

TURKEY ADOPTION GUIDE



Finding your new companions

Step 1: Submit your application form (available on our website) and photos

We will need to see photos and measurements of your turkey's accommodation. Please email these to: smallanimals1@raystede.org

We will consider your application and contact you if we need a few more details or to invite you to Raystede for a chat. If you do not hear from us, we have everything we need for now, thank you.

Step 2: Wait for the magic to happen

Once you have registered with us, please keep an eye on our website for new arrivals and contact us if you feel someone might suit your home.

When animals arrive at Raystede, we get to know them through behaviour and medical assessments. Our expert animal care teams carefully use this information alongside your application to see if the match could be a success. Finding the perfect pet can take time. Please be patient; they will be worth the wait.

Step 3: Visit Raystede

We will invite you to Raystede as soon as we have found any potential matches for your home. We will discuss the animals' background, health and behaviour. This sometimes requires a few visits. You will need to provide photo ID, proof of address, and if applicable, written landlord permission to have a pet in your property.

Step 4: Take your new pet home

Once we have found your perfect partner, we will book an adoption appointment; our Rehoming Team will talk you through caring for your pet. Your adoption fee will help us continue our work to give animals a better life.

Rehoming criteria

Our housing requirements aim to ensure the best welfare standards for turkeys. Our team are happy to offer advice in purchasing or adapting your set-up to provide the best home before adopting.

Turkeys are social animals and should be kept in pairs or groups. A turkey Tom can be paired with a single female turkey hen or live with a group of turkey hens.

Turkeys need a fully secure, fox-proof enclosure, including a shed, stable or outbuilding. If allowing your turkeys to free-range in your garden, they must be supervised and the garden must be secure.

Peace of mind when adopting

- All turkeys are health checked regularly

You will also receive:

- A comprehensive adoption pack and appointment with our Rehoming Team to ensure you have everything you need to care for your new turkeys

Follow-up advice from our expert team

Thank you for your adoption fee, which will help to cover some of our costs:

Adoption fee: £10 each

The average daily cost of care for our turkeys, chickens, ducks and geese at Raystede is in excess of £70.

Turkey care

Owning turkeys can be very rewarding, but it is a big responsibility and a long-term commitment. Did you know that turkeys can live up to ten years?

Turkeys can be vocal animals, especially during mating season. If you have close neighbours it may be sensible to have a discussion with them about the possibility of noise beforehand.

Turkey Toms can show dominant behaviour and become protective of their territory as they sexually mature. If you are interested in rehoming a male, please bear this behaviour in mind.

Check your turkeys for signs of injury or illness every day and seek veterinary advice if necessary.

- If your turkeys become ill, a specialist vet would be required; do you know where your nearest exotic/farm vet practice is located?
- Worming: poultry must be wormed at least twice a year.
- Lice and mites: treat your poultry regularly for lice and red mite.
- Some diseases are transferable between turkeys and other poultry such as chickens, this is important to bear in mind if you keep both species.
- Due to their size turkeys are prone to feet and leg problems such as bumblefoot.

Housing your birds

As turkeys are such large birds, they will need a sizeable sleeping area that they can move around comfortably in; sheds, stables and outbuildings are ideal. Turkeys like to perch overnight so any accommodation should have sturdy perch bars installed that are within their reach. Accommodation should be well ventilated, weather-proof and allow in natural light.

Turkeys spend much of their time foraging so will need a large outside area to keep themselves occupied, this should be attached to their housing or offer secure free-ranging. Trees and plants within their outside area are a good source of shelter, food and enrichment.

Turkeys also enjoy sunbathing and dustbathing so their accommodation should include access to natural sunlight and either an area of naturally dry ground or something such as a shallow plastic paddling pool filled with a mixture of light soil and fine sand.

Settling in & Introductions

When you first get your turkeys home, you should leave them to settle in for a few days and allow them to get to know their accommodation and routine.

If you already own turkeys, introductions should be made gradually to prevent fighting between groups. Turkey hens should not be introduced to a male during breeding season to prevent injury to the hens.

Diet

- **Turkey pellets** are specially formulated to contain foods that they would naturally consume in the wild.
- **Fresh foods:** their diet should also be supplemented with corn, grit to aid digestion and small amounts of healthy treats such as fresh green vegetables, grapes and apples.
- **Fresh water** available at all times, as birds can drink a lot throughout the day. They can also receive an apple cider vinegar supplement in their drinking water to promote general health and improve plumage.