

# Rabbit-Proofing Your Home

Rabbit-Proofing one's home involves three things:

- 1) Preventing destruction of your property
- 2) Protecting your companion rabbit(s) from harm
- 3) Providing safe and fun chewing alternatives for your rabbit

## Why is rabbit proofing your home so important?

*Preventing rabbits from chewing on electrical cords is of utmost importance, since rabbits can be badly burned or electrocuted. The consequences of biting into an electric wire are too severe to risk relying on training alone. **You must take action to cover the cords or move them out of reach.** Some ways of doing this follow:*

### Electrical and Other Cords

**Plastic tubing:** (similar to that used in fish tanks) from a hardware or aquarium store can be slit lengthwise with heavy shears, and the wire can be tucked safely inside. Taps Plastics in Santa Rosa sell tubing by the foot. **Buy the size that is ¾ inch outside diameter and ½ inch inside diameter.**

**Spiral cable wrap:** Radio Shack sells something called “spiral cable wrap.” Wrap the electrical cords in this spiral plastic sheath and the rabbits don't seem to want to chew them any more—perhaps because the wrap has the effect of thickening the cords so they are no longer bite-sized.

Decorative gold and wood-grained **wire-concealers that stick to the base of walls** come in strips, corners, etc., so they can follow the shape of the wall. This is a more costly and time-consuming method than the clear plastic tubing above, but is more permanent.

Of course, wires can be run under, behind, or above furniture and carpets in order to keep them out of bunny's reach.

### Eliminate Toxic House Plants

Putting them on high furniture may not keep a rabbit away. Hang them from the ceiling if you have an active bunny, but watch for falling leaves! If you are unsure which plants may be toxic, the **House Rabbit Handbook: How to Live with an Urban Rabbit** by Marinell Harriman has a complete list of poisonous plants (indoors and outdoors).

### Baseboards and Wooden Furniture

Rabbits love to chew wood. “Just saying no” will NOT be enough. PREVENTION is the best strategy:

- PVC pipe, hard tubing or plastic containers can be placed around the legs of furniture
- Place boards that you will allow your rabbit to chew in front of the baseboards. Use Velcro to attach the “fake” board to the real one.
- Provide a variety of alternate chew toys.

### **Upholstered Furniture and Beds**

Upholstered furniture and beds that are several inches off the ground are wonderful places for rabbits to hide underneath. However, some will burrow up into the soft underside and make a nest. A flat cardboard box or frame of 2x4s, smaller than the area of the future base, will keep the rabbit out, and won't be seen from human level.

Velcro thin plastic panels to the corners of your sofa or use the sticky double-sided plastic sold in pet stores to keep rabbits from chewing furniture. Taps Plastics will cut the plastic to size.

Spray with deodorant, perfume, oil of cloves. Bunnies have fantastic noses and hate certain smells.

**CAUTION: Never put your recliner down without checking underneath for a bunny!!!** Stuff the underneath hole of the recliner with an old blanket to prevent the bunny from hiding there.

### **Carpets**

- Put heavy stone tiles or bricks in corners.
- Cover irresistible carpet areas with plastic carpet runners.

**A happy free-roaming house bunny rarely chews as your house has become his house. Bunnies who are only let out a few hours a day tend to chew more, because the house has not become their home.**