

## Accommodation: Outdoor Rabbits

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### Space & Exercise

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Providing your rabbits with plenty of space is vital for their wellbeing. Hutches were invented many years ago to keep farmed rabbits for meat produce, pet rabbits need much more space to live happy healthy lives.

**Rabbits should have access to a living area of at least 10ft x 6ft (3m x 2m) AT ALL TIMES**

This provides your rabbits with plenty of space to be comfortable, display natural behaviours and get lots of exercise.

Without sufficient space a rabbit can develop serious skeletal problems and behaviour problems.



## Safe and Sound

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Within a rabbits living space they will need an enclosed weather proof area to sleep and shelter from bad weather. This can be a hutch, converted shed, playhouse or garden building but must be a **minimum of 6ft x 2ft (1.8m x 0.6m)**

The sheltered area should be.....

- \* Slightly raised off the ground to provide protection against vermin and damp.
- \* Have a waterproof roof to allow the water to drain off—the roof should overhang the sides to stop water getting in.
- \* Situated in a sheltered position to avoid extremes in temperature and draughts in winter but adequate ventilation in summer

The exercise area should be .....

- \* At least 2ft high to allow rabbits to stand up fully
- \* Fully secure and predator proof as rabbits are often snatched by foxes
- \* The exercise area must be fully enclosed (with a predator proof roof)
- \* Made with strong welded mesh rather than chicken wire (foxes can chew through chicken wire)
- \* Secured with strong fastenings, bolts and latches which cannot be easily opened by other animals



Exercise areas are best situated on a paved base as grass will become muddy quickly and will need wire mesh flooring to stop your rabbit from digging its way out.

Provide some extra hides in the run for rabbits to explore and retreat to if they feel threatened.

Rabbits are naturally inquisitive so provide plenty of toys, tunnels, boxes and digging pits in the exercise area to keep them entertained and mentally stimulated.

Rabbits can enjoy exploring the rest of your garden but this should always be supervised.

## Companionship

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Rabbits are a social species and a large enclosure is no substitute for companionship from another rabbit. The minimum size for living area is the same for one or two rabbits so keeping one alone will not save on space.

The best way to enrich your rabbits life is to get them a compatible friend.



## Be Adventurous

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Your rabbits' accommodation can be an attractive garden feature. You can convert Wendy houses, summerhouses and sheds into spacious living quarters with a large run attached.

A spacious shed also makes it easier and more enjoyable for you to spend time with your rabbits

For more ideas visit [www.rabbitwelfare.co.uk/rabbit-care-advice](http://www.rabbitwelfare.co.uk/rabbit-care-advice)