



Rabbit Litterbox Training Tips

*Are your rabbits' previously pristine litterbox habits changing for the worse?
Has your rabbit decided your entire house is now his litterbox?*

First, determine if the reason could be medical, perhaps a bladder infection. A trip to your rabbit's veterinarian may be in order to detect a urinary illness.

What is the age of your rabbit? Do not expect a baby bunny to be totally litterbox trained - they are still young. That would be like expecting a new born baby to be toilet trained. Their bladder control increases as they mature. Be patient with very young, unaltered rabbits.

Is your rabbit spayed or neutered? When rabbits reach the age of 4-6 months, their hormones become active and they usually begin "marking" their territory. By spaying or neutering your rabbit he will be more likely to use the litterbox and will be a happier, healthier, calmer rabbit.

Decrease freedom and increase litterboxes. Do not give your rabbit total freedom of the house. When you decrease his freedom and increase litterboxes, you are increasing his chances he will make it to the litterbox. Keep two or more litterboxes outside the cage and one inside the cage. As his habits improve, you can decrease a litterbox or two. If you have more than one rabbit, you may see less control and more marking. If slip-ups begin, start shorter periods of freedom and more litterboxes.

Keep litterboxes very clean. Rabbits are very clean creatures. A smelly, soiled litterbox could cause your rabbit to choose another place to do his business, sometimes just outside the box. Depending on the number of rabbits and litterboxes, clean litterboxes at least once a day. Once a week is NOT enough!

Spritz litter pans with white vinegar to clean and deodorize. Let pans soak if there is urine build up and then rinse clean. Do not use chemicals. If your rabbit marks in an area, blot up the urine and dab on white vinegar to neutralize the odor. Do Not leave the smell or he may be encouraged to revisit.

Try a different litter. The House Rabbit Society suggests one of the many organic paper litters available. Sometimes the strong scent of litter will keep bunny out of the box. Avoid pine and cedar shavings and clay cat litters. The Missouri House Rabbit Society recommends the following litters: Feline Pine, Yesterday's News and CareFresh. Also, try a handful of fresh Timothy hay in the box. This will usually entice bunny to get into the box. You can also put a few of his droppings in the box, but just a few.

Be consistent. Get your rabbit into a daily routine and try not to vary it. Rabbits are very habitual and once a routine is established they usually prefer to stick with it. Routines make learning easier.

If your rabbit is continually going in an opposite corner from his box, put his box in the area he has chosen, even if it means rearranging his cage or pen or moving a table in the living room. He has already decided where he wants his box and it is much easier to oblige than to try to work against a determined bunny!



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