

VetSmiths

More than just vets

RABBITS

Outdoor accommodation

You've decided that bunnies are for you, so you need to think about providing the best possible home for them.

A rabbit's housing and accommodation needs are sometimes hugely under estimated. They require a considerable amount of space in order to display natural behaviour. Sadly many mainstream pet shops sell small hutches for our long eared furries. These aren't suitable and are misleading for a new bunny owner .

The minimum requirements for housing a pair of average size rabbits, measures 3m x 2m x 1m. This is based on ground space, so an upper level or a two level hutch would not count.

Rabbits like to hop and roam freely and to be able to 'periscope' – this means to stand on their hind legs and observe their surroundings, therefore a hutch and run should be high enough to accommodate this.

If your choice of housing is an outdoor set up, the recommended hutch size would be 6ft x 2ft x2ft. This hutch would be suited for use as their bedroom area ONLY and should be permanently attached to a run of at least 3m x 2m x 1m.

Our bunny friends are most active at dusk and dawn, so it's important they have constant access to a large run area. This way they can express this behaviour as they would in the wild.

If kept outdoors, you need to make sure your buns are kept safe from predators like foxes, plus they're natural diggers, so it's important to ensure they are safe and secure.

Where their hutch and run is positioned is also important. Make sure it's not in constant direct sunlight, or could be caught by strong winds.

If you're a keen gardener, it's best to keep away from pesticides and sprays – you can find pet friendly ones that do the job.

Once you're ready to set your new accommodation up, you'll need the following:

- Good quality bedding – straw, recycled paper bedding, vet-bed, blankets. We don't recommend sawdust for rabbits, as it can be dusty and affect their delicate respiratory systems
- Good quality unlimited Timothy hay for your bunny to eat 24/7 – they'll love it!
- Access to fresh water 24/7
- A litter tray
- Toys – like tunnels to run in and out of, hidey houses, dig boxes, balls

Please note: the above information is a general guide and shouldn't be used instead of veterinary medical advice or diagnosis. If you are ever concerned about your pet, you should seek immediate advice from your vet.

