



CAN DOGS & RABBITS LIVE TOGETHER?

Can rabbits and dogs be friends? Yes, but everything hinges on the dog's prey drive. For a successful interspecies household, a dog must have a low prey drive and must not be interested in chasing and killing wildlife. A low prey drive dog is gentle with other animal species, even in play. Introducing dogs and rabbits should be done with caution and preparation. Stop the introduction if the dog becomes aggressive, rough or harassing. Stop the introduction if the rabbit becomes frightened.

LOOK FOR THESE DOG TRAITS

- Low prey drive is **required**
- Dog follows basic commands such as "sit," "down," "stay," and "leave it"
- Calm, submissive dog
- Adult dog (puppies are untrained and unable to control their exuberant behavior)
- Herding, non-sporting, and working dog breeds are a good place to start. Generally speaking, avoid sporting breeds because these dogs have been bred to hunt. Avoid toy breeds if the dog is high strung or anxious. Breed recommendations are generalities to use as a baseline. Individual personalities are most important to determine compatibility.
- A trained service dog or therapy dog



RABBITS WHO ARE A GOOD CANDIDATE FOR A CANINE COMPANION

- Outgoing, confident bunnies
- Relaxed, easy-going bunnies
- A shy, fearful rabbit is not a good choice

SET UP FOR SUCCESS

- Never allow a dog to meet a rabbit who's confined inside a cage. Instead, allow the rabbit to freely explore the dog while the dog is lying down and on leash.
- Keep sessions short and gradually extend supervised introductions.
- Proceed slowly. Take your time and have patience.
- Safety of your rabbit is your top priority during this process.
- Use positive reinforcement and be consistent.
- Establish yourself and your rabbit at the top of the pack hierarchy.

ONCE THEY ARE FRIENDS

- Always provide escape routes for both species (a place the rabbit can escape to if she feels threatened by the dog, a place the dog can go to escape a pestering rabbit).
- Always keep separate feeding areas.
- Never allow your dog to chase your rabbit, even in play.
- Supervision is required until 100% trust has been achieved.

Keeping a high-prey-drive dog or cat separated from a pet rabbit is critical but difficult and dangerous. A split-second accident can be fatal for the rabbit. If you think a dog or cat is not trustworthy with a small animal trust your gut. Trying to keep them forever separated in the same home is incredibly high risk, and this approach has failed many times.



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