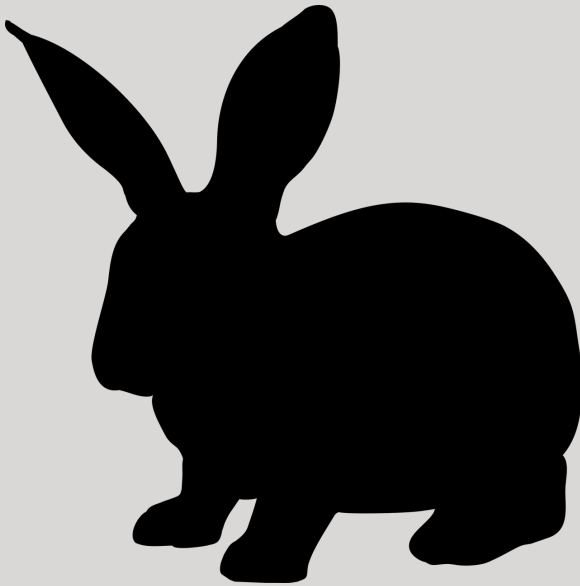


HUMANE SOCIETY



SILICON VALLEY

ADOPTION GUIDE



RABBIT

Name _____

Animal # _____

Microchip# _____

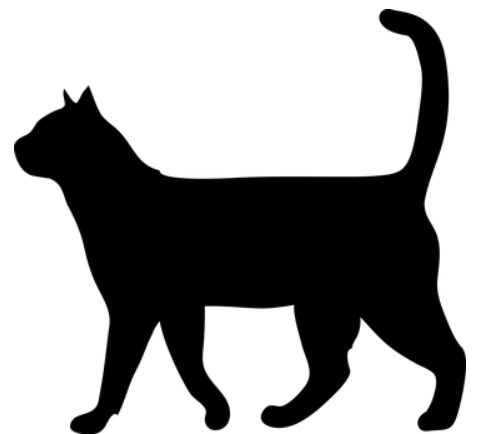
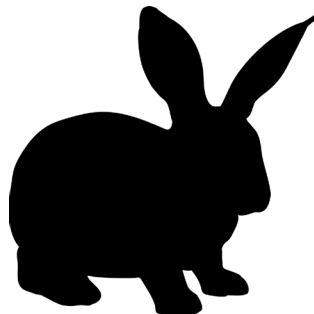
Person # _____

Counselor _____

Share updates or contact us at adoptions@hssv.org

Table of Contents

4	What's Included in Your Adoption
5	Finding a Vet
7	Starting Out on the Right Paw
8	Rabbit Housing Options
9	Rabbit Proofing
11	Litter Box Training Tips
13	Bonding Rabbits
15	Next Steps and Resources
16	Our Services



WHAT'S INCLUDED

The fees for adopting animals allow us provide medical care, food, and shelter the animals in our care.



MEDICAL EXAM & BEHAVIOR ASSESSMENT

A copy of the animal's medical history and behavior assessment will be provided to you at the time of adoption. Please consult your vet for any questions on the medical history.



MICROCHIP

HSSV uses HomeAgain for its microchip services. Animals without microchips will receive one prior to adoption. All microchips will be registered with HomeAgain for the life of the pet at time of adoption.



SPAY & NEUTER

Rabbits adopted through HSSV must be altered prior to adoption.

FINDING A VET

As soon as you acquire a pet, you should develop a relationship with a veterinarian. Even though pets adopted from HSSV are fully vaccinated and examined by our staff veterinarians, you should have your family veterinarian examine your pet within 1-2 weeks of bringing your pet home. This allows your veterinarian to establish a baseline by which to compare should your pet develop any problems. Your veterinarian can also serve as a resource to provide advice about feeding, grooming, training, etc.

The standard pet should have an annual exam, your veterinarian may recommend more frequent visit if they are geriatric or experience medical issues. By seeing your pet at least annually, your family veterinarian may be able to detect subtle abnormal changes, problems in the very early stages. Your veterinarian can advise you on how best to meet changes if they can see how your pet is aging on a regular basis.

Find a vet at: www.hssv.org/choosingavet

Parktown Veterinarian Clinic

www.parktownvet.com

HSSV Recommended Animal Hospital!

1393 S. Park Victoria Dr.,

Milpitas, CA, 95035

408-263-3990

All vets are able to see all pocket pets.

Central Animal Hospital

www.petcentralvets.com

971 E. Hamilton Ave.,

Campbell 95008

408-377-4043

Dr. James Dunlap is able to see all pocket pets.

The Whole Pet Vet

www.thewholepetvet.com

325 Los Gatos Saratoga Rd.,

Los Gatos, CA, 95030

408-402-3071

Some vets are able to see all pocket pets.

Adobe Animal Hospital

www.adobe-animal.com

15965 Los Gatos Blvd, Suite 102

Los Gatos, CA-95032

408-357-8008

Dr. Nakamura, Dr. Blackwolf, Dr.Koga, Dr. Harrell see all pocket pets.

Adobe Animal Hospital

www.adobe-animal.com

15965 Los Gatos Blvd, Suite 102

Los Gatos, CA-95032

408-357-8008

Dr. Nakamura, Dr. Blackwolf, Dr.Koga, Dr. Harrell see all pocket pets.

Santa Clara Pet Hospital

www.santaclarapethospital.com

830 Kiely Blvd #107

Santa Clara, CA 95051

(408) 296-5857

Dr. Lawrence sees all pocket pets.

De Anza Veterinary Clinic

www.deanzavet.com

7325 Fallenleaf Ln

Cupertino, CA 95014

(408) 996-1411

All vets are able to see all pocket pets.

Banfield Almaden

www.banfield.com

5353 Almaden Expy Suite D-10

San Jose, CA 95118

(408) 978-0103

Dr. Brown sees all pocket pets.

Starting Out on the Right Paw With Your Newly Adopted Rabbit!

Congratulations on adopting a new member of your household! Rabbits are very social and structured animals. They do not like changes in their routine! To help your new bunny friend adapt to your home, we recommend you follow the following guidelines:

IF YOU PLAN ON GIVING YOUR BUNNY AN OUTDOOR EXPERIENCE, PLEASE KEEP IT IN AN ENCLOSED AREA (PLAYPEN, EX-PEN, ETC.), AND ALWAYS SUPERVISED!

1. SET UP YOUR RABBITS HABITAT. Before allowing your rabbit out of its carrier, make sure you have its new home all set up. Start them off in a smaller area in a widely used room of the home. If you plan on using an ex-pen or play pen, make sure you have your new bunny's food, water, litter box, hay, and hidey hole are set up. If you plan on having your bunny having free roam of the new room or home, start them in this smaller area for the first 7-10 days before allowing them to explore further. You do not want your bunny to feel isolated from his/her new family by putting them in a room that is rarely visited. It will be very difficult to form a bond with them!

2. RABBIT PROOF THE ROOM. The same way you would baby proof the nursery, bunny proof your furry friend's new play area! A good way to do this is by lying flat on your stomach on the floor, and looking around the room. If you can see it, your bunny can see it, and bunnies investigate with their teeth! Make sure any electrical cords, expensive rugs, shoes and small choking hazards are out of reach.

3. SPEND TIME WITH YOUR NEW FRIEND. At first, your bunny may not seem to want any attention. He/she will probably hide for the first 2-3 days. You never want to force your bunny to come out of his/her hidey space. This will only make them more afraid! Instead, talk to them, read a book, or do some paperwork next to your bunny. Get them used to the sounds of daily life in your home, while learning your voice. Eventually, when he/she hears your coming, they will come right up to say hello! You should be spending at least 20-30 minutes with your new bunny twice a day for the first few weeks to develop a bond with them.

4. ALLOW PLAY TIME. Once your rabbit is fully comfortable in his/her new space, allow play time! Rabbits need to stretch their legs and explore new surroundings. If your bunny is mainly kept in a pen, allow at least 30 minutes of play time twice a day. If you would like to give your new friend an outdoors experience, make sure it is always supervised and never free roaming. Use an ex-pen or play pen outside, and let them run around in there. Never leave your bunny outside unsupervised. There are birds of prey that can make an easy meal of a free bunny. Rabbits can also jump, dig and push any fencing out of the way, and wander off.

5. RABBITS ARE NOCTURNAL. Remember, your bunny is naturally most awake in the evenings and nights! To prevent your bunny from keeping you up, engage with them before your bedtime and during the day. Teach them your schedule, and they can learn to enjoy it!

You can always check our Rabbit Information Library on our website for any further information. Just visit the main website – pet care – behavior & training – rabbit behavior and information library.

Rabbit Housing Options

FREE ROAMING

Rabbits are happiest when they have a lot of space to run around, and a rabbit's personality really emerges when she is able to interact in an area with their owner. An option that allows your rabbit the most amount of space and the chance to interact with you is having them as a free roaming rabbit. This means that they are allowed free run of the house, usually with a small private area with their hiding box, food, water, litter box, and bed. Rabbits can be litter trained, which is a plus for those considering free roaming rabbits. However, it is best to start with a smaller enclosed area so the rabbit becomes accustomed to the litter box location and then expanding the area once they are proficient at using the litter box. The areas the rabbit will have access to will need to be rabbit-proofed, meaning protected from natural behaviors like chewing and digging, such as hiding electrical cords.

DESIGNATED ROOM

If it is not possible to allow the rabbit to be free-roaming, another option is having a designated area of the house belong to the rabbit. Giving a rabbit their own room is an option that still allows the rabbit plenty of space. Baby gates can be used to block off areas of the house you do not want the rabbit, but still offering a room or two for them to run around in and explore.

Sometimes it is not an option to have a rabbit free roaming or have a dedicated room and only supervised playtime is possible. There are many other alternatives to provide your rabbit a safe enclosure when you cannot be there to watch them that still offer a comfortable amount of space. The enclosure should be spacious enough to fit in their litter box, food and water bowls, toys, and hiding box with enough room left to stretch out and hop around.

EXERCISE PENS

X-pens offer enough space to keep your rabbit happy when they must be safely confined and are easily folded up and stored when not in use. X-pens can be purchased in pet stores and online. To create a bunny friendly area, set down an old sheet or rug on the floor and place the x-pen on top. The rabbit's litter box, toys, food and water, and hide can all be placed inside. Taller pens can be purchased for rabbits good at jumping or a sheet can be simply clipped on to the top with binder clips to discourage escape.

DIY RABBIT CONDO

A rabbit condo can easily and cheaply be built and can accommodate any size rabbit or living situation. This idea is expanded off of guinea pig C&C cages (cubes and chloroplast cages) and adapted for rabbits. Square wire shelving panels are quickly easily secured together with cable zip ties to create multi-level condos for rabbits. Like x-pens, a towel or sheet can be placed on the bottom of the condo and simply washed when needed. Another option is creating a bottom out of chloroplast, which are large sheets of corrugated plastic that are easily cut and folded to make a bottom that is easily swept and wiped down when dirty – a good option for rabbits still learning to use a litter box. Rabbit condos can be built in all sizes – some choose to build tall, multi-level condos, while others prefer to create long and wide single story condos. There are many examples of different set-ups available online.

DOG CRATE/KENNEL

Most cages marketed for rabbits in pet stores are far too small for anything but a baby rabbit. However, dog crates and kennels that are sold in pet stores offer considerably more space and are better suited for a rabbit. It is recommended to get the largest size available (be sure to consider bar spacing and size of rabbit as well). A dog crate can easily be converted into a rabbit cage by simply adding a blanket and all the rabbit's necessities. The large doors on the crates allow easy access for cleaning and for the rabbit to come and go when they have floor time. Large dog crates also have the advantage of being able to add a second story shelf. Chloroplast or cardboard can also easily be added around the base and edges to create a bigger tray to prevent hay and litter spillover. Wire bottom kennels will have to either have the wire removed or covered as wire bottoms are not safe for rabbits.

For more information and ideas please visit:

<http://www.rabbit.org/> (House Rabbit Society) <http://www.myhouserabbit.com/> (My House Rabbit) <http://www.therabbithouse.com/> (The Rabbit House)

Rabbit Proofing

Before you bring your rabbit home it is important that you rabbit proof the areas they will have access to when not inside their enclosure. Rabbits love to run, chew, and dig. You want to encourage these natural behaviors in a way that keeps your rabbit and your belongings protected.

CHEWING

Rabbits need to chew. Unlike us, their teeth continue to grow; chewing helps maintain their dental health. There are two ways to protect from nibblers: provide appropriate chew items for your rabbit and exclude them from the areas you want to protect. Wooden blocks, toilet paper tubes, cardboard boxes, paper bags, untreated wicker and willow baskets, and plastic baby toys (such as key rings) all make great alternatives to your furniture and belongings. Grass mats for rabbits can be placed on the areas the rabbit chews to encourage appropriate chewing as well. Chew toys specifically made for rabbits are sold at most pet stores and online.

However, even with appropriate chewing alternatives it is still important to protect items that can be dangerous or expensive for a rabbit to chew on.

ELECTRICAL CORDS

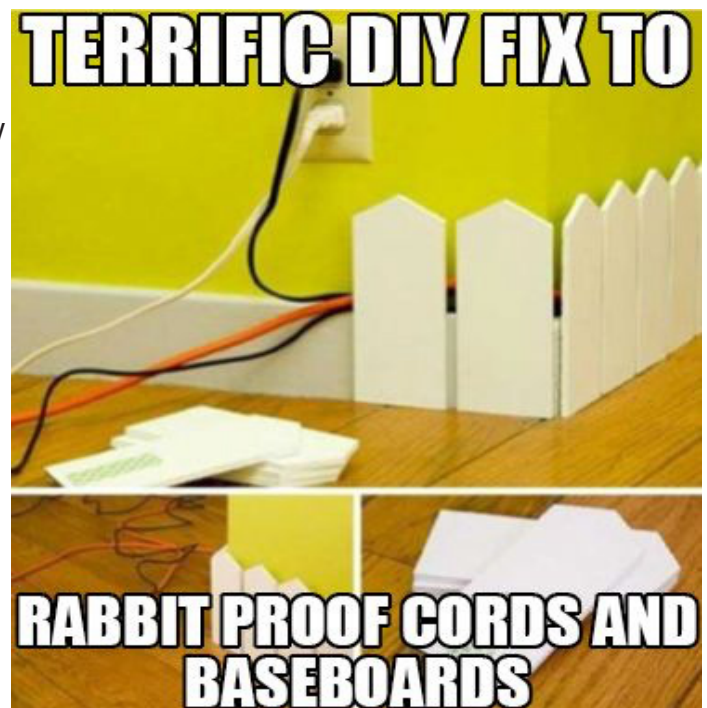
Electrical cords can seriously harm your rabbit through burns or electrocution if they are able to reach and chew them. Chewing electrical cords also can be dangerous for the household itself (electrical fires), and at the very least costly to appliances and electronics.

Wire tubing secured with electrical tape can be used to cover any exposed wires the rabbit has access to. Wire wrap, corrugated tubing, or cord covers can be a popular solution, which can be purchased at most hardware and electronic stores. It may be necessary to double wrap cords as some determined rabbits can still chew through. Another option is the use of flat cord concealers, which can run along a wall or flat along the floor. Blocking access to cords completely is another method of protecting your rabbit and your belongings that does not risk the rabbit chewing through cord protectors. Wire shelving units can also be used to create

cheap fences and gates for rabbits that are easy to move and store. Cable zip ties can be used to connect panels together to block off areas that may be dangerous for a rabbit such as entertainment centers and behind desks. When the gate is not in use it can easily be folded up and stored out of the way. Storage shelving cubes are usually \$20-30 for a box at home and office stores and cable zip ties can be found at electronic stores and both can be found online. Exercise pens for dogs also work well as gates.

CARPET AND FURNITURE

The edges and legs of dressers, bookcases, tables, and other furniture are often the target of chewing when a rabbit has access to them. Wire shelving gates and exercise pens (mentioned above) can be used to block access to furniture. Chloroplast can be easily cut and used to block access under couches, beds, and other furniture. Cardboard may be used as well, but might have to be replaced periodically. Rabbits also instinctively dig and will often dig on parts of carpet and rugs and pull out the fibers. Although some rabbits pull out the fibers and drop them, some rabbits may ingest the fibers, which can cause fatal blockages. Renters in particular want to make sure they leave their carpet in pre-bunny condition. Grass mats and old towels or rugs can be placed on areas of carpet that a rabbit repeatedly chooses to dig at when loose.



TOXIC HOUSE PLANTS

Rabbits love to eat fresh greens, but do not instinctively know what kinds of plants are toxic and which ones are not. Many houseplants are toxic to rabbits so it is best to keep them out of reach of rabbits or in rooms the rabbit does not have access to. Keep in mind that rabbits are great jumpers and simply placing a plant on a table might not keep a determined rabbit out of the way. Hanging plants from the ceiling and away from furniture is a good way to keep your decoration safe from rabbits.

CLOTHES, BLANKETS, BOOKS, ETC.

Rabbits love to play in tunnels and sometimes the comforter hanging over your bed may become a playground and a nice place to chew. Shoes (especially shoelaces), clothes, and books on the floor are also fair game for chewing and digging. Keep blankets, clothes and books stored out of reach of rabbits. Some rabbits will pull books off of bookshelves so gating those areas off can also save your literature.

For more information and tips on litter box training, visit these websites:

<http://www.rabbit.org/> (House Rabbit Society)

<http://www.binkybunny.com/> (Binky Bunny)

<http://myhouserabbit.com/> (My House Rabbit)

Litter Box Training Tips

From House Rabbit Society

By nature, rabbits choose one or a few places (usually corners) to deposit their urine and most of their pills (feces). Urine-training involves little more than putting a litter box where the rabbit chooses to go. Pill training requires only that you give them a place they know will not be invaded by others. Here are some suggestions to help you to train your rabbit to use the litter box.

AGE

Older rabbits are easier to train than younger rabbits, especially babies. A rabbit's attention span, and knack for learning, increases as he or she grows up. If you have a baby, stick with it! And if you are deciding whether to adopt an older rabbit, or litter-train your older rabbit, go for it!

SPAY/NEUTER

This is often the most important factor. When rabbits reach the age of 4- 6 months, their hormones become active and they usually begin marking their territory. By spaying or neutering your rabbit, they will be more likely to use their litter box (as well as be much healthier and happier).

TYPES OF LITTER

Use a litter made from plants or paper. Some brands to look for: CareFresh, Cat Country, Critter Country, and Yesterday's News. You can also use horse bedding (available at feed stores) or wood stove pellets. These have been heat-treated in the manufacturing process, so they don't present the same hazards as soft wood shavings, which can cause liver damage in rabbits. Silica, clay, and clumping cat litters are dangerous for your rabbit, and should never be used. Corn & wheat based litter also should be avoided, because rabbits will often ingest it. Another approach is to place a handful of hay in each box, or to simply use hay as litter. It is helpful to put several layers of newspaper under the hay, to absorb urine. Most newspapers today are using soy-based ink, which is safe for your rabbit. Obviously, you need to change the hay fairly frequently (daily), since your rabbit will be eating it. This method often helps to encourage good litter habits as well as to encourage hay consumption, since rabbits often eat at or near the same time as they use the litter box.

RUNNING SPACE

Even if your goal is to let your rabbit have full run of the house, you must start small. Start with a cage and a small running space, and when your rabbit is sufficiently well trained in that space, gradually give them more space. But do so gradually! If you overwhelm them with too much freedom before they are ready, they will forget where their box is and will lose their good habits.

THE METHOD

Start with a box in the cage, and one or more boxes in the rabbit's running space. If they urinate in a corner of the cage not containing the box, move the box to that corner until they get it right. Don't be concerned if your bunny curls up in his litter box -- this is natural. Once they are using the box in the cage, open the door and allow them into their running space. Watch them go in and out on their own. If they head to a corner where there's no box, or lifts up their tail in the characteristic fashion, cry "no" in a single, sharp burst of sound. Gently herd them back to their cage and their litter box, or into one of the boxes in their room. Be careful, however. You don't want to make the cage or the litter box seem like punishment. A handful of hay in the box makes it a more welcoming place. After they first use the box, praise them and give them a favorite treat. Once they use the box in their room a couple of times, you're well on your way, as their habits will be on their way to forming. As they get better trained in their first room, you can increase their space. Don't hurry this process. And if the area becomes very big, or includes a second floor, be sure to include more litter boxes, so as not to confuse them. Remember, as they become more confident and use fewer boxes, you can start to remove some of their early, "training" boxes.

PILLS VS. URINE

All rabbits will drop “pills” around their cages to mark it as their own. This is not failure to be litter-trained. It is very important for your rabbit to identify the cage as their property so that when they leave the cage for the bigger world of your house, they will distinguish the family’s area from their own and avoid marking it. To encourage this, make the rabbit the king of its cage. Try not to force them in or out of it- - coax them. Do not do things to their cage that they don’t like, or things to them that they don’t like while they are in the cage.

For more information and tips on litter box training, visit these websites:

Source: Rabbit.org/faq/sections/litter.html (House Rabbit Society)

Myhouserabbit.com (My House Rabbit)

Binkybunny.com (Binky Bunny – good step-by-step picture guide)

Bonding Rabbits

By: House Rabbit Society

PREREQUISITES FOR A SUCCESSFUL INTRODUCTION

Before attempting an introduction, the rabbits should be spayed or neutered, and you should wait for a full two weeks after the surgery before proceeding with the introduction. This delay both ensures proper healing and gives the hormones a chance to dissipate. This delay is especially important with a newly neutered male, as a male bunny can still be fertile for two weeks after fixing.

Many of the calls we receive are from well-meaning rabbit caregivers who bring a new rabbit home, put him with their existing rabbit, and think all will be fine. Sadly, these hasty introductions often result in serious harm or injury from biting, chasing, or other forms of attack.

In addition, rabbits are not quick to forget, so a bad fight could hinder future bonding success. Taking the time, reading up, and waiting for two spayed or neutered rabbits to be introduced will ensure you the best possible chance at a loving, bonded relationship.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE TYPES OF INTRODUCTIONS?

- Boy and girl: one of the easiest, often fall in love at first sight, but not always
- Girl and girl: sometimes easy, often fighting
- Boy and boy: sometimes easy, sometimes difficult, usually fighting at first, but not at all impossible
- Two babies: extremely easy
- Three or more rabbits: Difficulty varies, depending on sexes, personalities, and whether or not two of the rabbits are already bonded
- Baby and adult: Sometimes difficult, but goes well if adult is very tolerant
- Bringing home a rabbit to an existing rabbit. Much easier if you bring a girl home to a boy than if you bring a rabbit home to a girl.
- Bringing two rabbits home at the same time. Quite easy, even if they're same sex. Usually the new space is enough to make them become friends quite on their own.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SCENARIOS AFTER FIRST INTRODUCTION?

- Love at first sight. If this occurs, you can try them in the space they're going to live in. If it's still good, then they're fine; you have nothing else to do.
- Tentative friendship: If this occurs, just watch them when they're together, keep them separate when you're not around, and if no fighting occurs, they'll eventually become friends.
- Amorous behavior: If the (neutered) male mounts the female, and the female does not mind, then this is usually a sign that the relationship will go well. If she does mind, and runs, it is still not usually a problem. If she minds, and becomes aggressive towards him, then you must prepare for a lengthier introduction period.
- One chasing, one running. If this occurs, just make sure the one running doesn't fight back and doesn't get hurt. If neither of these things occurs, then just watch and wait. If one gets hurt, then separate them and go slower and if one fights back, then you must prepare for a lengthier introduction period.
- Fighting. When two new rabbits (or, for that matter, two existing rabbits) fight, then you must prepare for a full introduction period.

HOW TO'S: WORK WITH SPACE

Rabbits are extremely territorial. In wild rabbits, territorial behavior includes depositing marking pellets at the boundaries of the territory, chinning, urinating, and aggressive behavior such as digging, circling, and fighting. Wild males tend to defend larger territories while females concentrate on their nests. In our neutered domestic companions, hormonal causes may be absent, but territorial behavior still exists. Thus, when introducing new rabbits, territory must be considered and used to your advantage.

What you are trying to do is eliminate the possibility for any territorial behavior to develop in the rabbits. So you choose introductory spaces that are as different from your bunny's territory as possible. You are also trying to mimic positive feelings in your rabbits. By creating artificial situations where your bunnies are snuggling, rubbing noses, smelling each other's fur, etc., you are creating positive memories, even if they are also stressful. I call this "coerced closeness." They are positive in the sense that they don't associate the other bun with the stress (of the car ride, for example), they associate the other rabbit with the feelings of security that they receive. If they fight, then they will carry THOSE bad memories around with them, and will remember that they fought together.

Always introduce rabbits, regardless of sex or age, in neutral space first. (Obviously, if you're bringing home two bunnies together, then any space in your home is neutral space.) Possible neutral spaces might be: a room that your rabbit has never been in, a friend's home or apartment, the seat of a car, on top of the kitchen table, the garage, the bathtub, the back yard, etc.

- Work with the rabbits for at least 20 minutes per day. Make sure to spend some time with the rabbits in one or more neutral space every day. When you're not actively working with them, they should be apart if they fight when together. If they do not fight, then they can be left alone if you're not working with them, but not when you leave the house completely
- Every day, try using two different situations, one relatively stressful (like a car ride), followed by one relatively normal (the floor of a new room, the top of the bed). That way, you can try to gradually transition them from strange to normal situations, without them fighting. If you immediately attempt to let them run around on the floor together, without first having taken them for a car ride, they may forget that the space is neutral and fight anyway.
- Use a water bottle (with the nozzle set on "stream") to break up any fights if they occur. It's best to spray the instigator before a fight actually occurs (watch for aggressive body language) rather than work on breaking up an existing fight.

None of these suggestions will work by themselves, and none will work immediately (usually). Work with your rabbits every day, for at least twenty minutes or so, and when you're not working with them, keep them in eye contact of each other. Start with extreme scenarios and gradually move to less extreme. Do one extreme and one less extreme every day. The more often you work with them, the quicker the progress. If you want to move at a quicker pace, then you need to arrange a large block of time (like a week's vacation) in an extremely neutral space (like a friend's or relative's house). If one rabbit is elderly or otherwise compromised, then go slowly to minimize the stress.

NEXT STEPS

Mandatory Items

Secure carrier

1. Pick up basic supplies

Rabbit Food

Timothy or oat hay

Fresh Veggies

Housing--Must have solid floor, at least 4ftx4ft per rabbit

Litter Box

Litter Liner (such as newspaper or Care Fresh paper bedding)

Additional Supplies

Food and water Bowls

Water Bottle

Toys--Cardboard, toilet paper rolls, wooden chew toys, plastic balls, etc

Cardboard scratcher or phone book

Brush

Nail trimmer

2. Complete Microchip Registration

We started your microchip registration for your new pet in the Home Again database. Log into their website to complete the registration at www.homeagain.com.

3. Set a Vet Appointment

Even though pets adopted from HSSV are examined by our medical team, you should have your family veterinarian examine your pet within 1-2 weeks of bringing them home. Your veterinarian can help you review your new pet's medical history and set up a schedule for future treatments.

4. Diet

While in our care your rabbit has been eating Rabbit Food, Timothy Hay, and fresh greens. You can use the feeding guidelines on the back of the dry food packaging or speak with your vet to determine appropriate amounts. Your chosen veterinarian can also serve as a resource to provide advice about which diet is best for your new pet.

RESOURCES

Rabbit and Training

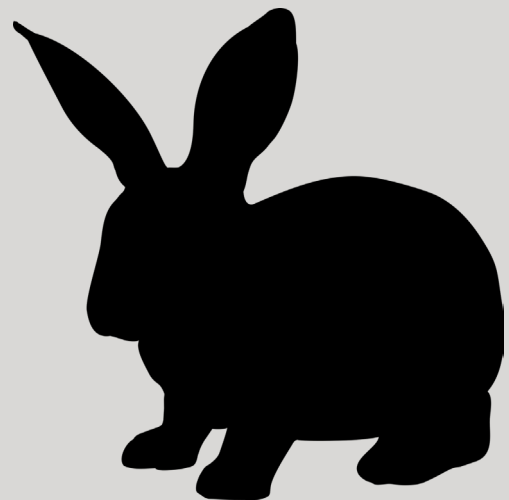
Learn more about your rabbit and build the best relationship for you two! Humane Society Silicon Valley (HSSV) has created informational articles for you to learn the most about your four-legged friend.

www.hssv.org/what-we-do/behavior-and-training

Rabbit Care

Please visit the House Rabbit Society's care page for a comprehensive list of care topics from nutrition to grooming.

www.rabbit.org/category/care



If you need to return an animal for any reason please reach out to our intake department at 408.262.2133 x110. Returns are by appointment only. Adoption fees are non-refundable, and after 90 days surrender fees apply.