Care Guide

Rabbit

(oryctolagus coniculus)

Facts:

Average adult size: **12+ inches long**
Average life span: **10+ with proper care**
Diet: **Herbivore**

Rabbits are intelligent, affectionate and social animals that need daily interaction with humans or other Rabbits. Spayed or neutered Rabbits tend to be healthier, live longer, and are better companions.

Feeding & Nutrition:

Food

- High-quality Rabbit food
- Timothy Hay
- Treats (limited amounts)
- Do not feed chocolate, caffeine or alcohol as these can cause serious medical conditions. Avoid sugar, food and treats high in carbohydrates and high fat treats.

Water

- Fresh water should be provided daily in water bottles to prevent contamination.
- Bottles need to be kept clean inside by soaking in a 10% bleach solution for ten minutes every two to three weeks and then scrubbed out with soap and a bottle brush. Bottles should be completely replaced with new ones every six months.

Frequency of Food

- Fresh food, timothy hay and water should always be available.
- Limited amounts of vegetables and fruits can be given daily.
- Vegetables and fruits not eaten within 24 hours should be discarded.
- Treats should not exceed 10% of total food intake.
- Many house plants are toxic and a Rabbit should not eat grass treated with pesticides.

Housing:

Cage

- Rabbits acclimate well to average household temperatures, not to exceed 80°F; be cautious of extreme temperature changes. The habitat should never be in direct sunlight or in a drafty area.
- Habitat should be at least four times the size of the Rabbit, escape proof with an area that has a solid surface and plenty of room for exercise and play.
- Habitat should also include a hammock, hiding place, litter box and toys.
- It is best to provide the largest habitat possible.
- Rabbits may be kept in mixed-sex pairs, if spayed/ neutered, or same-sex pairs, if they are raised together, otherwise, keep adult Rabbits housed separately.
- **Different types of small animals should not be housed together.**

Bedding

- 1-2 inches of bedding should be placed in the habitat

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- Proper bedding includes high quality paper bedding, crumbled paper bedding, or aspen shavings.
- Avoid Cedar-based products.

Habitat Maintenance

- Clean the habitat and its contents at least once a week with mild soap and water, rinse and dry completely before placing back into the habitat.
- Remove wet spots daily; change bedding at least once a week, or more often as necessary.

Care:

Grooming & Hygiene

- Rabbits stay clean and rarely need baths, but may be bathed using pet shampoo, if necessary; clean outside the ears frequently with a cotton ball.
- Consult with a veterinarian if a Rabbit's teeth seem too long.
- Nails should be cut every 6 to 8 weeks.

Health

- Active and social when awake
- Shiny coat and clear eyes
- Eats and drinks regularly
- Breathing is clear and walks normally

Normal Behavior

- Always exercise caution when handling a Rabbit as they do not like to be handled; ensure you are fully supporting the body, especially the hind legs; it is best to keep them on the floor for human interaction.
- Can be litter box trained.
- Chew on objects to maintain all their teeth, which grow continuously; ensure have plenty of chew sticks available.

Recommended Supplies:

- ☐ Appropriate Size Habitat
- ☐ Bedding
- ☐ High-quality Food
- ☐ Treats
- ☐ Food bowl/Water bottle
- ☐ Litter Pan/Litter
- ☐ Hide
- ☐ Hay Rack
- ☐ Toys
- ☐ Harness and Leash
- ☐ Indoor playpen
- ☐ Shampoo

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