Nibbles Rodent & Rabbit Rescue
www.nibbles.org.uk
Reg Charity No. 1168657

Our Guide to



Neutering Your Rabbits

Why do Rabbits Need Neutering?



There are so many important benefits that come from neutering your rabbits — from better long-term health to calmer behaviour and improved overall welfare. Sadly, many new guardians aren't made aware of how essential neutering is, and we often see the consequences of this at Nibbles.

Neutering is important for every rabbit, whatever their sex, even when they live in same-sex pairs.

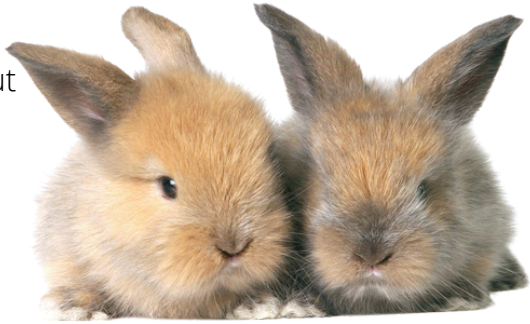
Our guide will help you understand why neutering matters, how it supports your rabbits' wellbeing, and how it helps them live long, healthy, and happy lives.



Why Neuter Two Litter Brothers?

Two baby brothers may seem happy and content at first, often cuddling up and appearing closely bonded. However, as they grow and their hormones develop, this early harmony can change. What begins as small squabbles can quickly turn into serious fights, and once this happens, the bond is usually broken and the brothers have to be separated for their own safety.

Neutering young isn't a full guarantee that two brothers will stay bonded, but it massively reduces the risk. Without neutering, fallouts are almost certain; with it, the chances are far lower. Neutering is vital for giving bonded brothers the best chance of staying safe and happy together.



Why Neuter Two Litter Sisters?



Uterine and Ovarian Cancer

Two litter sisters are less likely to fall out as they reach maturity, though it can still happen. The main reason neutering is essential for female rabbits is to protect them from cancer. Research shows that around 80% of unneutered females develop uterine or ovarian cancer by age five, with changes often beginning as early as three. With odds like this, neutering is vital to prevent an early and painful death. Once the uterus and ovaries are removed, the risk of these cancers is completely eliminated.



Why Neuter Mixed Sex Pairs?

The most obvious reason to neuter mixed-sex pairs is to prevent unwanted litters. We've all heard the saying "breeding like rabbits", and it's true — two rabbits can quickly become dozens if left to breed unchecked.

Keeping a neutered female with an unneutered male may prevent pregnancy and reduce her cancer risk, but it won't stop the male's strong urge to mount her repeatedly, especially in spring when hormones are highest.



The female's only way to cope with this constant attention is to become defensive and aggressive. In most cases, the pair will eventually fall out and need to be separated.



When should a rabbit be neutered?

Males can usually be neutered from around 12–16 weeks of age, and females from 16–20 weeks, with an ideal body weight of roughly 1.2 kg. It's best to neuter as early as possible to help protect bonds and prevent fallouts as hormones develop.

If your rabbit is already an adult, it is still perfectly safe to have them neutered. We often see adult rabbits arriving in rescue who need the procedure, and sadly many unneutered older females already show early cancerous changes.

Other Benefits of Neutering



Company - As a social prey species, rabbits feel safest with the company of their own kind. Neutering makes it possible for them to live happily with a companion.



Litter Training - Neutered rabbits are far more likely to use litter trays and keep their space much cleaner. It also helps reduce the unpleasant behaviour of urine spraying.



Aggression - Neutering helps prevent hormone-driven aggression, which is the most common cause of conflict between rabbits and towards humans. From chasing and lunging to biting, neutering is the most effective way to reduce these behaviours.