

ANIMAL LIFE

Vet's opinions: what you need to know before getting an Easter bunny

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Animals



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With Easter comes the annual surge in demand for pet rabbits. They are seen as easy pets for children, but they can live for more than ten years and have specific needs. Rabbits can make lovely pets, but here are some things to consider before getting one.

- They are social creatures and need companionship. A neutered male and female make the best pairing and as prey species, they are not fond of being picked up.
- They need plenty of space. In the wild, rabbits will spend much of their time digging, jumping, foraging and binkying. A pair of rabbits should have a minimum of a 6ft by 2ft by 2ft hutch with an 8ft run. There should be spaces in which to hide and toys, to allow them to express their natural behaviour.
- They need a special diet, vital to keep their teeth and digestive tract healthy. It should be made of 85 per cent hay or grass, 10 per cent vegetables and herbs, and 5 per cent pellets.
- They need two annual vaccinations against myxomatosis, viral haemorrhagic disease 1 and viral haemorrhagic disease 2, all of which can be fatal.

rabbitwelfare.co.uk