The Littlest Lives Rescue



# BUNNY GROOMING GUIDE

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# WHY GROOMING MATTERS



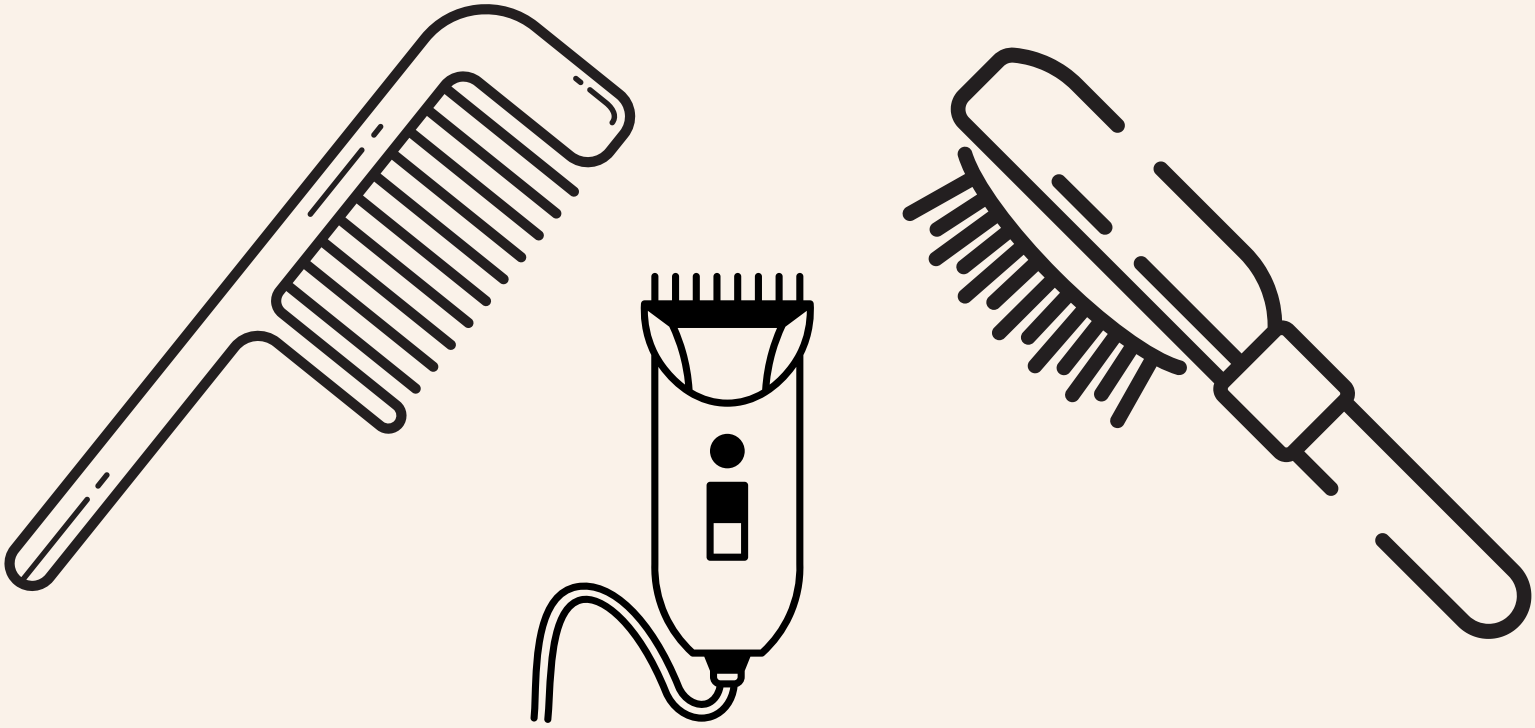
Rabbits are very clean animals, but they sometimes need our help.
Pain, illness, age, or weight can make grooming difficult for them. Regular, gentle grooming helps keep your rabbit comfortable, healthy, and able to move normally.
Rabbits hide pain extremely well, so grooming issues are often an early warning sign of something underlying.
We have created this brief handbook to help you spot those signs and help with your rabbit's journey.



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**Top tip!**
Avoid scissors for matts unless trained – a bunny's skin tears easily.

# BASIC GROOMING ESSENTIALS



**How often?**

- Short-haired rabbits: light grooming once per week
- Long-haired rabbits: daily checks, full groom as often as required
- During moults: daily brushing is ideal

**What you need:**

- Soft brush or rubber grooming mitt
- Fine-toothed comb (for gently checking, not dragging through matts)
- Towel (for bunny burritos)
- Pet-safe nail clippers
- Cotton pads & warm water (for gentle bathing only)
- Pet-safe clippers - if you're confident!

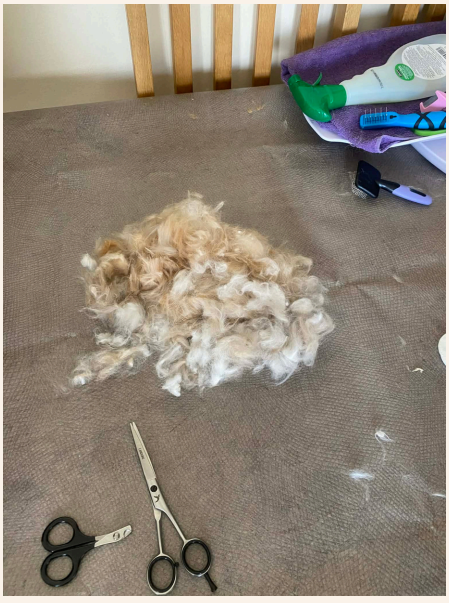
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# COMMON PROBLEMS WE SEE

## URINE SCALD

Urine scald presents as wet, smelly fur around the bottom or back legs. It causes red, sore and inflamed skin and hair loss.
A common cause of this is difficulty moving (arthritis, lack of space), obesity, dental pain and E-Cuniculi.
It is extremely painful and increases the risk of flystrike. If your bunny has urine scald they need the vet for pain relief, soothing cream and the underlying cause investigated.





## MATTING

Matts are clumps of fur that feel hard or tight. They can be close to the skin or not. Matts are more common in bunnies with long fur.
Matts can be caused by an inability to groom properly, lack of regular maintenance, pain or reduced mobility, or by having a mucky bum. These can pull painfully on the skin, and trap moisture and infection. They can also hide and cause wounds.
Matts require careful and, in some cases, professional removal.

## MITES AND SKIN PARASITES



Mites and other parasites can present as persistent scratching, fur loss and skin flakes (like dandruff). These can be caused by a variety of things including mites in the hay, unkept environment or a low immune system.
Your vet will be able to prescribe appopriate spot-on parasite treatment.



## MUCKY BUM

A mucky butt is pretty obvious! It is smelly sticky poop stuck to your bunny's backend.
Common causes for this are a diet that is too high in sugars/fat (e.g. lots of carrot or muesli food), obesity, pain and mobility problems, and lack of space.
This leads to a very high risk of flystrike (fatal), skin irritation, scald and infection.
If your bunny has this they will need a vet visit, and an appointment with a grooming professional. We would recommend speaking to an ethical rescue about changes you can make to help your bunny with this issue.



EXAMPLE OF A SKIN INFECTION

## SORE HOCKS

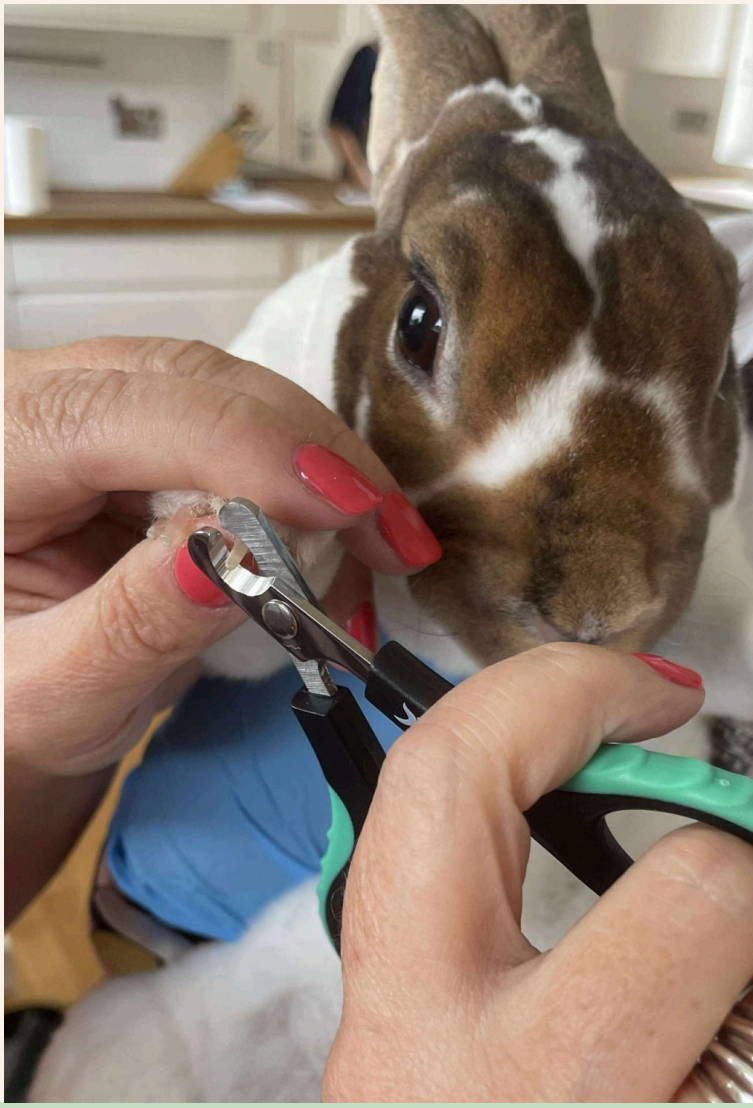


Sore hocks are a very common issue for bunnies. They present as small red/pink circles on your bunnies hind feet and can be caused by rough flooring (e.g. carpet) or long nails.
You can improve your bunnies sore hocks by making sure their nails are a good length and that flooring is soft. If sore hocks are severe they do require a vet trip for pain relief and appropriate treatment.

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# SUPPORT

Many loving owners struggle with grooming – especially if their rabbit is long-haired (e.g. Angora), unwell or ageing. Asking for help is one of the kindest things you can do.



## SUMMARY

You should:

- Check your rabbit regularly
- Keep fur well groomed and clean
- Ask for help as soon as you think there is a problem
- Adapt housing and litter trays

## CONTACT US

The Littlest Lives Rescue offer monthly grooming days if you need help and advice. You can find details on our social media pages about upcoming dates.

hello@thelittlestlivesrescue.org.uk



**Top tip!**
A lot of grooming and health issues come down to lack of space. If you need any accommodation advice please do get in touch - we are here to help!

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www.thelittlestlivesrescue.org.uk

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