

Bunny Care On a Budget

Caring for a rabbit doesn't have to be expensive, but it **does** require smart choices, good planning, and an understanding of where not to cut costs.

This guide is about **budget-conscious rabbit care that still meets a rabbit's needs**, without compromising welfare. Cheap does *not* mean careless. The goal is **intentional spending**, not bare-minimum survival.

Housing On a Budget

Rabbits don't need fancy cages, they need **space**.

Budget-Friendly Housing Options

- Exercise pens instead of cages
- Free-roam in a bunny-proofed room
- DIY setups using grids, pens, or baby gates
- Wendy house

Money-Saving Tips

- Skip pet-store "rabbit cages" (small and overpriced)
- Use vinyl offcuts, mats, or cardboard under rugs
- Repurpose furniture barriers instead of buying enclosures
- Shop secondhand on Facebook Marketplace or Gumtree!!

A bigger, simpler space reduces behaviour issues, saving money long-term.

Cheap vs Cost Effective (There's a Difference)

Hay

- Instead of buying small bags of hay from pet shops, visit a feed store and purchase a bale.
- Hay from feed stores is cheaper, can be better quality, is not as dusty and fresher!

Greens

- Buy seasonal greens
- Use affordable options like coriander, parsley, cabbage leaves, spring greens
- You can attempt to grow your own greens on your windowsill
- Supplement with safe garden herbs (pesticide-free)
- Avoid expensive “rabbit treat” packs, fresh greens are healthier and cheaper.

Pellets

- Pellets should be measured, not free-fed
- A small bag lasts much longer when fed correctly
- Overfeeding pellets causes health problems, which cost far more later.

Enrichment

Rabbits don't need expensive toys, they need purposeful enrichment.

Free or Low-Cost Enrichment

- Cardboard boxes and tubes, you can find cardboard boxes from your local grocery or liquor store.
- Paper bags stuffed with hay
- Old towels or blankets for digging
- DIY dig boxes (soil, shredded paper, hay)

Rotate items weekly to keep them interesting.

Companionship: One of The Biggest Budget Savers

This might sound counterintuitive, but bonded rabbits often cost less over time.

Why a Bunny Friend Saves Money

- Less boredom-related destruction
- Reduced stress behaviours
- Less reliance on constant human interaction

Adopting a bonded pair from a rescue:

- Avoids bonding costs
- Often includes sterilisation
- Prevents accidental litters

	Adopting From An Ethical Rescue:	Buying From A Breeder or Pet Shop:
Initial Cost	± R550	± R300
Sterilised?	Yes	No (± R2 000)
Health Checked?	Yes	No
Ongoing Guidance and Support?	Yes	No
Knowledge on Background	Yes	No
Behavioural Assessment	Yes	No
Actual Cost	± R550	± R2 800 - R3 000+

While buying a rabbit may look cheaper upfront, the true cost quickly adds up once sterilisation, veterinary care, and lack of support are factored in.

Medical Care: Where You Shouldn't Cut Corners

Pet Insurance: A Smart Budget Tool

Unexpected vet bills are one of the biggest reasons rabbits end up surrendered, even in loving homes. Pet insurance can help by:

- Spreading medical costs over manageable monthly payments
- Providing support during emergencies or sudden illness
- Allowing guardians to choose treatment based on need, not finances

We strongly recommend considering pet insurance as part of responsible, budget-conscious rabbit care, especially for households without large emergency funds. Insurance does not replace good daily care — it supports you when things go wrong.

We've partnered with **Dotsure Pet Insurance** to make this more accessible:

- **50% off your first month's premium** when you request a free quote
- **R200 donated to our rescue on your behalf**, at no extra cost to you, just for requesting a free quote!

This partnership helps protect both rabbits and their guardians, while directly supporting rescue work. [Click here to request a free quote.](#)

Sterilisation Is Non-Negotiable

Spaying/Neutering:

- Prevents costly reproductive cancers
- Reduces aggression and spraying
- Prevents accidental breeding

The upfront cost saves significant money long-term.

Preventative Care Saves The Most

- Daily observation (eating, pooping, behaviour)
- Early vet visits when something seems “off”
- Annual check-ups when possible
- Waiting until a rabbit is critically ill is always more expensive.

When done right, caring for a rabbit can be affordable, sustainable, and deeply rewarding. A well-cared-for bunny doesn't need luxury, just informed, intentional care

Should you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us! We're more than happy to help!

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