are new places for him to run around and see if I moved anything.

Oreo will know if I moved something. If I have, he will be right there to check it out. As if he has to give his approval. Rabbits are funny little creatures.

Since Oreo is a "senior citizen" he doesn't run around the house as he used to. He stays in his local area. Once in awhile, I do hear him behind the couch in the family room.

#### Rabbit Care - Plants

Pet rabbits love to graze when they are out and about. So have some of their hay at their disposal where they can easily see it.

To make sure you are giving your rabbit the best rabbit care, here are some plants that are dangerous to them.

Common milkweed

Boxwood

Oriental Bittersweet

Lily of the Valley

Poison Hemlock

Jimson Weed

Toadstools

Foxglove

English Ivy

Daffodil

Oleander

Azalea

Black-Eyed Susan

Buttercup

Nightshade

Bird of Paradise

A rule of thumb, if a plant is known to be toxic in general for any reason, please do not let your rabbit near it. It may cause him to become very sick or it could be fatal to him.

Here's a list of some plants that are safe for your pet rabbit.

Sunflower

Dandelion-

Apple (but not the seeds) Leaves, branches and fruit

Basil

Blackberry- leaves, stems and fruit

Clover, red and white

Maple, sugar and silver. Leaves and branches

Mint

Pear (but not the seeds)

Strawberry

Willow- leaves and branches

Branches are also good to let your rabbit chew on to help keep their teeth trimmed. Rabbit's teeth grow continuously; so they need harder items to chew on to keep them in good shape.

Rabbit care is very important to our little friends. Hopefully, these tips will help you have a long and happy friendship with your pet rabbit.