

# All About Rabbits



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# Introduction to Rabbits

**Rabbits** are **mammals**, which is an animal that has warm blood and backbones. They are small, fluffy animals with short tails that look like a ball. They have long ears and whiskers. Their long legs let them hop around quickly. They can weigh one pound or even up to 16 pounds! Rabbits can live for about 10 years. Some people call rabbits bunnies, but they are the same.



A big rabbit, the size of a larger dog.

# Introduction to Rabbits (continued)

A female rabbit is called a **doe** while a male rabbit is called a **buck**.

Rabbits have lots of babies, which are called **kits**. Kits are born without fur and can't see. When the babies are 5 weeks old, they can live on their own. Rabbits can make their own families at 2 to 3 months old.



Baby rabbits when they begin getting fur.

# What Rabbits Eat

Rabbits are **herbivores**, which means they only eat plants. Rabbits cannot throw up, so it's important to feed them healthy food. Rabbits like to eat soft vegetables and fruits, such as:

- Grass
- Leaves
- Broccoli
- Brussel Sprouts
- Fruits
- Seeds
- Roots



They collect their food in the morning and evening so that their predators do not see them. During the day, they sometimes eat their poop so that they are not hungry.

# Where Rabbits Live

**Habitat** is the word used to describe where animals and plants live. Rabbits are found all over the world in these kinds of habitats:



- Forests
- Meadows
- Grasslands
- Deserts
- Tundra
- Wetlands

Rabbits tunnel into the ground to make their homes. These tunnels have more than one entrance so they can escape fast. Some tunnels can go ten feet deep! Rabbits live in groups with other rabbits.

# What Rabbits Like to Do

Rabbits are active the most during the morning and the evening. During these times, they like to go **foraging**, which means to collect food. They like to play with other rabbits and dig more tunnels for their home.

During the day and night, they stay in their homes to stay safe from predators. They like to sleep or just relax during this time until it is time to go above ground again.

**Domestic rabbits**, which are rabbits that are pets, are also active the most in the morning and evening.



# Difference Between Rabbits and Hares

Rabbits and **hares** are often confused. Hares look like rabbits, but they have longer legs and ears. Rabbits' fur stays the same color but hares' fur turns white in the winter. When rabbits run from danger, they run underground but hares like to just run away as fast as they can.

Rabbits live in big groups, but hares like to be alone. Hares also live above ground and like to eat hard things, like bark and twigs. Some rabbits are pets but hares like to stay in the wild.



A picture of a rabbit. How is it different from the hare on page 9?

# Difference Between Rabbits and Hares (Continued)

Even when they are born, they are different. While rabbits do not have fur and cannot see when they are born, hares are the opposite! They are fluffy, can see and are able to move on their own an hour after they are born.



A hare, with longer ears and back legs than a rabbit.

# Predators of Rabbits

Rabbits are **prey**, which means that they are hunted by bigger animals. These bigger animals are called **predators**. Some predators that hunt rabbits are:

- Owls
- Hawks
- Eagles
- Wild Dogs
- Wild Cats
- Ground Squirrels



Rabbits' long legs let them run fast and for a long time. They run zigzags to confuse their predators. Rabbits' long ears allow them to hear predators from far away. It gives them time to start running and get ahead.

# How to Take Care of a Rabbit

## Living Space:

Should have places to:

- Hide when scared
- Eat quietly
- Play by itself
- Protected from weather
- Play with toys
- Sleep in peace



## Exercising:

Every day your bunny should have space to:

- Stretch
- Run

## Cleaning:

Your rabbit's toilet area should have newspaper and should be cleaned every day. Water and food containers should be cleaned before putting new food in.

Their living area should be cleaned once a week with cleaner. New bedding should be placed in there along with some of the old bedding so that the bunny can still smell itself.

# How to Take Care of a Rabbit (continued)

## **Food:**

Bunnies cannot throw up their food, so it is important to feed them food that is good for them. If your bunny eats its poop, it is normal. They eat it to get more food!

## **Training:**

Rabbits can be trained just like a dog. You can train your rabbit to use the bathroom only where you set up its toilet. You can also teach your bunny simple tricks, like sitting on your lap or coming to you when you call its name.

## **Bunny Proofing your House:**

- Keep cleaners out of reach.
- Do not let rabbit eat plants that can make them sick.
- Make sure your rabbit cannot get out of its home on its own.
- Always keep an eye on your rabbit if it's running around your house.

# Conclusion to Rabbits

Rabbits are mammals, which are warm blooded animals with backbones. They like to live in groups and dig tunnels under the ground to protect themselves. They are prey and have many predators that like to eat them. Rabbits are herbivores, which means they like to eat only plants. Rabbits and hares are often confused and have many differences. Rabbits can be pets and have the same schedule as rabbits that live in the wild. There are many different things someone needs to do if they own a rabbit so that they are safe and healthy.



# Glossary

**Buck** – Male rabbit

**Doe** – Female rabbit

**Domestic Rabbits** – Rabbits that are pets

**Foraging** – Collecting food

**Habitat** – Where certain animals and plants live

**Hare** – Mammal that lives above ground and has longer ears and legs than rabbits

**Herbivore** – Only eats plants

**Kits** – Baby rabbits

**Mammal** – Warm blooded animal that has a backbone

**Predator** – An animal that hunts other animals

**Prey** – An animal that is being hunted

**Rabbit** – Mammal that lives underground and has long ears and legs

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# Common Core State Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.5

Explain major differences between books that tell stories and books that give information, drawing on a wide reading of a range of text types.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.7

Use the illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.10

With prompting and support, read informational texts appropriately complex for grade 1.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.2.10

By the end of year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 2-3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

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