

Bunny Bonding Instructions

PURPOSE

The goal of rabbit bonding is to help two rabbits learn to live together peacefully. Bonded rabbits can share a living space without aggression and often provide companionship and emotional enrichment for each other.

Bonding takes time, patience, and careful supervision. Progress varies depending on the rabbits' personalities, age, and past experiences.

BEFORE YOU START

Before beginning the bonding process, make sure:

- Both rabbits are spayed or neutered
- You have a neutral bonding space (an area neither rabbit considers their own)
- You can closely supervise bonding sessions
- You are prepared to move slowly and adjust as needed

Never place unbonded rabbits together unsupervised.

STEP 1 — PREPARE SEPARATE LIVING SPACES

1. House the rabbits separately in individual enclosures.
2. Place enclosures close enough that the rabbits can see and smell each other, but not touch.
3. Swap items daily between enclosures, such as:
 - Litter boxes
 - Bedding
 - Towels or blankets

This helps the rabbits become familiar with each other's scent before direct contact.

STEP 2 — SET UP A NEUTRAL BONDING SPACE

A neutral space is somewhere neither rabbit has claimed as territory.

Good neutral spaces include:

- Bathroom

- Kitchen
- Hallway
- A room the rabbits have never used
- A temporary exercise pen

Prepare the space with:

- Fresh litter box(es)
 - Hay and water
 - Toys or chew items
 - Non-slippery flooring
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STEP 3 — FIRST FACE-TO-FACE INTRODUCTIONS

1. Place both rabbits in the neutral space.
2. Start with short sessions (15–30 minutes).
3. Stay close and observe their behavior at all times.
4. End sessions calmly and positively.

Repeat these short sessions daily if there is no serious aggression.

STEP 4 — INCREASE TIME AND SPACE GRADUALLY

As tolerance improves:

1. Gradually increase session length.
2. Slowly increase the size of the bonding area.
3. Aim for multiple hours together without incident before attempting overnight sessions.

Do not rush this step.

RABBIT BEHAVIOR GUIDE

Aggressive / Stop the Session

- Lunging or biting
- Tight circling or “tornado” fighting
- Persistent aggressive chasing
- Ears pinned back with raised tail

Separate the rabbits immediately if these occur.

Neutral / Normal Bonding Behaviors

- Short chasing without biting
- Mounting (dominance behavior)
- Ignoring each other

These behaviors can be normal during bonding but should be closely monitored.

Positive Signs

- Grooming each other
- Sitting or lying near each other
- Relaxed posture
- Eating together
- Copying each other's behavior

These are strong indicators of bonding progress.

STEP 5 — LONG SESSIONS AND MOVING IN TOGETHER

Once the rabbits can spend 7–8 hours together peacefully:

1. Attempt a 24–48 hour bonding session in the neutral space.
2. Thoroughly clean the permanent enclosure to remove old scents.
3. Move both rabbits into the cleaned space together at the same time.

Continue monitoring closely during the first several days.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- End sessions on a positive note (petting or treats).
 - Provide plenty of hay and distractions.
 - If bonding stalls, try a new neutral location.
 - If aggression increases, return to an earlier step and slow down.
 - Stay calm—rabbits react to human stress.
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WHEN TO PAUSE OR STOP

Consider taking a break if:

- Aggression becomes intense or dangerous
- One or both rabbits show prolonged stress
- No progress is made after an extended period

Some rabbits may never bond, and that is okay. They can still live happy lives in separate spaces with enrichment and supervised interaction.

HOW TO KNOW THEY ARE BONDED

Your rabbits are considered bonded when:

- They can live together unsupervised
- Fighting does not occur
- Body language is relaxed
- They groom or rest near each other willingly

The goal is peaceful coexistence. Deep affection may develop, but comfort and safety come first.