



Selecting a Pet Rabbit

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Lincoln

EXTENSION



Selecting a rabbit to be your new pet is a special and exciting time. Just like with any other animal there are some things to consider.

First, NEVER buy a pet rabbit on a whim. Rabbits require a lot of time and care. They can live for up to 12 years. Make sure that you are committed to cleaning, feeding and loving your rabbit everyday.

Once you have made the decision that you are committed to having a rabbit, the next step is to find a reputable breeder or store to purchase a rabbit from. When you are looking for a breeder ask questions. (see below)

Now if you have found a place to get your rabbit from, make sure you are ready to interact! Rabbits are just like other pets, they each have their own personality. They can be shy, aggressive, friendly, curious, and more. Shy rabbits can be great pets, but they may require more time and patience. Curious rabbit can be mischievous. Think about what kind of personality you want in a rabbit.

Handle the rabbits you are considering bringing home. If you have small hands a smaller breed may be more appropriate. Watch how the rabbits react when you are near them, while they are still in the cage. Are they relaxed and look comfortable in their cage? Do they come right up and want your attention or are they shy and hide in the corner?

While you are observing and handling the rabbits look at their overall appearance. They should have full, shiny, healthy hair coats, bright eyes with no discharge and their toenails should be trimmed and clean. Is your rabbit just going to be your pet, or are you going to show it.

Remember, you can always look and not buy.

Do not feel pressured to bring home a rabbit that you do not think is right for you!

Questions to ask the breeder/pet store

What kind of food is the rabbit currently eating?

It is a good idea to get some of the food that the rabbit is currently eating. Moving to a new home is stressful enough without changing foods. After your rabbit is settled you can switch foods if you want to

How much is the rabbit eating?

Knowing how much the rabbit is currently eating will allow you to keep its routine basically the same. Also you will be able to notice if they are not eating a much

Does the rabbit have any habits (good and bad)?

Many rabbit breeders will know the personalities of the rabbits. They may be able to give you an insight to their personalities.

How much have the rabbits been handled?

Rabbits that have been handled typically are more relaxed when interacting with people.

Has the rabbit lived inside or outside?

A rabbit who has grown up and lived inside will have a hard time adapting to outside living conditions.



Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

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