
**AVIAN & EXOTIC CLINIC
of the Monterey Peninsula**

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Housing for Rabbits

Is it ok to keep my rabbit in a cage with a wire floor?

Rabbits were not designed to live on wire floors, which can cause pressure sores on their feet. If you must use a cage with a wire floor, provide your rabbit with padding such as cardboard or towels to protect the feet.

A solid floor is ideal. Place a litter box in the corner. Line the litter box with newspaper and shredded paper bedding & grass hay.

What size cage is best?

Bigger is better! A cage should be at least 4 times the size of your bunny – more if it is confined for a large amount of the day. You can build or buy your rabbit a two-story “condo” with floors connected by a ramp – they love this! Placing the cage inside an X-pen with the cage door open will give the rabbit room to roam while keeping it safe from danger while you are away.

Can my new bunny run loose 24 hours a day?

An untrained rabbit probably should be kept in a cage while you’re not home to supervise and at night when you sleep. Rabbits are crepuscular, which means that generally they sleep during the day and during the night but are ready to play at dawn and at twilight. Be sure to let them out during the evening when you are home, and if possible, in the morning while you get ready for work.

What can I do to make the rabbits cage time more enjoyable?

A cage should be seen as the rabbits “nest”, a special place where they can feel safe and secure. Make the nest enjoyable and it will enjoy being there, even when the cage door is open! Keep it stocked with baby toys, a synthetic sheepskin rug, a piece of wood attached to the inside (like a baseboard), and when you put them to bed at night, a nice veggie or fruit snack.

When is it OK to let a rabbit run loose in the house?

When your rabbit is litter box trained, and the part of your house that your rabbit has access to is sufficiently bunny proof, your rabbit can be allowed free run of the home (or part of it) even when you are not home. The more room your rabbit has to run around in, the more delightful you will find it as a companion.

Even when a rabbit has a lot of room to run around, it may still get bored. A bored rabbit is often a naughty rabbit. If you don’t make every attempt to provide your rabbit with lots of entertainment, in the form of boxes, baskets, brooms, sticks, magazines, phone books, grass mats, etc., then it will entertain itself with destroying your carpet.

Can I let my rabbit run loose outside?

Always supervise your rabbit when it's outside. It takes just a few seconds for the neighbor's dog to jump the fence and attack or frighten your rabbit to death.

Make sure that the grass has not been sprayed with pesticides or fertilizers. Check the yard for holes in the fence and poisonous plants.

Under no circumstances should rabbits be left outside after dark. Predators are opossums, raccoons, skunks, coyotes, dogs, and occasionally cats. If you have an outside enclosure that you feel is very secure, a rabbit can still die of fright while a predator taunts the rabbit from the outside. Mosquitos can also carry a dangerous disease that is fatal to rabbits.