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## Are netherland dwarf rabbits cuddly

The Netherlands Dwarf rabbit is one of the smallest breeds of rabbit and is a very popular pet throughout the United States and the rest of the world. These bunnies have an excitable and energetic temperament and this combined with their compact size makes them a perfect companion to many. While these rabbits can be shy and scared when you first bring them home and therefore may not be the pet for you if you have small children in the house, with the correct training and socialization they can grow up to live a happy life with their owners. If you're interested in learning more about the Netherlands Dwarf rabbit and seeing whether they might be the bun for you, keep reading below.

**History Of The Netherlands Dwarf Rabbit** Netherlands Dwarf rabbits are a true dwarf breed, which means they carry the dwarf gene. They are often compared to the Holland Lop as they both have compact body types but, while the Holland Lop is the smallest lop, the Netherlands Dwarf is the smallest rabbit. Their small size is actually due to a dwarf gene, which was first discovered in rabbits in the mid-1900s. A breeder in Holland was the first to use this gene to create very small rabbits. The American Rabbit Breeders Association (ARBA) recognized the Netherlands Dwarf rabbit in 1969 and several other dwarf breeds have sprung up since. The Netherlands Dwarf remains one of the most popular rabbit breeds in the United States.

**Breed Origin** The Netherlands Dwarf rabbit originated in Holland, hence their name, when five men worked for 30 years to create a standardized small rabbit that would be accepted and available in a variety of colors. They began breeding all-white Hermelin rabbits with local wild rabbits as well as other domestic breeds until the Netherlands Dwarf was created. The Netherlands Dwarf was recognized by Holland in 1940. However, WWII interrupted further development. In 1947, some English breeders were given some of the remaining Netherlands Dwarfs in various colors and they were recognized as a breed by the British Rabbit Council in 1950. The Netherlands Dwarf Club was also set up in England in 1949.

The Netherlands Dwarf first arrived in North America in 1965 with the purpose to breed and improve Polish rabbits in the United States.

**Characteristics Of The Netherlands Dwarf Rabbit** A Netherlands Dwarf rabbit of "perfect size", known as a "true dwarf" has one copy of the dwarf gene. If two true dwarfs mate, the result can be offspring with no copies of the gene, one copy of the gene and two copies of the gene. Rabbits with one copy of the gene are not small enough to be show Netherlands Dwarfs, and rabbits with two copies of the gene will be too small to live longer than a few days.

The Netherlands Dwarf is normally born in litter sizes of between two and four kits. A Netherlands Dwarf kit will usually cost around \$30 and \$90, which is more than many rabbit breeds.

**Appearance** The Netherlands Dwarf is, of course, a small rabbit and normally weighs between 2 to 2.5 lbs. These little rabbits often look like a kit for their whole lives. They have a compact body, a large head, short face, short ears and large eyes. Their ears can look a little out of place as they are small and erect on top of their large head! Their legs are also short.

**Coat** The Netherlands Dwarf's coat is short to medium in length, soft, and does not need much grooming. They will shed moderately a few times a year during shedding season, during which time they may need to be brushed more.

We will go into more detail about grooming later on.

**Color** There are many different colors for this breed that are accepted by the ARBA. These colors are split into five groups: self, shaded, agouti, tan, and any other variety. Popular colors include black, blue, chocolate, orange, tortoise shell, sable point, blue tan, lynx, lilac, fawn, opal, black silver marten and chinchilla.

**Temperament** The Netherlands Dwarf has a wonderful temperament, once they get to know you! They can be shy and scared at first, especially when new to a home and the people around them, so getting them to understand that you are not there to hurt them can take some time. You should always respect your rabbit's personal space, especially when they are new to your home. However, with adequate socialization and human interaction, these rabbits will learn to love their owners. Once they are comfortable with you they are a very affectionate rabbit and will love to spend time with you. They are also excitable and energetic and will love to hop around the house! You should always make sure they have toys to play with so they don't become bored.

**Lifespan** The Netherlands Dwarf rabbit has an average life expectancy of between 10 to 12 years.

**Known Health Issues** Like all rabbits, the Netherlands Dwarf is prone to some health problems. Some of these concerns relate to their small size.

- Malocclusion — this is when the upper and lower teeth are misaligned so that the normal process of chewing doesn't wear down your rabbit's teeth. This is more severe in smaller rabbits because of their small mouths. Regular dental checkups are very important.
- GI Stasis — this is a potentially deadly condition in which the digestive system slows down or stops completely. Symptoms include loss of appetite, small or no fecal pellets and lethargy. It can be treated if caught quickly.
- Ear Mites — this is a common parasite of pet rabbits. You may see your rabbit shaking their head a lot if they are affected. Your vet will be able to treat them.
- Uterine Cancer — this is the most common type of cancer in rabbits. Uterine cancer occurs in up to 60% of females that are greater than 3 years old. Treatment is available.

Alongside these issues, the Netherlands Dwarf can also be prone to respiratory issues due to their smaller mouth and a shorter nose. Like all rabbits, they can also suffer from back issues if they are mishandled or accidentally dropped because of their size.

Regular vet checkups will ensure that you catch any health problems before they become too serious. You should also make sure that you are buying from a reputable breeder.

**Daily Life** Now we know all about the traits and characteristics of the Netherlands Dwarf rabbit, it is time to take a look at what living with one of these rabbits on a day to day basis is really like. Fortunately, these small bunnies are easy to care for.

Below we will cover their food and diet, their exercise needs, their living requirements and their grooming needs.

**Food And Diet** The exact amount you feed your Netherlands Dwarf rabbit should be based on their size, age and activity level. They should be eating a portion of hay that is at least as their body size every day, alongside pellets and fresh vegetables. Fresh water should also always be available to them.

Hay is very important as it helps to keep your Netherlands Dwarf's digestive system moving, as well as helping to wear down their teeth so they are less prone to dental issues. At least 70% of your rabbit's diet should be hay.

High-quality supplementary pellets help to provide extra vitamins and minerals that keep your rabbit healthy. Take a look at a supplementary pellet food we recommend below.

**Best Food For The Netherlands Dwarf Rabbit** Sherwood Pet Health Adult Rabbit Food BUY ON AMAZON We recommend the Sherwood Pet Health rabbit food for the Netherlands Dwarf rabbit. This food helps to improve your rabbit's digestive health by supporting the growth of healthy microflora. With no grain or soy, this food is ideal to promote urinary health too and the ingredients are all natural, ensuring your Netherlands isn't eating anything they shouldn't be.

A pellet food, there is no chance of selective feeding, and the vitamins, minerals and amino acids all add to a balanced and complete diet. There are also essential omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids for a healthy skin and coat.

**Exercise** In the wild, rabbits run around three miles a day. Therefore, it is very important that you give your pet rabbit enough exercise every day to keep them active and entertained. They should have at least three hours of free-range time, whether this is out of their hutch in the garden or just around the house.

The Netherlands Dwarf rabbit breed is an excitable and energetic rabbit once they are comfortable in the home. Once they have bonded with you they will like to be near you and will like to play games with you.

Always make sure they have toys to keep them occupied. Exercise is very important for the well-being of your rabbit. It helps to keep their joints moving, keeps them entertained and ensures they stay at a healthy weight. You can buy an outdoor enclosure for your Netherlands Dwarf to run around in. However, you should always supervise them as their size makes them popular among predators.

**Family Compatibility And Trainability** The Netherlands Dwarf rabbit can make a fantastic pet to many households, including couples, singles or seniors who live in either a home or apartment. However, they are not advised for homes with very young children, particularly because of their shy nature. Young children can be rough with rabbits and if your Netherlands Dwarf is dropped or scared, they may never learn that they are not being threatened.

Training the Netherlands Dwarf rabbit can be a little more difficult than training other breeds of rabbit, but it can be done. One of the most difficult tasks is training them to use a litter tray. It is advised you leave litter trays throughout the house so they have multiple places to go rather than having to go back to their hutch every time. It is recommended that you keep the Netherlands Dwarf bunny inside as a house rabbit, instead of keeping their hutch outside. Their small size means they are easier for predators to get at, and so keeping them inside will ensure they are safer.

These rabbits do not need a lot of space thanks to their size, but their hutch should be large enough that they can easily move around inside. Try to stay away from hutches with wire floors as these can cause sore hocks within rabbits. Take a look at the hutch we recommend below.

**Best Hutch For The Netherlands Dwarf Rabbit** Petsfit Wood Rabbit Cage BUY ON AMAZON We recommend the Petsfit rabbit cage for the Netherlands Dwarf rabbit. With a size of 36" L x 22" W x 30" H, it is large enough to fit one to two rabbits and, although it doesn't have multiple levels, gives a large space for your bunnies to run around in. There is an enclosed section of the hutch that can be used for sleeping or as a bathroom and the bottom tray is easily removable for cleaning.

Perfect for indoor use, this hutch is sturdy and easy to assemble. There are two access points for this hutch — one on the side and one on the roof. Buying an extra ramp will also allow your Netherlands in and out access whenever they want.

**Grooming** The Netherlands Dwarf rabbit does not need a lot of grooming. You should brush these rabbits one to two times a week to keep their fur in good condition and to prevent matting. During shedding season, which happens twice a year, you may need to be brushing them more often. Use a bristled brush and stroke in the natural direction of their fur. You should very rarely bathe your rabbit. It is not really necessary, unless they are really dirty. Bathing can also be a traumatic experience for them. You should also trim their nails as and when is needed.

Netherlands Dwarf Rabbit FAQ's Can I keep my Netherlands Dwarf rabbit outside? You can keep your Netherlands Dwarf rabbit outside, but only if their hutch is extra secure. Thanks to their small size, the Netherlands Dwarf is very vulnerable to predators and this is why it is often recommended that they are kept indoors.

How big should my rabbit's cage be? The rule with rabbits is: the bigger the better! If you have the space for a big hutch then your rabbit will always appreciate the extra room to roam and exercise. No one wants to be stuck in a cramped space! If you do not have a lot of space, then the cage should be at least 4 times the size of the rabbit. A guide is 24" by 36" for smaller rabbits (less than 8 lbs) or 30" by 36" for larger rabbits. Hutches with multiple stories are also popular as they give your bun more space.

**Summary** The Netherlands Dwarf rabbit is one of the smallest breeds of rabbit, yet one of the most popular. Cute and compact, this bunny doesn't take up a lot of space and doesn't have very high care needs. While these rabbits can be shy and scared when first brought into a new home, with lots of human interaction and socialization they will learn that not everything is a threat.

Once adapted, they are excitable and energetic little rabbits that'll keep you on your toes and will love to spend time with you. Do you think a Netherlands Dwarf could be the bunny for you?

Breed of rabbit For the 2008 short film, see Netherlands Dwarf (film).

A Netherlands Dwarf rabbit

Note the short ears, brachycephalic head and cobby body

Ruby-eyed white colour variety FOR COMPARISON

A Polish breed rabbit

Note the longer ears and lack of brachycephalic head, with less cobbliness

Ruby-eyed white colour variety

The Netherlands Dwarf is a breed of domestic rabbit that originated in the Netherlands. Weighing 1.1–2.5 pounds (0.50–1.13 kg).[1][2] the Netherlands Dwarf is one of the smallest rabbit breeds. Its popularity as a pet or show rabbit may stem from its neotenic appearance. The Netherlands Dwarf is recognised by both the American Rabbit Breeders Association (ARBA)[1] and the British Rabbit Council (BRC).[2] The Netherlands Dwarf is confused with the Polish breed of rabbit, but the latter has longer ears, a non-brachycephalic head and less cobbliness. History The Netherlands Dwarf breed was first produced in the Netherlands in the early 20th century. Small Polish rabbits were bred with smaller wild rabbits:[3] after several generations the resulting animal was a very small domestic rabbit available in a wide variety of colours and patterns. Netherlands Dwarfs were first imported into the United Kingdom in 1948.[3] In the 1960s and 1970s the United States imported its first Netherlands Dwarf rabbits. The breed was accepted by the American Rabbit Breeders Association in 1969 using a modification of the British standard.[3] Early dwarfs, even into the 1970s and 1980s, had fearful and sometimes aggressive temperaments. This was a result of breeders selecting wild breeding animals for their size. The first dwarf rabbits behaved more like these wild rabbits than domestic animals and were not good pets. However, through generations of selective breeding, the modern Netherlands Dwarf has become a gentle, friendly pet rabbit, though it still can retain a more energetic disposition than larger breeds. 11-week-old Netherlands Dwarf rabbit. (Vienna Marked Black Otter) Appearance Young blue-eyed-white Netherlands Dwarf eating timothy hay. The Netherlands Dwarf's head and eyes are disproportionately large with respect to its short-coupled and stout ("cobby") [4] body. Its ears are notably short and carried high on the head and its face is rounded and brachycephalic. These neotenic features, a result of dwarfism, cause the Netherlands Dwarf to retain an infantile appearance even into adulthood. 1½ year old red-eyed-white (REW) Netherlands Dwarf. The Netherlands Dwarf has been bred in a wide variety of colours/citation needed), including: Ruby Eyed White, Blue Eyed White, Black, Blue, Chocolate, Lilac, Red, Siamese Sable, Siamese Smoke, Sealpoint, Blue Point, Chocolate Point, Tortoiseshell, Agouti, Red Agouti, Opal, Cinnamon, Lynx, Chinchilla, Squirrel, Tan, Marten Sable, Marten Smoke, Black Otter, Blue Otter, Chocolate Otter, Lilac Otter, Fox Orange, Fawn, Hotot, Himalayan, Harlequin, Magpie, Broken, Butterfly and Mantle EMD[clarify]. 7 years old Netherlands Dwarf. Netherlands Dwarfs as pets Main article: Domestic rabbit § As pets This section needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. Find sources: "Netherlands Dwarf rabbit" – news · newspapers · books · scholar · JSTOR (June 2018) (Learn how and when to remove this template message) A grey pet Netherlands Dwarf, 2 Years old Due to their size and overall disposition, Netherlands Dwarfs often do not make good pets for children (although suitability will vary between individual rabbits). There is often a mismatch with small children, because they like to play with the pet or pick it up to cuddle with it. Dwarf rabbits do not like to be picked up or held tightly; and they can bite, scratch or struggle wildly if the child does so. This often leads to accidents if the child does them out of fright, leading to major injuries because a rabbit has very fragile bones. Larger breeds of rabbits are recommended for children, because they have fewer issues with temperament. However, dwarf rabbits can make excellent pets for adults. They thrive in a quiet, stable environment with plenty of human interaction. They are trainable, quiet and clean. Grooming needs are minimal, but the rabbit enjoys a daily brushing. Time is needed to bond with the rabbit and to build trust, because Dwarf breeds are often more nervous and more aloof than larger breeds. However, when the rabbit has bonded with their owner they make affectionate pets. The expected lifespan of domesticated Netherlands Dwarfs is 7-10 years. [5] Behaviour This section does not cite any sources. Please help improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. (September 2016) (Learn how and when to remove this template message) They can be litter-trained because they have a natural tendency to choose the same spot for their droppings and they have a much higher intelligence than most rabbits making it easier to litter train them. Netherlands Dwarfs can be skittish, wild and/or of a disagreeable nature. This is a leftover stereotype from the beginnings of the breed. This has changed through selective breeding; however, they are skittish and aloof. They are extremely active and energetic, requiring the same amount of exercise as other breeds of rabbit. They also have a higher tendency towards nervousness and stress. As with any species, disposition will vary from individual to individual. A Netherlands Dwarf rabbit on swing Diet This section is written like a manual or guidebook. Please help rewrite this section from a descriptive, neutral point of view, and remove advice or instruction. (June 2015) (Learn how and when to remove this template message) A 4-week-old Netherlands Dwarf rabbit from a litter of four in St. Catharines, ON, Canada. Their diet consists of an unlimited supply of hay, veggies and good quality pellets. Root vegetables and fruit are high in sugar and should not be given often or in large amounts. Pellets should be fed in limited amounts—1⁄8 cup per pound of body weight. Vegetables - namely dark, leafy greens, should also be given, at 2 cups or more per 6 pounds of body weight.[6] At a juvenile age, Netherlands Dwarfs (as with most other rabbit breeds) should be fed unlimited quantities of alfalfa pellets and hay. As they age, the alfalfa should be gradually replaced with other hays and pellets. The pellets should be reduced to proportion with the weight of the rabbit.[7] Dwarf breeds An adult female Netherlands Dwarf, Black Self. Main article: Dwarf rabbit Rabbit breeds derived from breeding larger rabbits with the Netherlands Dwarf (or any rabbit with a dwarf gene) are known as dwarf breeds. Most smaller breeds, like the Mini Rex, the Jersey Wooly, and the Holland Lop, are results of such breedings. Generally dwarf breeds are slightly larger than the typical Netherlands Dwarf, not growing larger than 4 to 5 lb (1.8 to 2.3 kg). Most have shortened faces compared to larger rabbits, and some even preserve the rounded head, large eyes or small ears of the Netherlands Dwarf. These features make them look little. Specifically, the Netherlands Dwarf body should be round, compact and equally broad from front to back. Dwarf rabbits also have short legs and a large head in relation to the body. Their foreheads are broad and they have well developed muzzles. Furthermore, the eyes are large and prominent. Their ears are erect and close together, reaching between one and three inches in length. They have to be shorter than 2 inches and a half (ARBA), if not, this is a disqualification from competition in the Netherlands Dwarf breed. Dwarf rabbits typically weigh 2 to 2.5 pounds according to ARBA.[8] Breeding This section does not cite any sources. Please help improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. (April 2018) (Learn how and when to remove this template message) A one-year-old Chestnut (Agouti in UK) Netherlands Dwarf The gene (symbol Dw) responsible for the common appearance of the dwarf was discovered in the United States during the beginning of the 20th century. When two "true dwarfs" (both buck and doe) are bred, the genetic pattern which makes them "true dwarfs" (Dwdw) ensures that 25 percentage of their offspring will inherit the lethal genetic combination dwdw. These offspring, often called "peanuts" by rabbit breeders, are destined to struggle with life for up to three weeks and then to die. Reasons behind the death are unknown, but it is believed that peanuts have underdeveloped digestive tracts. The condition is 100% fatal, although if fed by hand every hour and kept warm it is possible for a peanut to survive, even though it will be handicapped for its entire life. Many ethical breeders humanely euthanise peanuts upon finding them soon after birth. Peanuts are easily distinguished from non-peanuts; they have extremely pinched hindquarters, a bulbous head and their ears are often set further back than normal (sometimes almost onto the neck). If two true dwarfs are bred, the statistical result will be 25% fatal 25% false, and 50% true. The actual numbers of true/false/peanuts in a real litter varies. "False Dwarfs" tend to have longer bodies, longer/larger ears, longer faces, and are mostly heavier than the 2.5 pound maximum weight for showing. While false dwarfs (referred to as BUD's by breeders, BUD meaning big ugly doe) do not make good show rabbits, does from a good background are vital to a breeder's programme. They have the same "good genes" as a true dwarf and are capable mothers, possibly even having larger and more successful litters than true dwarfs. Also False Dwarfs are unable to produce peanuts. Their litters will be 50% false dwarfs and 50% true dwarfs if they are bred to a true dwarf buck. False dwarfs are easily judged for quality as the traits are generally the same, only bigger. Ear thickness/shape, fullness of hindquarter, topline and other traits are the same. It is common practice among Netherlands Dwarf breeders to breed a proven show quality true dwarf buck to a quality false dwarf doe. This eliminates the chance of peanuts and yields quality offspring. The chances of false dwarfs is higher, but those offspring generally go toward breeding (some false dwarf bucks have proven themselves valuable to a breeding programme) or are sold as pets. Usually false dwarf bucks are not kept by breeders. See also Rabbits and hares portal Dwarf rabbit List of rabbit breeds References ^ a b "ARBA Recognized Breeds". American Rabbit Breeders Association. Retrieved 5 April 2018. ^ a b "Breed Standards 2016-2020" (PDF). British Rabbit Council. Archived from the original (PDF) on 21 January 2018. Retrieved 5 April 2018. ^ a b c American Rabbit Breeders Association (2000). Official Guide Book: Raising Better Rabbits & Cavies. Bloomington, IL: American Rabbit Breeders Association, Inc. p. 65. ^ Baskett, Nancy K.; Newman, Jerry A., eds. (1 July 2014). 4-H Rabbit Project Leader Guide: Introduction, Glossary, and References (PDF) (WSU Extension Bulletin EM075E ed.). Washington State University. pp. 19, 25. Archived from the original (PDF) on 6 April 2018. Retrieved 5 April 2018. Cobby — Short and stocky, close-coupled; very compact. Stocky — Compact, stout, and cobby. ^ "Netherlands Dwarf Rabbit Health Facts by Petplan". www.petplan.co.uk. Retrieved 2020-05-14. ^ "Proper Rabbit Maintenance Diet ^ Rabbit Food - House Rabbit Society ^ Wegler, Monika. "The Dwarf Breeds." My Dwarf Rabbit. Hauppauge, NY: Barron's, 2008. 26-31. Print. External links American Netherlands Dwarf Rabbit Club Dwarf Rabbits Articles Netherlands Dwarf Rabbit Breed History Breeds of Rabbits Chart Retrieved from "

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