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Bunnies can make extremely rewarding companions – smart, affectionate, entertaining, and exceptionally cute. They are unfortunately also some of the most misunderstood pets, often surrendered, sold or simply dumped in fields because their owners just don't understand them. At Bunny Huggers South Africa, we hope to change that, one bunny at a time, by educating the people who love them.

Join our interactive support group to learn more about bunny care: share pics, links & general bunny information, download our care guides and recommended vet list, take part in discussions and share your experiences - learn to be the best bun-parent you can be.

**Facebook link to our official Cape Town Bunny Huggers Group:**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/BunnyHuggersSA/>



## 28 LIFESAVING BUNNY FACTS

### The road map to a happy healthy bunny

#### What you need to know before getting a bunny

♥ **There are bunnies out there that need you more than you need them.** They live in rescues and in open fields, rather than in pet shops or on Gumtree. Bunnies breed quickly and easily. Pet shops and intentional bunny breeders love this fact because it means they can make 'easy' money. But population is a huge problem for bun-kind. This is because there are more bunnies out there than people willing to give them good, loving homes. Bunny rescuers take bunnies from bad people and bad situations and rehome them to homes where they will live their best lives. Rather adopt a bunny from a Rescue than buy one from a shop or off the internet. This way you do some good by NOT encouraging people to keep breeding bunnies.

♥ **Bunnies do not make ideal pets for kids, unless supervised by an educated adult at all times.**

Bunnies have very fragile backs and when picking them up, you need to support their back as well as their hind legs - one big kick, while dangling in the air could leave your bunny paralysed for life. Children's hands are too tiny to hold a bunny properly, and it is advised to always let kids sit on the floor to interact with them. Bunnies also don't always come when they are called and this could provoke the wrong type of behaviour - a child trying to hold a bunny down - or cause a child to lose interest in their pet, leaving it lonely, and stuck in a cage for the rest of its life. Bunnies have very sharp nails and teeth and will bite and scratch if they feel they should. Even people who are experienced with bunnies will tell you that they have probably been scratched on the chest more than once, by a bunny that did not feel like being held at the time. Please only adopt a bunny for a small child if you are going to be the main caregiver, will ensure the proper diet is followed and can ensure that your children only interacts with the bunny under supervision. Bunnies have amazing personalities, but will only reward you with affection on their terms (much like a cat). What we can confirm though, is that it's totally worth the patience and effort.

♥ **Bunnies can live inside as part of the family by becoming litterbox trained** (more perfectly so when they are sterilized). To start with litterbox training, place the litterbox in the corner that your bunny has chosen to do his business. Bunnies are creatures of habit and will most likely wee and poop in the same corner. We suggest using eco scentless wood pellets with a layer of hay on top. You can add a piece of toilet paper to the litterbox that has been used to wipe your bun's urine - this will show him that you want him to go there. Be persistent about throwing all droppings in the litterbox. If you are struggling, it is best to start small (in a cage or playpen) and then let your bunny "earn" more space as his manners improve. Once they've learned the habit they will hardly ever urinate outside the litter box. Just remember that unsterilized bunnies will probably mark territory, leaving droppings and spraying urine all over the place - best to get them sterilized, it helps with manners.

♥ **Bunnies are not low maintenance pets and they live up to 10 years.** Many people think that bunnies make great starting pets - this is not true. When you adopt a bunny you need to be in it for the long run. Bunnies need a responsible caretaker who can ensure that: they follow the correct diet, they always have fresh water and hay available, they get enough run time, they are handled carefully, they aren't hiding illness or pain, their litterboxes are clean, they are sterilized to prevent aggressive/hormonal behaviour, they are entertained and interacted with so that they do not go into depression. You also need to bunny-proof your home (or supervise out-time) as they have a natural instinct to chew and dig.

♥ **They are not cheap pets.** In contradiction to what most people think, there are a lot of costs associated with owning a bunny. Many bunnies have been rehomed due to people realizing that they cannot afford their pets.

Costs to consider:

- Hay (R85 per bale),
- Greens/Veg (if R10 per day = R300 p/m) / Pellets (R35 – R300 per pack),
- Large enough cage / playpen / run (R1000+)
- Toys / blankets / litterboxes / treats / food & water bowls / emergency kit
- Vet bills: Chances are that you will visit the vet at least once a year, whether it is for teeth/ear/eye/general check-up, digestive illness or sterilization. Vet consult (R170 – R300), Sterilization at a bunny savvy vet (R650 – R1200), Dental or general surgery (R650 +).

♥ **Domesticated bunnies cannot survive in the wild.** While many people feel that they are doing their pets a favour by “setting them free”. Stats show that a domesticated bunny (not born wild) will only survive an average of about 3 - 4 days in the wild. These domesticated pets mostly end up killed by vehicles, or caught by predators. No animal deserves to be left in a box in the wild. If you can no longer take care of your pet, put him up for adoption on our rehome page and give him a new chance at life: <https://www.facebook.com/bunnyhuggersrehomepage/>

## Food

♥ **Hay! Hay! Hay! - Bunnies should not go without fresh hay for even one day.** All bunnies should have access to unlimited fresh grass-based hay: Oat hay (most common), teff aka eragrostis, mountain hay, meadow hay, orchard grass & timothy hay (hard to find in SA). Lucerne aka alfalfa is not a grass hay but rather a legume and should only be fed as a treat due to high calcium content. Eating enough hay will ensure a healthy digestive system (prevents intestinal issues and blockage). Bunnies that fill up on pellets, do not eat enough hay – check that your bunny is consuming at least its body size in hay per day before introducing pellets. Sometimes it is necessary to take pellets away completely to encourage hay eating – your bunnies WILL beg for it, don't give in! They will learn to love their hay and will be happier & healthier for it. Do not mistake straw for hay (hay is not just golden in colour but also has green and brown bits, as well as seeds). Although bunnies may eat straw, it has no nutritional value. An average bunny's diet should consist of **unlimited hay and grass, 1-2 cups safe veggies/greens, 1-2 tbsp. quality, non-muesli pellets, 1 tsp. occasional fruit/treats.**

♥ **Bunnies must never stop eating.** A bunny's gut needs to constantly move or else he could get Gastrointestinal (GI) stasis where the digestive system completely shuts down. Bunnies are not like other animals that you only feed once or twice a day, they need to eat constantly. GI stasis is very serious and can be fatal. This is one of the reasons why hay should be available at all times.

♥ **Do not feed your bunny ICEBERG LETTUCE.** This is one of the most common mistakes that new bun owners make. Iceberg lettuce has very little nutritional value and it can cause diarrhoea. There are varieties of better (more nutritious) alternatives. For a comprehensive list of safe plants, visit: <https://riseandshinerabbitry.com/2012/02/26/safe-food-list-for-bunnies/>

### ♥ Limit pellets and do not feed muesli mixes.

Bunnies cannot properly digest corn, peas and seeds. Feeding these foods will jeopardize their digestive and dental health. In the long term it can shorten their life span. Muesli mixes also encourages selective feeding (picking out the good bits), which can lead to nutrient deficiency. Stick to the good stuff for a healthy happy bun. We highly recommend the following: **Burgess Excel Nuggets** (+- R300 p.pack), **Selective** (+- R150 p.pack) & **Verse Laga Crispy Snack** (+- R85 p.pack). If you are on a tight budget try Agri Pellets (buy in bulk), Bunny Chow, Perky Pets' or Marltons' plain brown pellets (+- R35 p.pack). Limit pellets to 2 tbsp. per day per bun. You can even follow a pellet-free diet, especially if your bunny is overweight. Many bunnies are so naughty for pellets that they don't eat their hay. If this is your bunny, I would consider cutting out pellets completely, or just feed them as a treat or to reward good behaviour. You can substitute by feeding more greens.



♥ **Grazing on fresh grass is essential for dental health.** Bunnies' teeth are constantly growing and need to be worn down by their diet. Most people are under the impression that chewing on wood or mineral blocks wear the teeth down, but in actual fact letting your bun graze on fresh grass is the most effective way to ensure dental health. Grass contains silica which wears the teeth down. When buns eat grass they also grind opposed to chew. If you don't have a garden, plant some grass in a tray for your bun to nibble on.

♥ **Introduce new foods one at a time.** Always introduce new food gradually to see if your bunny's system tolerates it. Stop feeding the specific food immediately if your bunny's poop softens too much (diarrhoea). Only try something new once his stool is back to normal

♥ **Keep house plants away.** Many house plants are poisonous to bunnies, keep them out of your bun's reach. Better safe than sorry. For a list of plants that definitely aren't safe for your bun, visit: <http://www.all ears sac.org/badplants.html>

## Time for the V-E-T

♥ **Know your bunny's poop!** Yes! Nothing gets a bun-mom as excited as her bun's first poop after illness or surgery. Your bun's poop is the best way to monitor his health. Bunnies have 2 types of stools – the normal round ones that they drop any- and everywhere, and caecotrophes (grapelike, squishy poo that they eat from their bum). Both are normal and it is important to know what they should look like. Caecotrophes are rarely seen (because your bun eats them), but when they are left behind, they are often mistaken for diarrhea. Real diarrhea is very rare in bunnies, but can be fatal. Healthy normal droppings should be: not too hard, not too soft, not too dark (darkness indicates lack of fiber/hay), not too small, also not strung together with hair. Poops that are strung together with hair indicate that you need to groom your bunny more to prevent excess hair from being digested.



♥ **If your bunny stops eating and/or pooping it is vet time!** Bunnies are prey animals and it is natural for them to hide any illness or pain. The most common symptom of illness would be if your bunny seems lethargic (out-of-it), not himself and/or when a bunny stops eating/pooping or refusing treats. At this point it normally means the issue has already progressed and it is time to see a vet immediately - DO NOT WASTE TIME. Bunnies commonly suffer from tummy gas/bloat/gastrointestinal (GI) stasis, which can be fatal if not treated. GI stasis can also be a secondary symptom of a more serious underlying cause, like infection. Always keep an emergency kit at home and know who your closest bunny savvy vet is (as well as after hours). Bunnies tend to get sick on weekends or late evenings when all the vets are closed.

♥ **Use a bun-savvy vet.** Bunnies are exotic animals (with digestive systems more like a horse than any other creature) and not all vets have the experience or knowledge to treat them. In the worst cases, inexperienced vets can actually worsen the condition of your bunny rather than making him better. Refer to our list of bun-savvy vets or contact us for more info.

♥ **Sterilizing your bunny is HIGHLY recommended.** Not only does it help prevent unwanted litters, it also reduces chances of cancer (which is very common in older females), and reduces aggressive and or territorial behaviour such as spraying and bad litter box manners.

♥ **NEVER starve your bunny (even before an operation).** Bunnies cannot vomit and therefore do not need to be starved before an operation. Also, increasing the time your bunny goes without food can cause GI Stasis, so let your bunny eat right up until he is sedated, and also encourage him to eat as soon as possible after he awakes. If a vet tells you to starve your bunny - run for the hills, because then he definitely isn't bun-savvy.

## Neat and tidy

♥ **White vinegar magic.** Clean litterboxes and urine stains on plastic with white vinegar. Not only does it work like a charm, it dries odourless and is completely bunny safe. Directions: Spray area with vinegar, let it soak for a while, scrub with a little water and dish washing liquid and rinse.

♥ **Angora (long haired) bunnies need daily grooming.** If you have an Angora, please groom daily to avoid matts. When you don't groom enough, uncomfortable matts form that pull on their skin and restrict movement. They can sometimes be very difficult to remove without injuring (in severe cases you might need to take your bunny for a shave under sedation at a vet). Angoras also need to be shaved in the summer to avoid heat exhaustion (not under sedation, but at a bunny-savvy parlour). You can also learn to groom your bunny yourself.

♥ **Short haired bunnies also need grooming during moulting season.** All bunnies will shed hair during the change of seasons. Bunnies digest a lot of this hair when grooming themselves, which causes blockages in the digestive system (bunnies cannot vomit hairballs like cats do). Wet your hands - shake off most of the water and then run your fingers through your bunny's fur, gently pulling out all excess hair. Do this a few times every day while your bunny is moulting. You can use a pet brush too, but be careful, their skin is delicate, so avoid brushing too much (you don't want to brush out all of your bunny's hair!)

♥ **Trim nails regularly.** A bunny's nails need to be trimmed regularly, or else they could get hooked and rip out - this is a very painful and bloody experience. Learn to look for the nerve/"quick" and trim them yourself with a dog nail cutter, or take your bun to a professional.

♥ **NEVER submerge a bunny in water.** Bunnies self-groom like cats and should never be bathed. It's unnatural and stressful - they can go into shock or die from a heart attack. Even if you do find a bunny that tolerates bathing, it's still stressful and not necessary. If your bunny does get wet for any reason, be sure to dry him properly. Their fur is thick and doesn't dry well - this can cause skin conditions and illness. If very dirty, use a damp cloth, or do a bunny butt wash. Many shops sell bunny shampoo and related products - the only way we can vote against them is not to buy them and to educate others not to buy them. If your bun is heavily soiled with poop that has already dried around the genital area, you might need to have him shaved by a vet (under sedation).

## Living bun's best life

♥ **Bunnies are social animals and need company.** Bunnies are much happier in bonded groups or pairs. Sterilized male/female pairs, female/female pairs or groups with 1 male and numerous females are normally the easiest match. Always remember that unbonded bunnies will fight viciously (till death), so read up on the introduction process before attempting a bonding session. <http://bunny-huggers.co.za/how-to-bond-your-buns/> discusses bonding in detail (neutral territory is key). Hormones also play a massive role in aggressive/territorial behaviour which means sterilizing your bun is highly recommended before adopting a mate (also to prevent unwanted litters). It is also highly recommended to take your bunny on numerous dates and let him choose his own friend - this way you will have the best chance at a successful bond.

♥ **Do not house bunnies with guinea pigs.** Even though they seem to tolerate each other, they cannot communicate. A bunny can easily injure or kill a piggy if a fight occurred. They also have different dietary needs and can pass diseases onto each other.

♥ **Bored bunnies get naughty.** Keep your bunny entertained with toys (the wooden parrot kind is normally fine as they are coloured with food colouring). Only use plastic toys made of hard plastic. Spice up the mix with different colours and textures. Use old rugs for your bunnies to dig on. Bunnies also love tunnels, places to jump on and holes to hide in (cardboard boxes work well if your bunny doesn't chew and swallow the cardboard like mine do). Toilet rolls or paper towel rolls work very well, especially when stuffed with hay. Keeping your bunny entertained is the best way to keep him from chewing your electrical cords.

♥ **Bunnies need run space - a hutch is not enough!** Bunnies need at least a few hours of run time daily. They are not cage animals. Permanently living in a cage could cause depression and aggressive behaviour. Bunnies, like most animals, need exercise, so ensure that your bunny has access to a space large enough for them to reach full speed running and with enough room to do a couple of binkies. Think playpens or enclosed runs, or bunny proof an area of your house.

♥ **Bunnies do not handle heat well and do better in colder temperatures.** You need to keep your bunny cool and hydrated in summer as they can die from heat exhaustion - anything from 26 Celsius and higher is a danger zone. There are many ways to keep your bunny cool, from ice bottles, to fans, cool tiles, etc. Ask members for tips if you haven't done this before. If you have a long-haired bunny (like an Angora or Jersey Woolly) - have him/her shaved for the summer at a bunny-savvy parlour.

## A HEALTHY, HOPPY DIET

### The best thing you can give your bun

An average bunny's diet should consist of **unlimited hay and grass, 1-2 cups safe veggies/greens, 2 tbsp. quality, non-muesli pellets, tsp. of occasional fruit/treats** in order to maintain healthy teeth and a healthy digestive system.

Young bunnies (under 6 months) are still developing and have different dietary needs - their diet needs to be adjusted as follows: Unlimited alfalfa (aka lucerne) for bone development, increase pellet allowance and add rolled oats to the diet for weight gain. Babies that were separated from their mother too soon (4-7 weeks of age) need to be supplemented with Royal Canin kitten milk and Protexin (both available at the counter of most vets and vet shops).

Always introduce new foods gradually to see if your bunny's system tolerates it. Stop feeding the specific food immediately if your bunny has runny poop. Only try something new once his stool is back to normal.

### A diet guide

#### **Grass Hay types available in SA** (feed unlimitedly)

Oat hay, teff (aka eragrostis), mountain hay, meadow hay, orchard grass.

Do not mistake straw for hay – straw has no nutritional value (is dry and yellow).

Lucerne (aka alfalfa) is not a grass hay but rather a legume and should only be fed as a treat due to high calcium content.

#### **Safe veggies/ greens** (1-2 cups per day)

Basil, Mint, Coriander, Rosemary, Thyme, Fennel, Oregano, Sage, Lavender, Carrot Tops, Dandelion leaves & flowers, Roses/Hibiscus flowers (watch out for pesticides), Lettuce (dark green/red leaf – avoid iceberg). Visit [this page](https://riseandshinerabbitry.com/2012/02/26/safe-food-list-for-rabbits/) for a more comprehensive list:

<https://riseandshinerabbitry.com/2012/02/26/safe-food-list-for-rabbits/>

#### **Treats** (1 tsp per day)

Remove all SEEDS before feeding, except strawberries: Apple, Pineapple, Strawberry, Banana, Raisins, Carrot, Grapes, Papaya, Watermelon, Mango

#### **Good quality, plain pellets** (2 tbsp. per day)

Burgess Excel Nuggets (+- R300 p.pack)

Selective (+- R150 p.pack)

Verse Laga Crispy Snack (+- R85 p.pack)

Budget Pellets: Agri feeds (buy in bulk),

Perky Pets or Marltons plain brown (+- R35 p.pack)

# HOW TO KNOW IF YOUR BUNNY IS SICK

& what to do if he is

**PLEASE NOTE:** The advice given in this section is not meant to replace proper vet care. We are not medical professionals and we strongly advise that you take your bunny to a bunny-savvy vet at any signs of pain or illness (see our vet list).

## Knowing the signs of illness

Most bunnies hide their symptoms well and by the time you realize your bunny is sick, it may be almost too late - DO NOT WAIT, take immediate action! Symptoms often include one or more of the following:

- ♥ loud teeth grinding
- ♥ hunched up with tummy pressed to the floor
- ♥ bloated tummy
- ♥ hiding in a corner refusing to come out
- ♥ refusing treats or favourite foods
- ♥ not eating, not drinking
- ♥ acting lethargic
- ♥ aggression towards you or his bonded mate
- ♥ any odd behaviour that seems "off"

## ♥ NO POOP = VET EMERGENCY!

Your bun's poop is the best way to monitor his health. Bunnies have 2 types of stools – the round ones that they drop everywhere, and caecotrophes (grapelike, squishy poo). Both are normal. Caecotrophes are rarely seen (bun eats them out of his bum), but when they are left behind, they are often mistaken for diarrhea. Real diarrhea is rare in bunnies, but can be fatal. Importantly,



## ♥ CAECOTROPHES (first 2 images above) – THESE ARE NORMAL AND HEALTHY

Yes, they need to eat these for nutrients. Normally you barely see them, but if you do...don't freak out. If your bun leaves them behind, it could mean he is eating food that is too rich, or is getting overweight and can't reach his bum. This is fine but if prolonged, your bunny will lose out on vital nutrients.

## ♥ CAECALS (third image above) – THESE ARE NORMAL AND HEALTHY

These should be plentiful, large, perfectly round balls (or slightly egg-shaped if really large) and soft enough to squash easily. They should consist mainly of damp/dry hay/grass particles and shouldn't contain a lot of fur.



### ♥ SMALL/HARD/STICKY POOP (first image below) – NOT SO HEALTHY

Dark, sticky poops indicate a lack of fibre. Feed more hay and cut down on other foods.

Poops that are small and hard are warning you that your bunny's digestion is not working well, so your bunny is at risk of GI stasis. Call the vet immediately and bring a poop sample with you.

### ♥ STRINGY POOP (second image below) – NOT SO HEALTHY

You need to help your bun digest less hair by grooming him more with a brush or dampen your hands and slide gently over your bun's body while collecting loose hair (rubber kitchen gloves work like a charm). Poops that look like this can send your bun into GI stasis if not attended to.



## Home Emergency Kit

Keep your bunny as comfortable and pain-free as possible until you are able to visit a bunny-savvy vet (ASAP).

### ♥ Warm water bottles/blankets/electric pad:

A sick bunny's temperature drops quickly. Keep him warm but make sure that it's not hot enough to burn him.

♥ **Treats:** Refusing a favourite treat is very uncommon for a healthy bunny and this is normally the first sign of illness to look out for. Tempt your bun with treats to encourage eating.

♥ **1ml/3ml Syringes:** (without the needles). Have a look at YouTube videos on how to syringe feed –insert the syringe from the side of the mouth (behind the front teeth) to prevent accidentally squirting food/ liquid into your bunny's airway (choking hazard)!

♥ **Rescue Remedy drops:** Keep your bunny calm by rubbing 3 drops on the inside of each ear. (Also works well for travelling, bonding and/or other stressful activities)

♥ **Critical Care/Dual Care:** High-fibre food made for sick/recovering small animals. It's easily mixed into a paste with water. You can syringe feed this to your bunny to keep the gut from shutting down. A less healthy alternative is apple/carrot/ banana Purity baby food.

♥ **Devil's claw/Analgesic Solution:** Most prescription painkillers can only be given once a day. This herbal medication can be given much more frequently and will help the bun pull through until his next dose. Syringe feed 4 drops (0.1ml) every hour for 3 hours, and then 3 hourly. Available at health shops and Dis-chem.

♥ **Chamomile tea/rooibos tea:** Keep your bunny hydrated when he is in pain. Chamomile manages pain (a little) and is calming, while rooibos promotes hydration.

## Bunny-Savvy Vet List

**PLEASE NOTE:** Bunnies are classed as EXOTIC in veterinary terms. As such, vets require specialized training to treat them effectively. Vets who have trained and only worked in South Africa are unlikely to have had extensive training in the treatment of bunnies. Our vet list is always under construction. Although we do our best to only recommend bunny-savvy vets, we (admins) have not been able to personally visit each of these vets. If you feel that one of the vets should be removed from the list, please contact us so we can investigate.

### ♥ WESTERN CAPE

Dr. Bernice van Huysteen

#### **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**

CEAH (Cape Exotic Animal Hospital),  
10 de Villiers Drive, Durbanville  
021 975 2239

Dr. Coetzee de Beer

#### **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**

CARE (Centre for Avian, Reptiles & Exotics),  
Pellmeadow Estate, Protea Road, Klampmuts  
021 875 5063 / 074 134 3271 (24-hour)

Dr. Kim Tutt (exotics & eye specialist)  
Cape Animal Medical Center (24 hours),  
Rosemead Avenue, Kenilworth  
021 674 0034

Dr. Didi Burger  
Teva Veterinary Clinic,  
Vergelegen Spar Centre,  
1 Schaapenberg Road, Somerset West  
021 851 3511 / 3554

Dr. Stephen Smith  
Tygerberg Animal Hospital Kenridge,  
78 De Bron Ave, Kenridge  
021 914 0886

Dr. Lauren, Dr. Gina & Dr Natasha  
Steenberg Veterinary Clinic,  
Steenberg Village Shopping Village, Reddam  
Ave, Westlake  
021 701 0557

Dr. Susie Peterssen  
Noordhoek Veterinary Clinic,  
Main Road, Noordhoek  
021 789 2888

Dr. Vanessa Persson  
Observatory Animal Clinic,  
156 Lower Main Road, Observatory  
021 447 1331

### ♥ GAUTENG

Dr. Dorianne Elliot  
Bird and Exotic Animal Hospital,  
M35 Soutpan Road, Onderstepoort  
012 529 8105

Bryanston Avian, Exotic & Small  
Animal Clinic  
99 Grosvenor Rd, Bryanston, Sandton  
Ask for bunny-savvy vet.  
011 706 1381

Dr. Bruce Peck  
Glenwood Bird and Animal Hospital  
120 Clearwater Rd, Pretoria  
012 348 5712

Dr. Graeme King  
Parkmore Vet Clinic  
124 11th Street, Parkmore  
011 883 4746 / 2107

Dr. Natasha Ross & Dr. Shelagh Hahn  
Blue Bush Animal Clinic  
256 Market Street, Randburg  
011 462 5839

Dr. Jaco Jacob  
Val De Grace Animal Clinic  
75 Watermeyer Street, Val De Grace  
012 804 8901 / (Emergency) 083 251 8484

Dr. Amy Newham  
Elarduspark Animal Clinic  
838 Barnard Street, Elardus Park, Pretoria  
012 345 2161



## ♥ KZN

Village Veterinary Clinic  
2 St. Mary's Road, Kloof, Durban  
Stocks food. Ask for bunny-savvy vet.  
031 764 0588

Riverside Veterinary Clinic  
62 Soofie Saheb Drive, Durban North  
Stocks food & hay. Ask for bunny-savvy vet.  
031 563 6565/6 / (emergency) 031 2678000

Westville Veterinary Hospital  
31 Jan Hofmeyr Road, Westville  
Stocks food. Ask for bunny-savvy vet.  
031 267 8000

## ♥ EASTERN CAPE

Dr. Laura Jeanne Rennie  
Linton Grange Animal Hospital  
8 Salvia Cres, Linton Grande  
Ask for bunny-savvy vet.  
041 360 1291

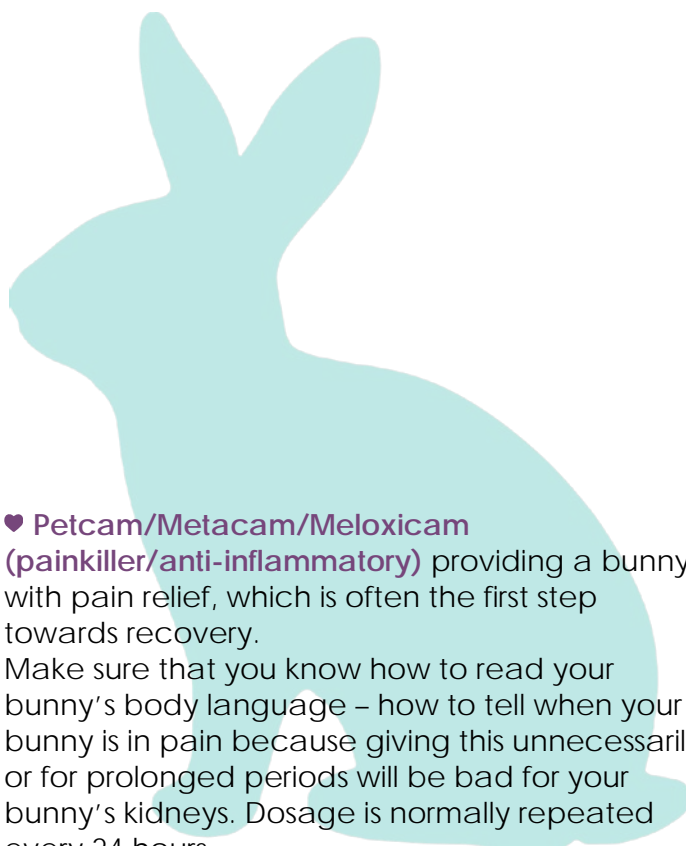
Lorraine Veterinary Clinic  
178 Circular Drive, Lorraine  
Ask for bunny-savvy vet.  
041 367 2303

## Prescription Drugs

Get these from your vet to keep at home in case of an emergency. Most dosages depend on your bunny's weight. Ask your vet to write down the dosage for each of your bunnies on the bottle. If you have the meds, but not the dosage and cannot contact your vet, at least contact one of our admins or knowledgeable members to assist, rather than guessing. Overdosing could be fatal.

Always remember to tell your vet which meds you have already given, in what quantities and when then they were last given.

♥ **Clopomon/Metoclopramide (gut motility drug)** keeps the gut working to prevent GI stasis but can be dangerous if given to a bunny with a blockage. Important for bunnies that have stopped eating/pooping. Dosage is normally repeated every 8-12 hours.



♥ **Petcam/Metacam/Meloxicam (painkiller/anti-inflammatory)** providing a bunny with pain relief, which is often the first step towards recovery. Make sure that you know how to read your bunny's body language – how to tell when your bunny is in pain because giving this unnecessarily or for prolonged periods will be bad for your bunny's kidneys. Dosage is normally repeated every 24 hours.

♥ **Baytril/Enrovet (antibiotic)** fights infections. Some bunny owners give antibiotics straight away when they suspect their bunny is sick. Do so with caution because this can lead to antibiotic resistance. The vet may prefer to prescribe a better antibiotic to suit the exact ailment and now your bunny has to first finish the course of antibiotic he started with.

## ADOPT A BUNNY

Adopt, don't shop!

Unfortunately, bunnies are often seen as disposable pets that people dump, neglect or abandon. In many cases they are also left, irresponsibly, to reproduce litter after litter.

There are so many bunnies in need of homes (even babies). Be part of the solution.

**Adopt, don't shop!** Our group strongly supports and encourages this initiative. Here is a list of organizations who always have bunnies in need of homes and/or fosters:

### ♥ The Bunny Huggers South Africa Rehome Page

We created the Bunny Huggers South Africa Rehome Page to help network bunnies in need of homes and/or lost and found bunnies. Our page is mainly Cape Town based, but we do get posts from Gauteng, PE and Durban as well. Make a difference by adopting a bun in need of a loving home. <https://www.facebook.com/bunnyhuggersrehomepage/>

### ♥ GAUTENG

Bunny Tales Rescue – Fourways  
081 040 0489 (Anabel)  
bunnytalesrescue@gmail.com  
<https://www.facebook.com/Bunnytalesrescue/>

Berario Bunnies – Randburg  
083 679 2243 (Meahni)  
berario.bunnies@gmail.com  
[https://www.facebook.com/BerarioBunnies/?ref=br\\_rs](https://www.facebook.com/BerarioBunnies/?ref=br_rs)

Critter Rescue SA – Benoni  
073 437 8918 (Karien)  
critterrescuesa@gmail.com  
[https://www.facebook.com/critterrescuesa/?ref=br\\_rs](https://www.facebook.com/critterrescuesa/?ref=br_rs)

The Lonehill Bunnies – Lonehill  
082 888 5895 (Cristina)  
lonehillbunnies@gmail.com  
<https://www.facebook.com/lonehillbunnies/?ref=ts>

### ♥ WESTERN CAPE

Barefoot Rescue – Kirstenhof  
082 780 3955 (Michelle)  
[https://www.facebook.com/pg/BarefootRescuers/about/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/BarefootRescuers/about/?ref=page_internal)

Noordhoek Bunny Rescue – Noordhoek  
062 124 5325 (Sian)  
<https://www.facebook.com/noordhoekbunnyrescue/>

Boggle & Brux – Southern Suburbs CT  
064 533 6910 (Kerri & Lori)  
boggleandbruxct@gmail.com  
<https://www.facebook.com/BoggleAndBruxCT/>

### ♥ KZN

Bunville Bunny Rescue – Westville  
061 974 0592 (Samantha)  
samanthabunnyfluff@icloud.com  
<https://www.facebook.com/bunvillebunnies/>

### ♥ EASTERN CAPE

REW Foundation – East London  
082 704 8106 (Sonia)  
<https://www.facebook.com/REW-Foundation-for-homeless-bunnies-368104140685524/>



# BUNNY BUSINESS

Groomers, sitters, builders, bunny-proofing

**PLEASE NOTE:** Although we do our best to only recommend bunny-savvy services, we advise each bunny owner personally visit the premises and decide for themselves whether they are satisfied, before booking, or post on our Facebook group to find out if any of the BHSA members can assist you. If you feel that one of these businesses should be removed from the list, please contact us so we can investigate.

## Habitats & bunny-proofing

### ♥ WESTERN CAPE

Pet Creations – Somerset West **Delivers to CT**  
Galvanized steel panels / cages / playpens  
079 314 6351 (Johan)  
<http://www.petcreations.co.za/>

The Bunny Zone – Durbanville  
083 658 4238 / 071 235 4687 (Peter)  
peter.vlok@gmail.com

Deon – Cape Town 084 811 0820  
deon-w@mweb.co.za

Douglas – Kenilworth 0837867021  
r\_bean@mweb.co.za

## Groomers

### ♥ WESTERN CAPE

Jeni's Pet Parlour – Newlands  
021 685 2982  
<https://www.facebook.com/Jenis-Pet-Parlour-336463429773202/>

Happy Tails – Joostenberg Vlakte  
076 742 5130 (Louise)  
<http://www.dog-care-centre.com/>

Douglas – Kenilworth 0837867021  
r\_bean@mweb.co.za

Nicole – Somerset West 082 411 9526

### ♥ KZN

Bunville Bunny Rescue – Westville  
061 974 0592 (Samantha)  
<https://www.facebook.com/bunvillebunnies/>

## Bunnysitters

### ♥ WESTERN CAPE

Pet Buddies – Fish Hoek  
072 740 7352 / 021 782 9299 (Claira)  
<http://www.petbuddiesfishhoek.co.za>

Happy Pet and Housesitter – Lakeside  
073 641 0813 (Arlene)  
<http://www.happypetandhousesitter.co.za>

Jolandie – Bothasig 073 067 2212  
Suzanna – Goodwood 064 905 0823  
Blaise – Sunningdale 083 790 7471  
Ashley – Parklands 084 244 7073  
Lexi – Kenilworth 082 739 2859

Happy Tails – Joostenberg Vlakte  
076 742 5130 (Louise)  
<http://www.dog-care-centre.com/>

### ♥ KZN

Bunville Bunny Rescue – Westville  
061 974 0592 (Samantha)  
<https://www.facebook.com/bunvillebunnies/>

### ♥ GAUTENG

Viam's Bunny Hotel – Randburg  
081 537 1093

Bunny Tales Rescue – Fourways  
081 040 0489 (Anabel)  
<https://www.facebook.com/Bunnytalesrescue/>

# BUNS WORLDWIDE

## Recommended online stores & recourses

♥ **Unusual Pets:** Bedding, food, supplements, toys and treats for bunnies.

<https://unusualpets.co.za/>

♥ **Njom-Njoms:** Food, treats and toys for small furry creatures.

<http://www.njomnjoms.co.za/>

♥ **Pet Habitat SA:** Find local stores that carry bunny brands like Burgess and Carefresh.

<https://pethabitat.co.za/Home>

♥ **House Bunny Society:** The largest international bunny organisation with tons of info for bunny owners, and resources for bunny rescues. HRS publishes a great guide called *The House Bunny Handbook*, and HRS members receive the biannual *House Bunny Journal*.

<https://bunny.org/>

♥ **Happy Bunny Club:** A monthly subscription box full of bunny toys and treats.

<https://www.happybunnyclub.com/>

♥ **The Bunny House:** DIY homes and toys (see blog for toys).

<http://www.thebunnyhouse.com/>

♥ **My House Bunny:** Educational website with great articles on bunny care, health and behaviour. <https://myhousebunny.com/>

♥ **Bunny Awareness Week:** Wonderful bite-sized articles on a variety of bunny topics.

<https://www.bunnyawarenessweek.co.uk/>

♥ **Howcast Bunny Videos:** Over 40 educational videos with celebrity bunny advocate Amy Sedaris and bunny expert Mary E. Cotter.

<https://www.howcast.com/guides/1187-how-to-take-care-of-a-pet-rabbit>

♥ **BinkyBunny:** Forum where you can connect with other bunny owners and post questions.

<https://www.binkybunny.com/HOME/tabid/36/Default.aspx>

♥ **RWAF:** The UK's largest organisation for bunny lovers with advice for bunny owners and articles on diet, health, and housing. RWAF members receive a quarterly magazine called *Bunnying On*.

<https://rabbitwelfare.co.uk/>