

# Omlet Guide to Keeping Rabbits

## Your guide to keeping rabbits

Your eglu has arrived! This guide is a comprehensive resource for advice, tips and essential information on everything rabbit and will take you through all you need to know to keep your rabbits happy, healthy and your eglu in tiptop condition.

## Online Forum

To meet up with other new and experienced rabbit owners you should visit the Omlet Club. Lots of people proudly put pictures of their rabbits, gardens and other pets in the online gallery and the discussion areas of the forum can be funny, helpful and reassuring if you are new to rabbits. To access the forum simply go to [www.omlet.co.uk/club](http://www.omlet.co.uk/club) and enter the following details:

**Username: egluowner**  
**Password: rabbits**



Your rabbits will be happy and contented in the eglu

## How many rabbits make a home?

Rabbits live in big groups in the wild and your domestic rabbit will also enjoy the company of other rabbits. In fact a single rabbit will get lonely unless you are prepared to spend a lot of time with it. So a pair of rabbits is a good idea as they can keep each other company.

Should you keep boys or girls? Well, one of each will generally make the best long term companions. BUT! Unless you want to breed from them, you must have them both neutered - an operation that your vet can do. Keeping two rabbits of the same sex together can work well especially if they have grown up together.

However, two males or two females could start fighting after puberty (about 3 months old). To reduce aggressive behaviour you can have your rabbits neutered, again this is something your vet can do.

## Introducing new rabbits

If you already have one rabbit and like the idea of it having a companion then you can introduce another rabbit. Introducing two rabbits needs to be done with consideration and patience. The best way to introduce a new rabbit is to keep it in a separate run near to your current rabbit. This way they can see each other and learn to recognise each other whilst they still have their own space. After a couple of days it should be safe to allow them to have contact. Some rabbits can be quite vicious and scratch and bite at one another and if this doesn't settle down quickly you should separate the rabbits again for a few days before repeating the introduction.

If you are at all unsure as to the sex of either your existing rabbit or your new rabbit it is worth having them checked before you introduce them by a vet or another experienced person. Breeding is not an area that should be entered into lightly.

## Daily Routine

Like most animals, your rabbits will be more relaxed and happier if you get into a routine when looking after them. Try to check up on your rabbits at roughly the same time everyday.

### Freshen up their home

Check the eglu dropping tray, if there are any droppings or soiled bedding then remove the tray, empty it then wipe it clean. You can use a pet disinfectant but never use household cleaners. Then simply put fresh bedding in the tray and pop it back in the eglu. This only takes a few minutes and will help keep your rabbit healthy and happy.



Changing the bedding



Refilling hay and water

### Food and water

You will need to check their food and water every day. The eglu has a special integrated hay and water holder that you can remove and take inside to refill.

## Feeding

Bugs Bunny and Peter rabbit may well live on a diet of juicy carrots, but this is not all that rabbits should eat!

A rabbit has a very delicate digestive system that can be upset relatively easily by eating the wrong things. In the wild, rabbits evolved in areas with lots of low quality vegetation. They spend a lot of time eating and have a digestive system that extracts the maximum goodness out of what they eat. Your pet rabbit is the same and so its diet should consist mainly of grass and hay. Too many so called 'wet' vegetables such as lettuce can cause diarrhoea.

### Hay:

Even if you are using a 'complete' mix, you should provide hay as the main part of your rabbits diet. Hay provides the roughage / fibre that the rabbit needs and also plays an important role in keeping the growth of your rabbit's teeth in check by wearing them down. Unless you can get hay from a farming friend, petshops sell hay in handy 'pillows' or small bales. You can feed your rabbits mainly to ensure that they are lean and healthy. You will find a hayrack inside the eglu and can restock the hay through the hatch.

### Water:

With any animal, water is very important. Make sure that the water is kept fresh by replacing it every couple of days (if they haven't drunk it already!) The water container is kept inside the rabbit's house where it is less likely to freeze than if it is outside but it is still important that you check for ice. The water in the bottle may not have frozen, but check that the tube at the bottom still lets water through. If your rabbit gets dehydrated it is less able to withstand the cold so will not last long without water.

### Green Food:

If you want to feed your rabbits vegetables, be careful and introduce them bit by bit. 'Wet' foods as they are known can soon upset your rabbit's stomach. Try carrots or turnips rather than the wetter tomato or lettuce. As with any new food that you give your rabbits, don't make any quick changes.



Use harder vegetables as treats rather than 'wet' tomatoes or lettuce

### Caecotrophs:

If you look carefully at what comes out of the back end of a rabbit, you will see that there are two different kinds of pellet. One type of pellet is round and relatively dry, this is a poo. The other type known as a caecotroph is actually the result of the first of two phases of digestion and is still full of goodness.

Although it might look revolting, your rabbit will actually eat some of these dark and moist pellets.

Don't try and stop your rabbit doing this it is all part of the process of extracting all the goodness possible from grass, (see page 3 for more about digestion).

If your rabbit has a diet that is too rich you can spot it quite quickly as the rabbit will be producing lots of caecotrophs and not eating them. This can lead to 'sticky bottom syndrome.' (see page 6.) To avoid this and your rabbits getting fat, you should change their diet to a higher percentage of hay and hard vegetables and less pellets or mix.

### Sweet:

As with people, many rabbits have a sweet tooth! Even though it can seem kind to give them treats they can get fat very easily which is bad for their health. Try giving them some carrot or turnip as a treat instead.

### Pellets/Mixes:

These are 'complete' solutions and contain everything your rabbit needs in terms of nutrients and vitamins. Young rabbits i.e. younger than five months old are growing fast and may need feeding twice a day but after that once a day is fine. The amount that you feed your rabbit is to some extent common sense as it varies massively between different breeds. So if your rabbit seems to be getting a bit fat, reduce the quantity of feed, if your rabbit tries to eat your hand as well as the food when you feed it, increase the quantity!



Rabbit 'Pellets'



Rabbit 'Mix'

There can be a drawback with a rabbit mix. Although it looks more interesting than the extruded foods or pellets, some rabbits can be a bit fussy and not eat all of the mix leaving it deficient. If this is the case then a pelleted food is a better option. It may look boring to us but rabbits tend to like them.



Use the bowl to stop your rabbits scattering their food

Don't be tempted to buy feed that is meant for another animal, that bag of hamster or goat food may look tasty, but different animals have different needs and the wrong food could cause your rabbits problems.



## The eglu run

Rabbits love to play and the large eglu run has over 2 square meters of secure space and lots of height for them to hop around in. Because the eglu and run work together as a complete habitat, your rabbits have the freedom to choose to be inside or out throughout the day and night.



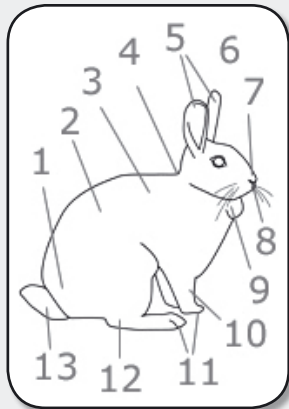
Your bunnies can choose when to go outside

Your rabbits will be naturally most active at dawn and dusk but you will probably also see them in the run during the day. Some rabbits like to dig and if you find that this is a problem you can fit the optional underfloor net to the run, (see back page.) The run has an anti-tunneling skirt all the way round to keep your rabbits safe but if the ground is uneven then it is also a good idea to peg this down, (see back page.)

## Anatomy

It's a big world out there so rabbits have developed some extraordinary features that have helped them survive and thrive in the wild.

- 1 Rump
- 2 Loin
- 3 Shoulder
- 4 Neck
- 5 Ears
- 6 Eye
- 7 Nose
- 8 Mouth
- 9 Dewlap
- 10 Foreleg
- 11 Toenails
- 12 Hock
- 13 Tail / Scut



### Ears:

With their big ears rabbits obviously have good hearing but even better than that they can move their ears independently allowing them to pinpoint danger from any direction.

### Eyes:

Rabbits also have big eyes. A rabbit's eyes protrude from the side of its head which gives them near 360° vision - the one area they can't see is right in front of their own nose! To 'see' whether something is edible a rabbit will touch the object with their sensitive top lip.

### Teeth:

Rabbits teeth are always growing to cope with all that gnawing. Infact, if they didn't wear them down by eating grass, they could grow up to 5 inches a year! This is why feeding your rabbit a lot of hay is the best way of keeping their teeth in good condition.

### Nose:

Why does a rabbits nose twitch? Its so that all of the highly sensitive receptors are exposed to the air. If your rabbit doesn't twitch its nose its a sign that it is very relaxed.



Rabbits noses twitch to help them smell better

### Digestion:

Rabbits - the ultimate in grass nutrient extraction! Rabbits have a two stage digestive system. After the chewed food passes from the upper digestive tract where its been mixed with stomach juices into the lower digestive system, the fibrous material is taken straight out and is turned into what we recognize as rabbit droppings - little fibrous balls.

The rest of the mixture i.e. the liquid and the non-fibrous bits go on to the caecum - a big fermentation tank, where lots of bacteria work at releasing all the goodness from the plant matter. Most of this is then packed up into pellets called caecotrophs that the rabbit eats straight from its bottom! At the second time of eating many more nutrients are absorbed after the bacteria from the caecum has had time to act.

### Back:

Rabbits have a relatively weak back and because of the strength in their back legs, they can cause themselves considerable damage. When you are picking your rabbits up to handle them, make sure that they are very comfortable so that they struggle as little as possible, (see page 4).

### Legs:

With extremely powerful back legs rabbits can perform big jumps and dig big holes. If they are in danger they will try to alert other rabbits with a sudden whack on the ground with their back feet. This can make a suprisingly loud noise.

### Tail:

Also known as a 'scut' the rabbit's tail is more than decoration! In wild rabbits the underside is pale and is used as a danger signal and for communication when several rabbits are feeding over a big area.

### Is it a boy or a girl?

When buying rabbits you will probably be looking for a male and a female. As well as asking the person selling the rabbits it is very sensible to check for yourself. It is probably sensible to ask the person selling it to hold the rabbit while you have a look at it's genital area. A male rabbit has a round opening and a female rabbit has a slit.



Checking a rabbit's sex

## Handling

Using the correct technique to pick up your rabbit will make it more comfortable for your rabbit and easier for you.

If a pet rabbit isn't used to being picked up it may take some time before it is happy for you to do so. A good technique for lifting your rabbit is to put one hand on the back of its neck and slowly bring it round to the front. At the same time put your other hand underneath the rabbit's hindquarters to support its weight whilst lifting. Remember, if a rabbit were to be picked up from above in the wild it would usually be in something's mouth.



Support your rabbit's weight whilst lifting

### Getting to know you rabbit:

If your rabbit is very timid it may be hard to get close enough for you to pick it up. You can try offering something irresistible like a carrot or a dandelion leaf. Once it is familiar with you being on the other end of the food, try stroking its head. If you do this repeatedly then you will soon become associated with food and you will hopefully find the rabbit bounding up to you expectantly! Remember not to become frustrated - some rabbits will simply never like to be picked up and it will be easier for you to spend time with your rabbit on their own terms i.e. on the ground.

## Grooming

Grooming isn't strictly necessary unless you have an Angora rabbit whose coat can grow to around 5in/12cm long. Angora's will need at least 40mins of brushing and care every day, so choosing this breed is a decision that needs some serious thought.

Rabbits love to be clean and will spend much of the day cleaning and preening themselves. Although not strictly necessary, grooming does provide a good opportunity for you and your rabbit to spend some quality time together. Every 3 months or so your rabbit will shed some of its fur alternating between a light and heavy shed. A good brush can help the loose fur to come out.



Grooming, a good opportunity to spend time with your rabbit

### Washing your rabbit:

It is unlikely that you will need to wash your rabbit. They are very good at grooming themselves, but it is important to keep their house and run clean.

## Rabbits Love to Play!

The key to providing your rabbits with a stimulating day is to vary their surroundings. A great way of doing this is to put toys in their run. These don't have to be bought; you can use things that you already have at home. Rabbits like to hide in things, climb onto different levels and chew so here are some suggestions:

### Cardboard box:

It may seem simple but as with small children the box the toy comes in is often more exciting than the toy itself! It provides your rabbit with something to chew on and also something to hide in.

### Tubes:

Pipes and cardboard tubes make great toys for rabbits. They whizz through them, hide in them and will even reverse out of them if they meet something coming the other way!

### Fruit tree branch:

Branches give your rabbit something natural to nibble on but make sure its from a fruit tree. There are many plants that are poisonous to rabbits but fruit tree branches are a safe bet.

### Unsuitable objects:

Avoid giving your rabbit any sharp objects or things that your rabbit could get trapped in.

## Behaviour

**Boxing:** If your rabbit 'boxes' you with its front paws when you try to get near it, it is telling you to keep away. This behaviour either comes from a female rabbit when they have kittens or from a male when they think that you're a threat.

**Chin-Rubbing:** If you see your rabbit rubbing its chin on things it is simply marking out its territory. It has scent glands on its chin and although the smell it secretes lets other rabbits know who's property is who's, people luckily can't smell it!

### 'Ready for anything':

Sitting up with bright eyes, nose twitching and ears up and swiveling round.

**Crepuscular:** Rabbits are crepuscular which means that they are most active in the morning and evening. So this means that they will be especially pleased to see you in the mornings and evening!



Alert - ears up and nose twitching

**Flattened:** In a last vain attempt at hiding from a predator a rabbit will flatten itself against the ground pretending that it isn't there! You may find that a new rabbit will do this if you loom over the top of it because it thinks that you're dangerous.

**'Play dead':** This is actually the sign of a contented rabbit. It can look convincingly dead lying on its back with its legs stretched out.

**Circling:** When a buck is on the look out for a mate he might well go round in circles making strange droning noise.

**Screaming:** A very frightened rabbit.

**Spraying:** Rabbits or bucks don't just rub things with their chins to mark territory, they will spray urine as well.. onto their hutch, a chair and even onto you!

**Thumping:** If a rabbit thinks it is in danger it will thump the ground with its back leg. This is an instinct from its days living in underground warrens. The thumps alert other rabbits to the danger.

## Indoors

Rabbits are best kept outdoors although there are many people that keep them indoors. Living outdoors gives them a much more natural lifestyle but bringing them inside to handle them can be a useful way for your rabbit to get to know you better. Rabbits aren't particularly keen on being carried large distances so try to keep the trip from eglu to inside as short as possible. Before you bring your rabbit inside though there is a certain amount of rabbit-proofing that needs to be done. Its not that they don't like the decoration in your house but more of a natural urge to chew.

Make sure you keep the doors to the room closed so that there is no possibility of a escape attempt! Anything at ground level is then a possible target for nibbling teeth. Carpets, curtains and wires are all also possible targets. Try not to make the mistake of bringing your rabbit inside and forgetting about them for a bit whilst answering the phone as you will probably come back to find a mess and no rabbit!

## Health Checks

### • Eyes

Your rabbits eyes should be bright and glossy. There shouldn't be any discharge or dullness. If you notice any discharge it could be that your rabbit has scratched its eye or if it is cloudy it could be related to its teeth. Either way it will be necessary to take your rabbit along to the vet for a check up.



Check your bunnies eyes are free of any discharge

### • Nose

If you spend a few minutes watching your rabbit you should see its nose twitching regularly. As with the eyes the nose shouldn't be runny but if it is, it could be a sign something isn't right.

Check for any dirtiness on the fur. Dirt is a sign that the rabbits diet is too rich. This stops the rabbit from eating so many of its caecotrophs which can dirty its fur. Too many greens will give your rabbit diarrhoea which again can leave its bum dirty. (It is important to keep their bottom nice and clean especially in the summer to avoid Flystrike, see bottom of page).

### • Teeth

Gently pull back the rabbit's cheeks and check that the teeth are nice and sharp and have been worn down evenly. Getting a good look at their back teeth is a little trickier.

The top teeth should overlap the bottom ones slightly. If you are worried that your rabbit's teeth are getting too long, make sure that they are eating plenty of hay as it is the most abrasive part of their diet. Again, if you are in doubt or unhappy holding your rabbit, ask a vet.

### • Nails

Like its teeth a rabbit's nails grow remarkably quickly and will need trimming around once every two months although this does depend on how much your rabbit is able to wander around and dig in the garden. A simple guide is to make sure that your rabbit's nails don't stick out beyond the fur.



Trim nails back to half a centimeter from the quick

Trimming their nails consists of clipping the nails back to half a centimeter from the quick, (the pink fleshy part inside the nail). On most nails you can actually see this fleshy part of the nail by shining a torch through the nail, but can be harder to see in darker nails. If the nail bleeds you can use a bit of cotton wool to apply a little pressure. If you are not happy holding your rabbit then a vet will be happy to trim its nails for a small fee.

## Health – Common ailments

### • Snuffles

This is the rabbit version of a cold. It can spread quickly so if possible try to isolate the rabbit which has it. The symptoms to look out for are the same as a person with a cold: a runny nose and sneezes. It is worth taking to your local vet for a check up and picking up a prescription of flu-strength carrots!

### • Flystrike

Flystrike occurs in the summer and is potentially lethal. If your rabbit's house isn't kept clean, their fur can become soiled with droppings and urine. The droppings make an ideal place for flies to lay their eggs. Within 24 hours the eggs will have turned into larvae and started to burrow into your rabbit. This is extremely painful and unpleasant for the rabbit and in many cases it will have to be put down by a vet.



## Seasonal Health Tips

You can easily avoid the chance of flystrike by keeping the house clean and making sure that your rabbit's diet isn't too rich. If your rabbit has too much food, it won't digest it properly and this can lead to sticky droppings that cling on to its fur. You can also buy a solution to rub into the fur which reduces the risk of flystrike. This will be available from your local vet.

### ● Sticky Bottom Syndrome

Sticky Bottom Syndrome occurs when the rabbit is producing too many caecotrophs. Caecotrophs are dark, look moist and are sticky so they can easily get stuck on the hairs around a rabbit's bottom leaving it permanently dirty. The most likely cause is a diet that is too rich. The solution is to cut down on pellets or rabbit mix and increase the amount of hay (fibre) in its diet. It could also be if your rabbit has become overweight and it is unable to reach round to clean its fur. If you suspect this you should start to exercise your rabbit and adjust its diet. It's probably best to speak to a vet about this. As soon as there is any sign of a sticky bottom, try to solve the problem as it can start to attract flies that can not only make your rabbit's life unpleasant but can ultimately be fatal if Flystrike occurs.

### ● Myxomatosis

What is myxomatosis? (also known as Myxi pronounced "Micksee") If you have ever come across a rabbit in the wild that has swollen eyes and doesn't run away from you the chances are that it has myxomatosis (see photo). It is a virus that was introduced by man in Australia as a way to control the number of rabbits. It came to Britain after being introduced in France, again deliberately. It is spread by insects or contact with another carrier, so can travel long distances without easy detection. It is estimated that four in five wild rabbits will catch myxomatosis and domestic rabbits are just as at risk of catching it. Myxomatosis can't be cured so you should have your rabbit vaccinated against it. Vaccination is quick and costs around £20 at a vet.

If your rabbit hasn't been vaccinated and contracts Myxi the kindest thing is to have them put down by a vet. As the disease is spread by insects, this is another reason to keep your rabbit's house as clean and unattractive to insects as possible.



A wild rabbit with Myxomatosis

### ● VHD (Viral Haemorrhage Disease)

This is another disease that was introduced into wild rabbits as a way of controlling their numbers. It only appeared in Britain in 1992 and is equally as nasty as Myxomatosis. Annual vaccination is the best weapon against this disease. VHD is an incredibly quick disease; if your rabbit does contract it there will probably not even be enough time to take it to a vet.

### ● Spring

With the weather starting to warm up and the days getting longer, any young rabbits that you have kept inside over winter can be brought outside. Older rabbits will start to get urges of the sort rabbits are generally famous for. Pairs which could potentially breed, will do so unless prevented by a trip to the vet and two males or bucks as they're known may start to fight. If this gets serious you may have to separate them or have them neutered.

### ● Summer

By now all thoughts of winter have faded into the distance and balmy evenings are spent by the barbeque. Amongst all the fun there are a few things to do to make your rabbit's life happier.

- Your rabbit may well have a good amount of grass in its diet already but if it doesn't make sure you introduce them slowly. A sudden change in diet can make itself all too apparent by giving your rabbit diarrhoea.

- Make sure that you check your rabbit for cleanliness in the summer heat. Apart from the usual daily and weekly routines try to check their body from end to end every day for any unusual signs. Flies, especially greenbottles can be a very nasty parasite for rabbits. They lay their eggs and within a matter of hours they will hatch into larvae. Making sure your rabbit and eglu will go a long way to stopping this problem. (For more see Flystrike on page 5.)

- Check the rabbits water supply daily. In the hot weather your rabbits will drink more so extra vigilance is needed.

- Shade. Position the shade so that the rabbits have an area of shade outside for midday lounging.

### ● Autumn

Not only was Guy Fawkes being reckless in his attempt to blow up the Houses of Parliament but had his explosives gone off he would have frightened the entire rabbit population of Westminster half to death. To avoid giving your rabbit a sleepless night on the fifth of November, you should take them indoors as far away from all the commotion as possible. Do this earlier in the day, not five minutes before, and it will give your rabbits a chance to acclimatise to their new surroundings.



Protect your rabbits before you let fireworks off

### ● Winter

In winter we put on woolly jumpers and rabbits do the same. They grow a thick coat which keeps them warm. They will rely on you though just as much to provide food and water so don't forget to visit them at least once a day. The key things to remember in the winter are: water, food and warmth.

**Water:** The water bottle in the eglu is insulated from the cold but if it gets very nippy there is still a chance it could freeze so you should check it everyday. A good idea for the winter is to have a spare water bottle, so that instead of filling the old one up you can swap it with a full one. This way the rabbits can drink and you are less likely to crack their bottle when trying to break the ice! A few drops of glycerin in their water will help prevent freezing, but never use salt.

**Food:** Don't be surprised by your rabbits eating more in the chilly months. They are using up lots of extra energy to keep warm. Keep an eye on their weight though to make sure that they aren't pretending to shiver when you are about so that they get extra treats!



In the winter rabbits will eat more to keep warm

**Warmth:** Unlike other houses the eglu will keep your rabbits nice and warm in the winter because its the only house that has all round insulation. Even so make sure that there is always clean bedding and position the door away from direct wind.

## Breeds

Rabbits come in all shapes and sizes but there are three distinct types.

**Fancy breeds:** Rabbits for showing and exhibiting (as well as being pets!).

**Fur breeds:** As the name suggests, these breeds were originally kept for their coats. Some of them have fur that simulates or is very similar to other animals, e.g. the Silver Fox.

**Rex breeds:** These rabbits have no guard hairs which makes them very soft - rather like velvet. Couple this with being a medium size and nice and friendly, they make good pets. The coat of underfur with no guard hairs only really came into existence in about 1920 as one of the many results of intensive breeding.

**Cross breeds:** As well as pure breeds there are lots of rabbits that are a mixture of breeds. You can often buy these from pet shops, garden centers and private sellers. Be careful buying cross breeds as you won't know what their temperament will be like or how big they are going to grow unless you see their parents. A rabbit will always make a better pet if it has been handled regularly when young.

### Some Fancy breeds:

#### Angora:

This breed has particularly long hair, up to 5in/12cm, needs constant grooming and is very high maintenance. We would not recommend this breed a good pet.

#### Dutch:

The stereotypical rabbit! It is coloured with a white stripe around the front of the body and a white blaze on the face.

#### English:

A white rabbits with some distinctive markings. A line of colour along the spine, around the eyes and on the ears.

#### Flemish Giant:

These are the heavyweights of the rabbit world, weighing in at a minimum of around a stone!

#### Himalyan:

Pure white body but has coloured ears, legs face and tail looking like its been dipped in ink or chocolate! It also has red eyes!

#### English Lop:

Has extremely long ears not for the beginner

#### Cashmere Lop:

A long eared rabbit with long hair although not as high maintenance as the Angora.

#### Dwarf Lop:

A very popular breed for showing and keeping as a pet. Small and compact and manageable with long ears.

If you want to see a definitive list of pure breeds visit the British Rabbit Councils website:

[www.thebrc.org](http://www.thebrc.org)



An 'English' looking cross-breed.

## A brief history

The original European wild rabbits were about around 4,000 years ago in the red shaded area of the world known as Iberia. In fact the visiting Phoenician merchants referred to part of Iberia as 'I-shephan-im' which means land of the rabbits. This was translated as 'Hispania' or as we know it - Spain. The scientific name for rabbits is 'Oryctolagus cuniculus' which sounds much more complicated than it actually is because it means 'a hare-like digger of underground passages'.

Life was peaceful for the rabbits until the Romans arrived in Spain during the Second Punic war in the 2nd century B.C. Much to the rabbits dismay the Romans quickly cottoned on to the idea of farming them in a practice known as cuniculture. Initially they kept them in fenced off scrubby areas, but using the first known example of a now standard prison escape tactic, the rabbits kept tunneling out! It wasn't long before every rabbit enclosure was as closely guarded as the emperor's own palace. Could this slightly unwise use of centurions have contributed in a small way to the downfall of the Roman Empire?

The increasing trade amongst countries by sea and land helped to introduce rabbits to every continent except for Antarctica. Humans were now getting good at growing crops and as more land was cultivated into fields full of food, humans inadvertently provided rabbits with ideal habitats to live in. Combined with their famously fast breeding rate this ensured that they established themselves quickly wherever they went.

## Fox

Fantastic Mr Fox is a graduate of the school of deception and cunning but he has met his match in the eglu. Together, the eglu and run form an extremely secure area for your rabbits. Features such as the anti-tunneling skirt, 3mm steel weld mesh run and recessed handles on the eglu make it as safe a rabbit house as it is possible to buy. Here are some useful tips which make it less likely that a fox will get even so much as a sniff of your rabbits.



An 'English' looking cross-breed

### Foiling the attack

There are lots of things you can do to improve the safety of your rabbits.

- Don't leave any food lying around the garden.
- Make sure that the dustbin is always securely closed.
- Increase the height of your fence to at least six feet all the way round.
- If you have a dog their scent will often put a fox off from entering your garden
- If there is a male in the household, ask him to urinate around the garden this will act as a chemical repellent to the fox (honestly!)
- Tying up bags of human hair around the garden works in the same way.
- Ask your neighbours not to leave out food in their gardens
- At the time of writing councils tend not to take the problem of urban foxes particularly seriously, so why not also write to your local MP to raise the issue.
- If you have an extremely persistent offender then you can call in a pest control company (look them up in the Yellow Pages).

## The End

Your rabbit will live for somewhere between 8 and 12 years. You should take your vet's advice on what is the kindest thing to do. If there is no treatment available then your vet will administer an injection

which will send your rabbit gently off to a permanent sleep. It costs around £10 and is a service offered by all vets. Of course we all hope that our pets will be there to say hello when we go outside, but it can't always be like this and however your rabbit has passed from this world into the next, it is important that it is laid to rest in the appropriate way.

There are three ways to perform a proper rabbit burial:

- Go to a vet for a cremation. This will be around £7
- Put it in the dustbin. Although this is a bit unceremonious.
- You could bury it in the garden, perhaps under a favourite tree or bush, however be advised that Government Regulations forbid this. Finally, never eat your rabbit if it has died.

### Glossary

see [www.omlet.co.uk](http://www.omlet.co.uk)

## Eglu do's and don'ts

**Do** take extra care when using the lawn mower around the foot plate of the run.

**Do** make sure your rabbits have enough food and water.

**Do** check your rabbits health regularly especially during the summer when flies can be fatal remarkably quickly.

**Don't** sit or climb on the run.

**Don't** let children climb inside the run or eglu unsupervised by adults.

**Don't** keep more than two large rabbits in the eglu

**Don't** keep the eglu on uneven ground as this will make the run less secure.

**Don't** use bleach, solvents or strong detergent to clean the eglu.

**Don't** keep the eglu near sources of ignition, such as a bonfire or barbecue.

**Don't** use the eglu for anything other than housing pets.



## The Omlet Shop

In the Omlet shop you can find everything you need to keep your eglu and rabbits in tip top condition. You can order health and grooming products or a few spares for your eglu.



### Accessories

To enable you to create the perfect eglu we have designed a range of accessories. You can buy extensions for your run and different sized shades plus much more.

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