






# Rabbit Facts

*Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff*



-  Humans began to raise rabbits around 600 B.C.
-  The short, stubby tail of a rabbit is known as a "scut."
-  Rabbits should not be fed iceberg lettuce.
-  Both King Louis XIV and Napoleon had pet rabbits.
-  Rabbits are crepuscular; they become most active at dawn and dusk.

Rabbits can be wonderful companions. They love to explore and are very smart. In the wild, they live in large groups. For homes, they dig warrens, which are extensive burrows with many entrances. Some warrens extend over a 100 acre area. That's over 430,500 square feet! The most commonly kept rabbit pet is the European rabbit. The scientific name is *Oryctolagus cuniculus*. The name, in part, means "the burrower." There are 25 different varieties of rabbits, each with different sizes and many color patterns. Rabbits are herbivores, which means they eat only plants and vegetation. They do not eat meat. A good rabbit diet includes a small amount of nutritionally complete [rabbit pellets](#) and unlimited amounts of fresh [Timothy Hay](#) and water. The hay aids in digestion and helps wear down a rabbit's constantly growing teeth. Rabbits also enjoy fresh vegetables, such as dark leafy greens, the outer leaves of cabbage, carrots, and sweet peppers.

What Is It Called?		Rabbits Around the World	
Common Name	Technical Name	Language	Name for Rabbits
Father	Buck	French	lapin or nullard
Mother	Doe	German	kaninchen
Baby	Kitten, bunny, or kit	Italian	coniglio
Group	Colony, drove, or warren	Spanish	conejo
		Swedish	kanin

## The Most Common Question About Rabbits

*Are rabbits and hares the same?*

Rabbits and hares are not the same. They are related. In fact, both rabbits and hares belong to the same scientifically classified family, Leporidae. At a quick glance, it is easy to confuse the two animals. Rabbits have long ears. But a hare's ears are even longer. A rabbit's legs are also shorter than those of

a hare. But the biggest difference between a rabbit and a hare is in the way each lives and gives birth to their young.

Rabbits primarily burrow beneath the ground. Hares live almost exclusively above ground. Of course, rabbits also forage for food above ground. But a hare will rarely go below ground. The other difference is that the babies of a mother rabbit are born blind and hairless. It takes about six weeks for a baby rabbit, or bunny, to grow all her hair and get ready to venture above ground to play and explore. By contrast, the babies of a mother hare are born furry and active. In most instances, a baby hare, which is known as a leveret, can run around just a few hours after birth.