

Academy of Language Studies

UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang

SEPTEMBER 2023

e-Lingua

3/2023



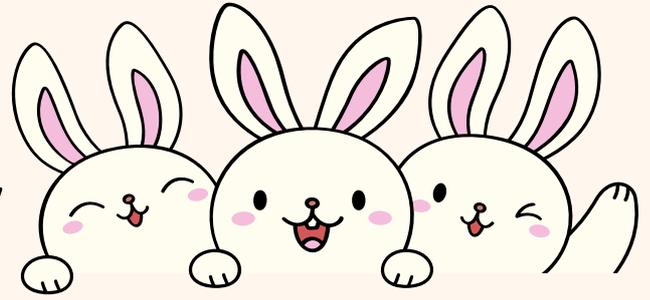
AKADEMI PENGAJIAN BAHASA
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Cawangan Pulau Pinang
Kampus Permatang Pauh



EARNING MYSELF A BUNMUMMY BADGE!



Having rabbits as pets is no walk in the park, let me tell you! These adorable furballs are more delicate than you might think. If you neglect their care, they can easily die if proper care is not given to them. I learned this lesson hard, but I'll share my bunny misadventures with you. It's quite a tale! Back in October 2021, I got these rabbits for my kids, who were 13 and 11 at that time. I figured they were old enough to handle the responsibility. And guess what? They've been amazing bunny caretakers! I'm so proud of them.

Before I brought those bunnies home, I had a lengthy chat with the breeder about their diet and behaviour. Sadly, he made it seem like a piece of cake, no worries at all. He even sent me some cheap pellets, claiming that was all the rabbits needed to eat. Well, I took his word for it without checking other sources. Big mistake!

- Those pellets wreaked havoc on my bunnies' tummies, causing them to have diarrhoea. I reached out to the breeder, hoping for some after-sales assistance, but he flat-out refused. It turns out that my friend had a similar experience with another breeder who fed her a bunch of lies. It's disappointing how some breeders just care about making a sale without knowing how to properly care for these furry friends. It really bummed me out.

Without wasting another second, I became a rabbit information sleuth. I discovered that my bunnies should be munching on hay with only a limited amount of pellets. Sure, some fancy social media videos show bunnies enjoying veggies and fruits, but I stuck to the good old hay. But here's the thing I missed: there are different types of hay for different ages of bunnies. Who knew, right? When they were little, I fed them Alfalfa hay, then switched to Timothy as they grew up. But when they turned a year old, I thought, "Hey, they loved Alfalfa before, let's give it to them again!" Little did I know that adult rabbits (6 months and older) should stick to Timothy because Alfalfa is loaded with sugar and can damage their kidneys. There are many more types of hay like oat, wheat, barley and orchard grass, and all of these can be fed to adult rabbits. My bunnies usually go gaga for oat and barley hay.



So, my bunnies had a bit of trouble adjusting to the hay switcheroo, leading to a few vet visits. But I learned a ton from those experiences! I can proudly say I've earned my bunmummy badge, even though I learned things the hard way. And you know what? Despite the bumps in the road, my rabbits have brought me so much joy. This October marks two years of me being a bunmummy, and it's been a wild but rewarding ride.



Writer's rabbits

Now, if you're considering getting a rabbit, there are a few important things to remember. Firstly, get them neutered or spayed once they hit six months. Trust me, you don't want their urine splattering all over their enclosure. It's a real pain to clean up because it contains ammonia and it stinks too. Neutering or spaying can also help with their litter box behaviour. My rabbits improved a lot after they were neutered. Secondly, rabbits are considered exotic animals, so not every vet can handle them. In my neck of the woods (Penang), only a handful of vets can examine them, and it's not exactly cheap.

But let me tell you something I absolutely adore about rabbits: they stay out of my kitchen when I'm cooking! No stealing food off the table or nosing around in the trash. And their droppings aren't even that stinky because they're chowing down on hay. Their food (hay) cost isn't too bad either, but those pellets can be a bit pricey. Thankfully, they only get pellets once a day, so it's manageable. And while they might not be as cuddly as cats, there's something endearing about their cautious nature. Being prey animals, they startle easily and won't readily come up to you for head rubs. But they do crazy binky and zoomies when they are happy. You might want to Google that to find out what they are. However, they're a quiet bunch too, and prefer to hide away when sick. So people, if you're considering a fluffy bunny companion, remember these tidbits. And don't worry, despite the challenges, having rabbits in your life can bring so much warmth and joy.

