

Rabbit-Proof Your Home

Take steps to keep your pet rabbit safe during out-of-cage time.

By Laura Doering

Want to spend some time playing with your pet rabbit outside the cage? First you must make sure the room is rabbit-proofed to protect your bunny and your home furnishings.

According to Anne McBride, author of *Why Does My Rabbit...?* [Souvenir Press Ltd., 1998], as a prey animal, a rabbit needs to memorize the layout of its surroundings and to be constantly aware of any changes to its environment in the event it needs to flee. What this does in the home environment is make your rabbit sniff out every corner, every item of furniture, your feet and everything in between.

Even if it is let out in the same room every day, a rabbit will diligently do a room check. Along the way, it may find temptation. And No. 1 on the temptation list is electric cords and wires. Rabbits simply can't resist them. If you don't wish to replace your lamp, TV or phone cord, put these out of your rabbit's reach or cover them with plastic tubing.

Next on the list is your carpet and rugs (which a rabbit can dig bare in no time), then comes furniture (wicker is a favorite) and then drapes. Remove these items or block them from your rabbit's reach. Diversion is always helpful. Supply plenty of wood chew toys, a dig box and straw mats so your rabbit has alternatives to your home décor. And don't forget other pets. Never leave your rabbit alone with a cat or dog, no matter how well they seem to get along.