

## Safely Pick Up A Rabbit

**Avoid injury to you and your pet and know how to safely and properly pick a rabbit up.**

*By Caroline Charland*

Once a rabbit regularly comes to you to take a treat from your hand, take the next step, and accustom it to being picked up. Being able to properly pick up and hold your rabbit also allows you to groom your pet and to put it into a carrier. If your rabbit is sick or injured and needs a trip to the vet, or if there is an emergency such as an earthquake, fire or flood, you need to be able to do this quickly and safely.

The goal is to pick your rabbit up in as safe a manner as possible, which includes preventing your rabbit from violently kicking its hind legs in an attempt to flee:

Step 1: Steady your rabbit by gently placing a hand over the top of its head and the other hand over its backside.

Step 2: Firmly place one hand under the rabbit's chest with your thumb around the rabbit's side or back (but do not squeeze), and your forefinger between the rabbit's front legs.

Step 3: With your other hand, scoop up the rabbit's bottom. Do this all in one motion, putting the rabbit against your chest.

Step 4: Hold your rabbit securely against your body, and make sure its backside is fully supported.

If the rabbit begins to struggle that means it does not feel safe, and you may need to hold your rabbit a little tighter, keeping in mind not to squeeze too hard. It may take a few tries for you and your rabbit to feel comfortable.

Practice doing this from a kneeling position on the floor so you don't have to lift the rabbit up too high off the ground. (A rabbit can injure itself if it attempts to flee your arms while held in a standing position.)