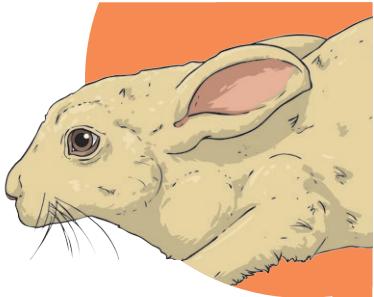


Pet Care of a Rabbit

Rabbits come in all sorts of sizes and colours. They also have very different characters. They can live for between 9 to 12 years, sometimes longer.



Diet

Rabbits eat hay and sometimes grass. They need pellets which are high in vitamins and minerals. They graze in the morning and evening, and always need clean, fresh water.

Giving rabbits hay helps them digest their food.

Muesli is dangerous and can cause serious problems for their teeth.

Environment

Rabbits need a large space to live in. They need room to hop, jump, dig and stand on their back legs.

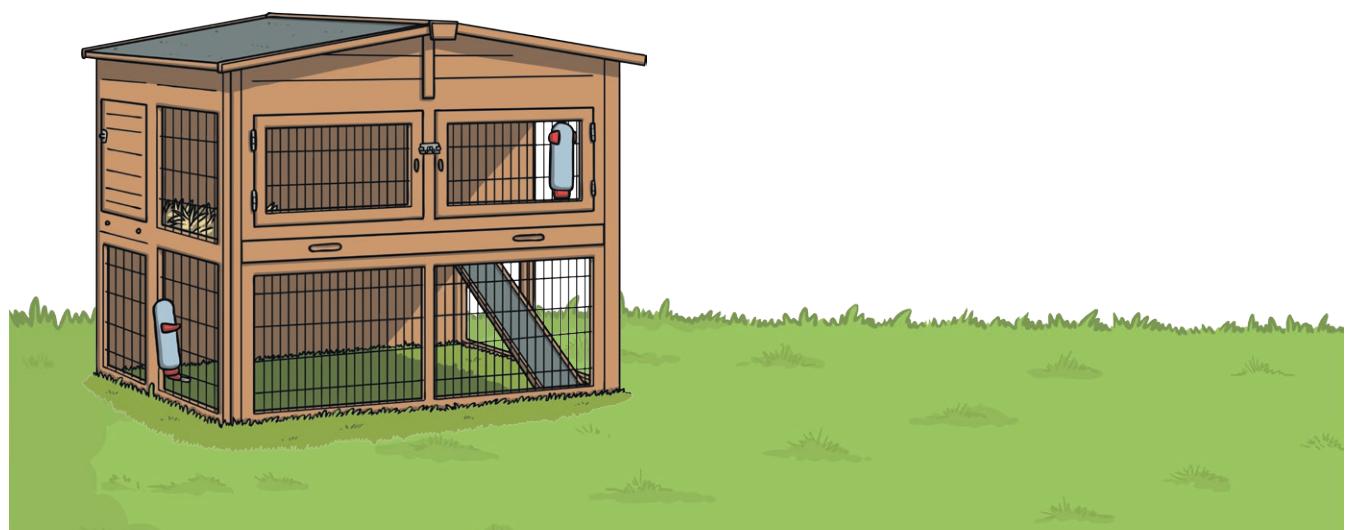
They must be safe from animals like foxes and birds of prey.

They need places to hide, and a dry, clean shelter, which will keep out the bad weather or the hot sun.



Did You Know?

Rabbits will be afraid of cats and dogs, but if they are introduced carefully, they can become friends!



Housing a rabbit

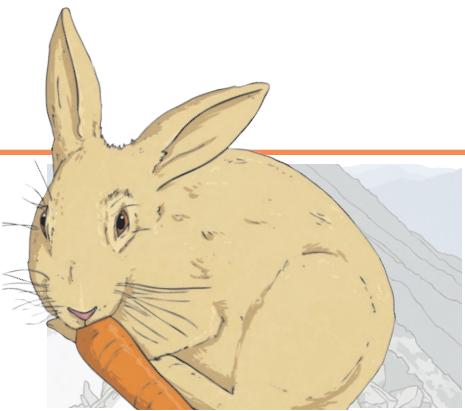
- Rabbits need dust-free hay or straw as bedding.
- All rabbits need to be able to go to a toilet area, which is not near the place they sleep in.
- Rabbits like being with other rabbits, so getting two is a great idea!

Rabbit behaviour

Rabbits are clever and need things to keep them busy. They need:

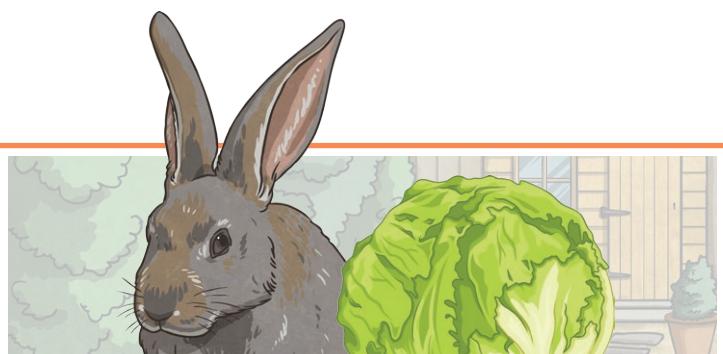
- toys to chew;
- a sand box for digging in;
- places to hide;
- chance to play with other rabbits and people.

You must always pick a rabbit up very carefully.



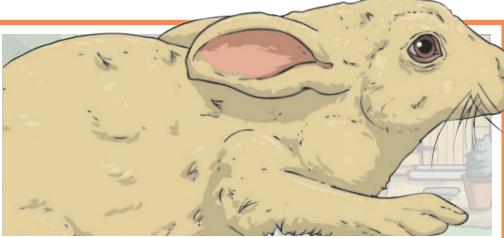
Did You Know?

Rabbits should not be given carrots very often! They are high in sugar, and rabbits can get overweight. Carrots should only be given as a treat!



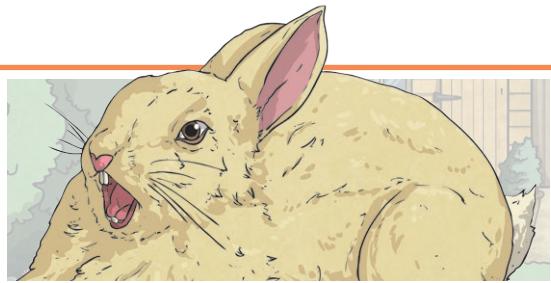
Did You Know?

Some lettuce is harmful for a rabbit. Some types can make them ill.



A Worried Rabbit

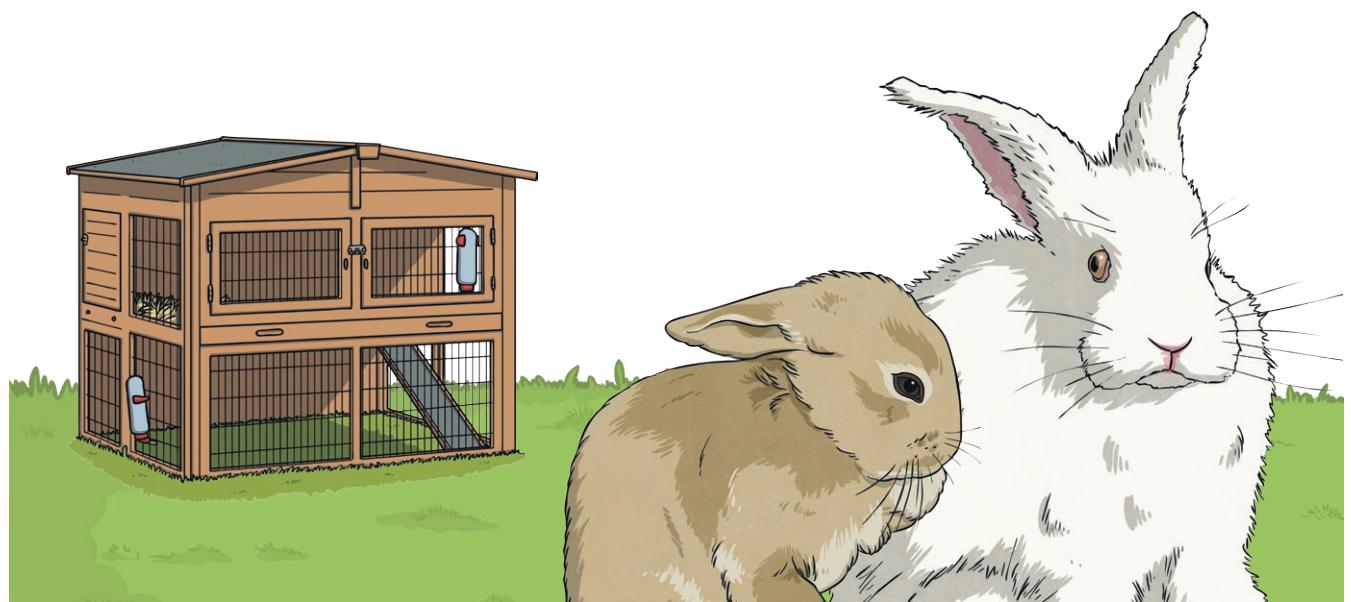
This rabbit is in a crouched position, its head is flat to the ground and its muscles are tense. Its ears are wide apart and flat against its back.



An Angry Rabbit

This rabbit is standing with its body down and its head upwards. Its mouth is open and it is showing its teeth. Its ears are right back and lowered.

Remember: You must always treat your rabbit with kindness and gentleness.



Questions

1. How long might a rabbit live?

2. When do rabbits eat?

3. Why should rabbits not have muesli?

4. Name one type of predator for a rabbit.

5. Would you say a rabbit likes to have company? How do you know?

6. Why could too many carrots be a danger to a rabbit?

Name two things that would stop a rabbit getting bored.

8. How might a rabbit be feeling if it is sitting in a crouched position with its head flat to the ground?

9. How should people treat a rabbit?

Answers

1. How long might a rabbit live?

A rabbit might live for 9 to 12 years.

2. When do rabbits eat?

Rabbits eat at dawn and dusk (morning and evening).

3. Why should rabbits not have muesli?

Rabbits should not have muesli because it causes serious problems with their teeth.

4. Name one type of predator for a rabbit.

A fox or a bird of prey are predators for rabbits. (Accept one.)

5. Would you say a rabbit likes to have company? How do you know?

I would say a rabbit likes to have company because in the text it says rabbits "like to be with other rabbits".

6. Why could too many carrots be a danger to a rabbit?

Too many carrots could be a danger to a rabbit because they are high in sugar and rabbits can get overweight.

7. Name two things that would stop a rabbit getting bored.

Two things which would stops a rabbit getting bored, are:

toys to chew;

a sand box for digging in;

places to hide;

chance to play with other rabbits and people.

(Accept any two.)

8. How might a rabbit be feeling if it is sitting in a crouched position with its head flat to the ground?

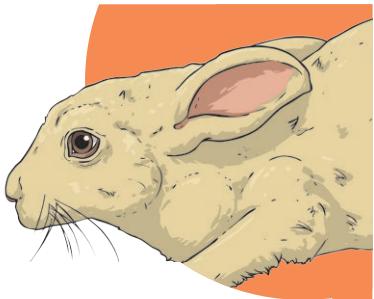
If a rabbit is sitting in a crouched position with its head flat to the ground, it might be feeling worried.

9. How should people treat a rabbit?

People should treat rabbits with kindness and gentleness.

Pet Care of a Rabbit

Rabbits come in all sorts of sizes and colours. They also have very different personalities. Domestic rabbits are related to the wild European rabbit. They live for between 9 to 12 years, sometimes longer.



Diet

Rabbits eat good quality hay and sometimes grass. They often need pellets which are high in vitamins and minerals. They graze at dawn and dusk, and always need clean, fresh water to be available.

Giving rabbits hay encourages their digestive system to function well. They produce droppings which they then eat to take in the nutrients.

Museli is dangerous and can cause serious dental problems.

Environment

Rabbits need a large space to live in. They are very active animals, so need room to hop, jump, dig and stand on their back legs.

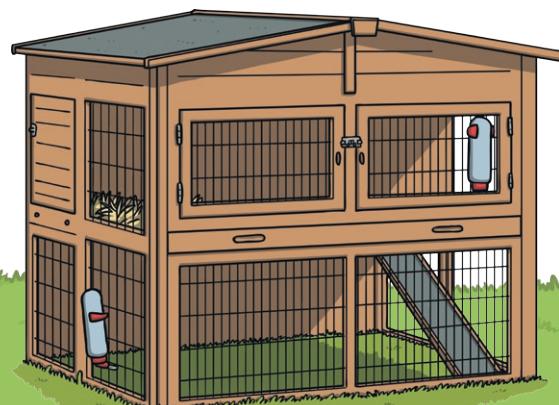
They must be safe from predators, like foxes and birds of prey, as rabbits are prey animals. Fortunately, they are able to see all around themselves, so they are always on the lookout for danger!

They need places to hide, and a dry, clean shelter, which will keep out extreme weather.



Did You Know?

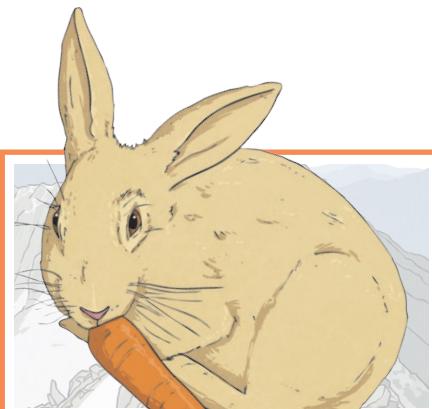
Rabbit teeth grow continuously, at a staggering 3mm per week!



Housing a rabbit

Rabbits must have a good amount of dust-free hay or straw as bedding, to sleep comfortably.

All rabbits need to be able to go to a toileting area, which is separate to their sleeping space. They can be trained to use litter boxes, similar to the sort cats use.



Did You Know?

Rabbits should not be given carrots very often! They are high in sugar, and should only be given as a treat!

Rabbit Behaviour

Rabbits are intelligent animals and need things to keep them busy. They need a range of toys to chew, a sand box for digging in, places to hide and chance to play with other rabbits and people.

They need handling by people from an early age, or they can become worried when meeting people at a later stage. Rabbits must always be handled very carefully.

You might see a rabbit which is feeling distressed, chewing the bars of the cage, playing with the water bottle, not wanting to move or sitting hunched up in a corner.



A Worried Rabbit

This rabbit is in a crouched position, its head is flat to the ground and its muscles are tense. Its ears are wide apart and flat against its back.

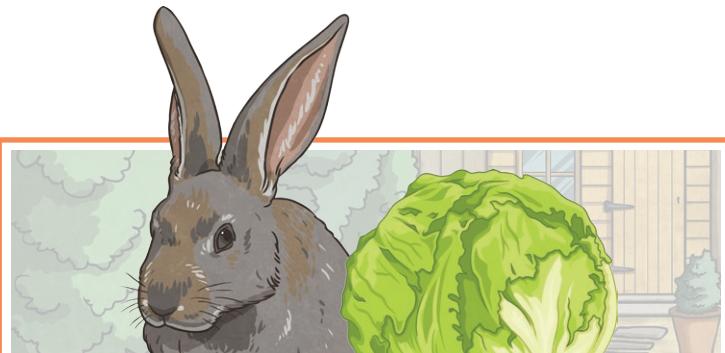


An Angry Rabbit

This rabbit is standing with its body down and its head upwards. Its mouth is open and it is showing its teeth. Its ears are right back and lowered.

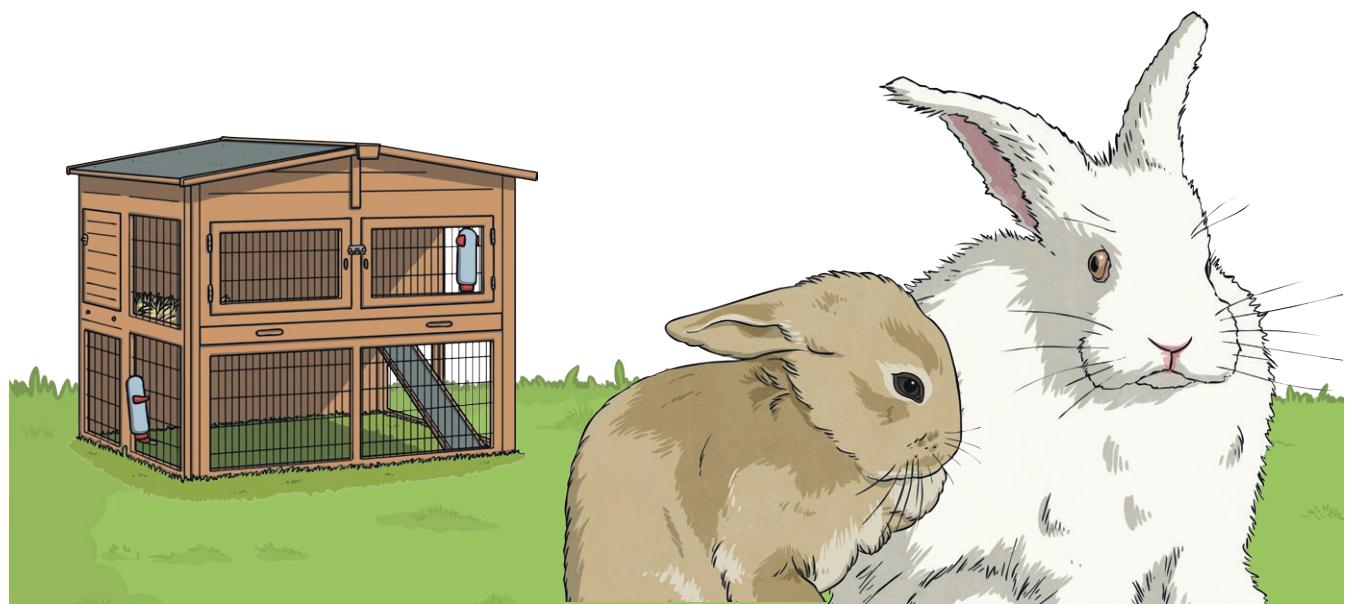
Rabbit behaviour depends very much on its age, its past experiences and its general personality. You must always treat your rabbit kindly and with gentleness. They are easily frightened, and shouting will make them very unhappy.

Rabbits are most content with other, friendly rabbits. This might be worth considering if you want to get a rabbit.



Did You Know?

Some lettuce is actually harmful for a rabbit. Some varieties contain a substance which can upset their digestion.



Questions

1. Name three ways rabbits might be different to one another.

2. Why do rabbits need to be given pellet?

3. Describe the purpose of giving rabbits hay.

4. What do rabbits do with their droppings and why?

5. Explain how rabbits are built to escape the threat of predators.

6. What are the main points of the paragraph in italics?

7. Why can't rabbits have particular types of lettuce?

8. Describe three activities which might help prevent a rabbit getting bored.

9. Why might a rabbit be showing its teeth when it is angry?

10. What would you advise a new rabbit owner about how to treat their new pet?

Answers

1. Name three ways rabbits might be different to one another.

Rabbits may be different in size, colour and personality.

2. Why do rabbits need to be given pellets as well as hay?

Rabbits need to be given pellets as well as hay because the pellets have the vitamins and minerals that they need.

3. Describe the purpose of giving rabbits hay.

The purpose of giving rabbits hay is that it helps their digestive system work properly, and they have an unusual digestive system.

4. What do rabbits do with their droppings and why?

Rabbits eat their droppings! They do this to re-ingest the nutrients.

5. Explain how rabbits are built to escape the threat of predators.

Rabbits are able to see all around themselves so they can see a predator coming. They are also active animals so they can hop, jump and hide from a predator.

6. What are the main points of the paragraph in italics?

The main points of the paragraph in italics is to explain how to get a rabbit to toilet in the same place, and to tell an owner not to have it near where they sleep.

7. Why can't rabbits have particular types of lettuce?

Rabbits cannot have particular types of lettuce because they contain a substance that can upset their digestion.

8. Describe three activities which might help prevent a rabbit getting bored.

Three activities which might help prevent a rabbit getting bored are: having a range of toys to chew, a sand box for digging in, places to hide and chance to play with other rabbits and people. (Accept any three.)

9. Why might a rabbit be showing its teeth when it is angry?

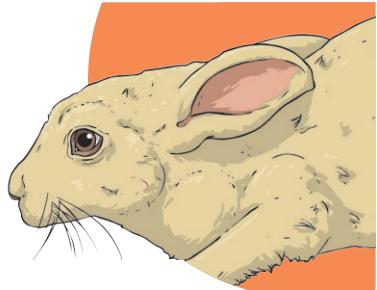
The rabbit might be trying to scare off a person or animal, by showing its teeth.

10. What would you advise a new rabbit owner about how to treat their new pet?

I would advise them to treat the rabbit kindly and gently and not to shout at it because it will be frightened.

Pet Care of a Rabbit

Rabbits come in all sorts of sizes and colours. They also have very different personalities. Domestic rabbits are related to the wild European rabbit. They live for between 9 to 12 years, sometimes longer, and there are an estimated 1.2 million pet rabbits in the UK!



Diet

Rabbits mainly eat good quality hay and sometimes grass. They often require pellets which are high in vitamins and minerals. They graze at dawn and dusk, and always need clean, fresh water to be continuously available.

Rabbits have an unusual digestive system. The hay enables their digestive system to function properly. They produce droppings called caecotropus, which they then eat, ingesting the nutrients.

Museli is dangerous and can cause serious dental problems.

Environment

Rabbits require a large area to live. They are very active animals, so need space to hop, jump, dig and stand on their back legs.

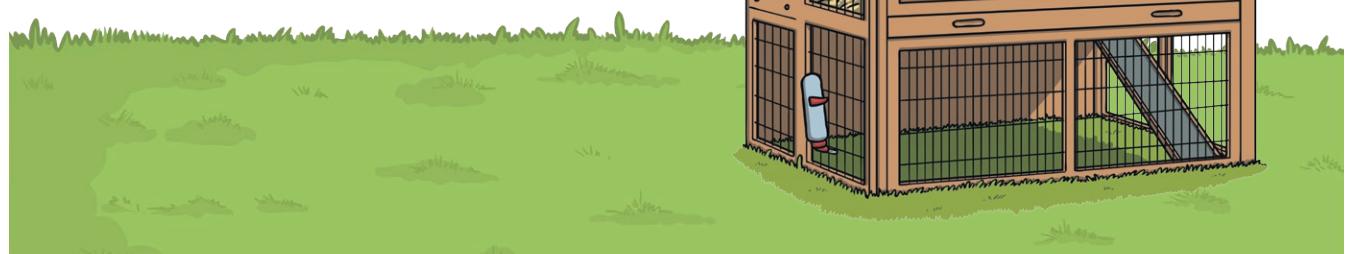
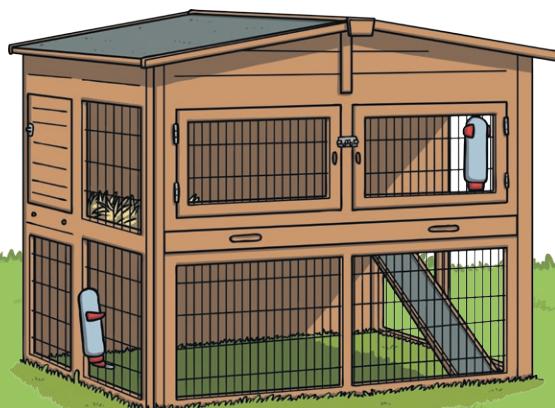
Their environment must be safe from predators, as rabbits are prey animals. Fortunately, they are able to see 360° around themselves, so they are always on the alert for danger!

They need places to hide as well as a dry, well-ventilated shelter, which protects them from extreme weather.



Did You Know?

Rabbit teeth grow continuously, at a staggering 3mm per week!

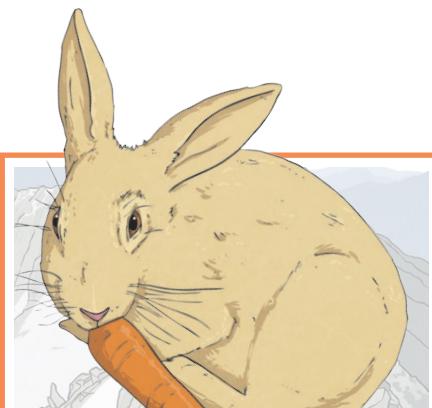


Housing a Rabbit

Rabbits must have enough bedding to sleep comfortably. This needs to be dust-free hay or straw. Some rabbits can be kept as indoor rabbits, and need very specific care.

All rabbits need easy access to a toileting area, which is separate to their sleeping space. They can be trained to use litter boxes, which contain shredded newspaper or non-clumping cat litter.

Rabbits are most settled when they have the company of other rabbits. If you are considering getting one, two might actually be a better idea.

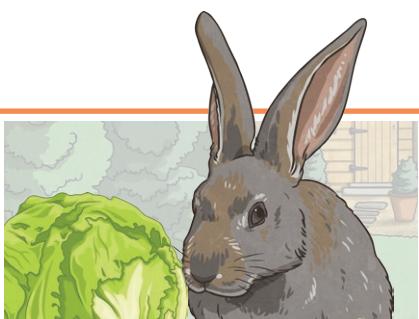


Did You Know?

Rabbits should not be given carrots very often! They are high in sugar, and should only be given as an occasional treat!

Rabbit Behaviour

Rabbits are intelligent animals and need things to keep them entertained. Therefore, they require a variety of toys to chew, a sand box for digging in, places to hide and opportunities to play with other rabbits and people.



Did You Know?

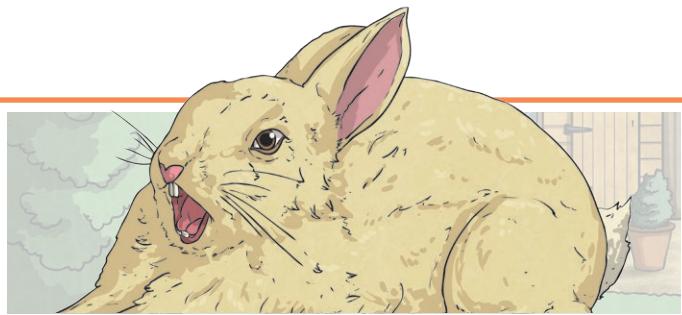
Some lettuce is actually harmful for a rabbit. Some varieties contain lactucarium, which can cause digestive problems.

They need handling by people from an early age, or they can become worried. Other signs that a rabbit is feeling distressed or bored is chewing the bars of the cage, playing with the water bottle, displaying a reluctance to move and sitting hunched up in a corner.



A Worried Rabbit

As with any animal, their behaviour will alter if they are worried or afraid.

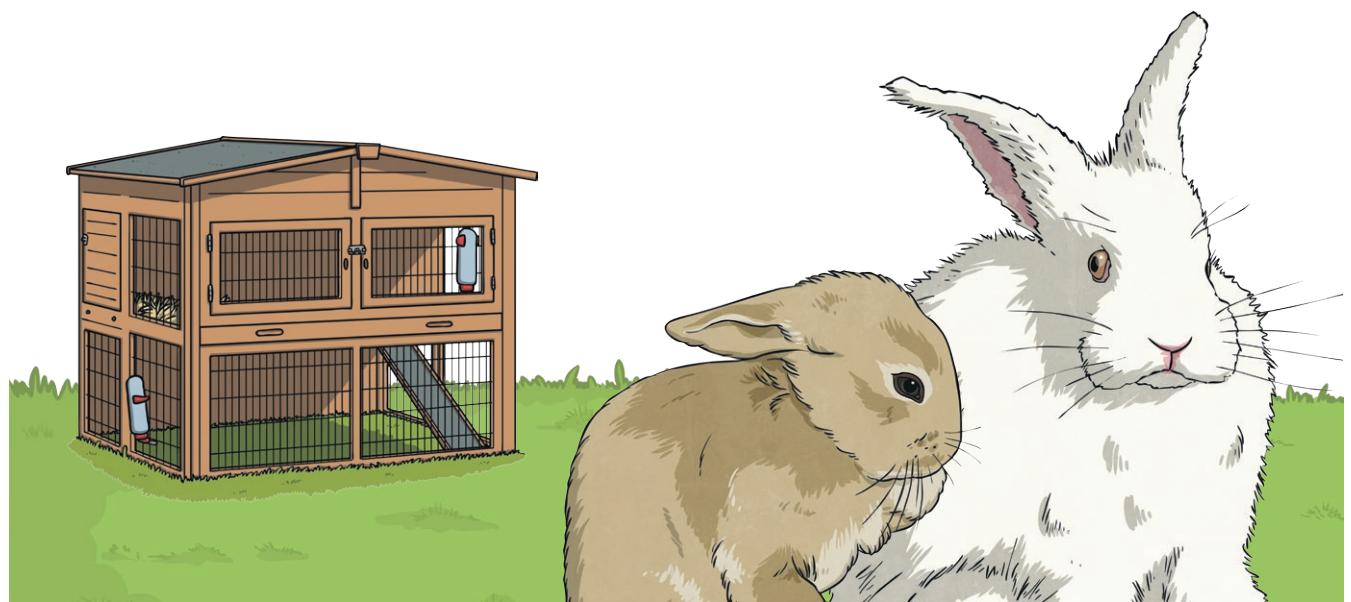


An Angry Rabbit

This rabbit is standing with its body down and its head tilted upwards. Its mouth is open and it is showing its teeth. Its ears are right back and lowered.

If a rabbit is in pain it can become aggressive and hide more often.

Rabbit behaviour depends very much on its age, its past experiences and its general personality. You must always treat your rabbit with kindness and gentleness. They are easily frightened, and shouting will make them very unhappy and stressed.



Questions

- Identify the main points in the first paragraph under the subheading 'Diet'.

- Summarise the paragraph in italics.

- What sort of predators do you think domestic rabbits might have?

- Describe how rabbits are equipped to avoid danger.

- How else might the author have described a suitable shelter as being 'well-ventilated'?

6. What would you advise a new owner of a rabbit, about how they should be housed?

7. Which of the Did you know...? facts surprises you and why?

8a. Your friend has told you that their rabbit is sitting on its own a lot and won't go anywhere.

What could be wrong? What question could you ask your friend to get a better idea of what is wrong?

8b. Now make a suggestion to help them improve the behaviour of their rabbit.

9. Either on the text sheet or in your book, write a detailed description of what behaviour the worried rabbit is displaying in the illustration.

10. What is the purpose of the last paragraph?

Answers

1. Identify the main points in the first paragraph under the subheading 'Diet'.
The main points in the first paragraph under the subheading Diet, are:
Rabbits eat hay or straw;
Rabbits need pellets for vitamins and minerals;
Rabbits need clean, fresh water all the time.

2. Summarise the paragraph in italics.
The paragraph in italics is about a rabbit's unusual digestive system, and how they eat their droppings to re-ingest the nutrients.

3. What sort of predators do you think domestic rabbits might have?
Pupil's own response. Possible answers: foxes, dogs.

4. Describe how rabbits are equipped to avoid danger.
Rabbits are well equipped to avoid danger because they can see 360° around themselves, so they can see a predator from any angle it may attack.

5. How else might the author have described a suitable shelter as being 'well-ventilated'?
Pupil's own response. Possible answers: airy, well aired, lets air through, not stuffy.

6. What would you advise a new owner of a rabbit, about how they should be housed?
Pupil's own response based on: the type of bedding a rabbit needs; how to position and train them to use a toilet area; that two rabbits would be good company for one another.

7. Which of the Did you know...? facts surprises you and why?
Pupil's own response.

- 8a. Your friend has told you that their rabbit is sitting on its own a lot and won't go anywhere. What could be wrong? What question could you ask your friend to get a better idea of what is wrong?
A rabbit which is sitting on its own and won't go anywhere, could be either bored or worried, as this is the sort of behaviour a rabbit might show. I could ask my friend if it is chewing the bars of its cage, playing with its water bottle or sitting hunched up.

- 8b. Now make a suggestion to help them improve the behaviour of their rabbit.
I could suggest they get a sand box so the rabbit can dig, or get some toys for it to chew, or if they have thought of getting another rabbit to keep it company.

9. Either on the text sheet or in your book, write a detailed description of what behaviour the worried rabbit is displaying in the illustration.
This rabbit is in a crouched position, its head is flat to the ground and its muscles are tense. Its ears are wide apart and flat against its back.

10. What is the purpose of the last paragraph?
The purpose of the last paragraph is to remind the reader how a rabbit should be treated and what they should not do.