

How to make a rabbit nesting box and what to do before & after the rabbit gives birth

Newly born bunnies are fragile hence preparations should be made before the rabbit give birth to increase their chances of survival.

A rabbit may start breeding at 6 months for the small to medium breeds like the New Zealand white and 8 to 9 months for the the large sized breeds such as the giant chinchilla. The gestation period of rabbits is between 28 to 30 days, but usually it is 21 days and a rabbit will give birth to between 1 to 14 bunnies but for the first time, it will give birth to between 6 to 8 bunnies. First time mothers may fail to take care of the bunnies hence you need to ensure that they are kept warm and well fed.

Preparations before kindling

When expecting the rabbit to give birth, you need to prepare a nesting box and put it in the rabbit pen about 5 days before she gives birth. When making a nesting box, it should be 35 cm in length, 25 cm in width and 12 cm high. After making the box, put soft wood shavings at the bottom for moisture absorption and hay as bedding.

Put the water bowl as as possible from the nesting box to avoid drowning of the bunnies.

After the rabbit giving birth, there is nothing much to do because the mother rabbit will take care of the bunnies. Just inspect the nesting box and remove the fur to check if the tummies of the bunnies are expanding and contracting but refrain from touching the bunnies if not necessary.

Incase you find a bunny with a shrunk tummy, you need to force the mother to feed it. It is common for the rabbit to give birth 1 to 3 days apart.

Keep monitoring and incase you find a dead bunny, remove it. Incase feed is scarce, there is a tendency for the mother rabbit to kill and eat its young ones.