Rabbit Adoption FAQs

How do I adopt rabbits?

Adopting rabbits is extremely rewarding but is also a big commitment. Each animal has their own individual and specific needs, so it’s very important that you understand and meet their individual requirements.

All our rabbits available for rehoming are listed on our website with a detailed description of their characteristics and needs, so you can see if you think any may be a suitable match for you. The website is updated regularly with new arrivals, so don’t worry if you haven’t spotted a potential match just yet!

All visits to Raystede to adopt or give up an animal are by appointment only. We accept online applications to adopt an animal and will consider reserves, introductions, and adoptions on a case-by-case basis. Due to the high volume of enquiries being received we are not currently able to respond immediately to every application we receive.

**Step 1**: **Submit your application form**

Tell us about your home, lifestyle, experience, and the type of animal you are hoping to share your life with.

Due to the high volume of enquiries we receive, we regret that we are not able to respond to every application but please be assured we have your details.

**Step 2**: **Don’t be a stranger**

Once you have registered with us, please keep an eye on our website for new arrivals.

If you spot some rabbits that you think may be a suitable match, there is no need to submit another application. Please contact us directly to highlight your interest by emailing info@raystede.org or by calling 01825 880468.

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.

**Step 3: A meet & greet invitation**

You will be invited to Raystede to meet any animals who might suit your home. We will discuss the animal's background, health, and behaviour. This sometimes requires a few visits. Please note that booking a visitor ticket to Raystede does not enable you to meet an animal you are interested in adopting.

What are your housing requirements for rabbits?

Rabbits are very active animals and require lots of space. We ask that they have at least 3m x 2m x 1m (10ft x 6ft x 3ft) of living space. Either inside this or attached to the enclosure should be a shelter/hutch measuring 1.8m x 0.6m x 0.6m (6ft x 2ft x 2t). The rabbits will need access to the full space at all times, they should never be shut inside a cage/hutch, even at night. Ensure your enclosure is fully predator proof if outside.

For house rabbits, they require the same amount of space, but this doesn’t have to be an enclosure. Why not let them free roam like a dog or cat would? Rabbits are generally clean animals and are easily litter trained. Just be sure to cover up or move any wires out of their reach.

Do you rehome single rabbits?

Rabbits are social animals and should always be kept in pairs or groups. Very occasionally we may have a rabbit who we have attempted to bond multiple times or may need to be kept as a single rabbit due to medical issues. We ask that these rabbits are kept indoors so they are able to spend more time with people.

Do you bond rabbits?

Yes, we offer a bonding service at Raystede. Once you have reserved a rabbit, we will book your rabbit to come to Raystede for a couple of weeks whilst we bond them in a neutral space with staff supervision. Once we are happy that they are fully bonded we will contact you to arrange the adoption.

Our bonding service costs £30.

If you are interested in bonding at home, please take a look at our rabbit bonding guide:

How much does it cost to adopt a rabbit?

Our rabbit adoption fee is £30

Adoption fees include:

- Neutering

- Vaccinations (against Myxomatosis, VHD1 & VHD2)

- Microchipping

- Behavioural and medical assessments

- 4 weeks free insurance with Petplan

- Follow up advice & lifetime support available from our Small Animals Team

Do you sell enclosures at Raystede?

Unfortunately, we don’t have any enclosures for sale at Raystede.

If you’re unsure whether an enclosure will be suitable, feel free to ask our Small Animals Team before you purchase anything, we are more than happy to advise.

I’ve got other animals in the home; can I still adopt rabbits?

Rabbits are prey animals so can be scared of cats or dogs in the home. To find out if our rabbits are happy to live with other animals, please click on their photo on our website to find out what kind of home they are looking for. Some rabbits are more confident or may be used to living with other animals. Rabbits must be kept in a secure enclosure and any interactions with cats or dogs should always be supervised.

My set-up doesn’t meet your requirements; can I still adopt rabbits?

Our housing guidelines are based on research carried out by the Rabbit Welfare Association & Fund (RWAF) to ensure rabbits are able to exhibit all their natural behaviours, such as running, jumping, digging, and binkying. If you already have a hutch and run and they aren’t quite big enough, our Small Animals Team will happily advise on ways to adapt your set-up to make it large enough for rabbits to live in without having to purchase a brand-new enclosure. The minimum space that rabbits should have access to is 3m x 2m x 1m.

Can guinea pigs and rabbits live together?

Unfortunately, not. They both have very different lifestyles and needs. Rabbits are much larger, and a boisterous rabbit could cause injury to a guinea pig. They also have different dietary needs and shouldn’t eat each other’s food. Furthermore, rabbits carry a bacterium called Bordatella which is harmless to them but can cause respiratory infections in guinea pigs. If you have a lonely guinea pig, please enquire about pairing them up with a new guinea pig friend.

What should I be looking for in a companion for my rabbit?

Breed: Rabbits don’t really mind what their companion looks like, you can pair a lop rabbit with an up-eared rabbit, or a dwarf with a giant breed.

Sex: Usually the best match is a neutered male with a spayed female. Rabbits of the same sex can get along, but this is usually if they have grown up together.

Age: It can be a good idea to bond similarly aged rabbits so their energy levels are matched, and they can grow old together. We wouldn’t advise bonding an elderly rabbit with a very young one as a young rabbit is likely to be too boisterous for an older one.

My rabbit isn’t neutered, can I still get them a friend?

We advise neutering all rabbits, whether kept as singles, or same sex pairs. Unspayed female rabbits have an 80% chance of getting uterine cancer by the age of 5, so it’s vital to get them spayed by a rabbit-savvy vet. Due to the high hormone levels in rabbits, it’s very tricky to bond them if they haven’t been neutered, so we recommend getting your rabbits neutered before bonding. You will need to wait 6 weeks after neutering to let their hormone levels reduce sufficiently before introducing a new rabbit.

Neutering will also help with litter-training, will reduce urine spraying, and will reduce territorial behaviours such as lunging and biting.