

# Double 'D' Ranch

716-672-5678

www.Double-D-Ranch.org








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## Lagomorph Language





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Many people do not realize that rabbits have their own language skills whether it is certain sounds or body language. I feel that every good bunny parent should learn these signals to understand their long eared family member better.

### VOCAL SOUNDS

-  Purr: it vibrates off of the teeth instead of in the throat when a bunny is blissfully happy or content, such as when he is getting nose rubs or pet in favorite places.
-  Loud grinding: the rabbit is in pain and needs medical attention.
-  Growl or sharp grunt: this is a warning not to touch the rabbit or inside the cage (or else); often followed by a charge and/or bite.
-  Grunt and stomp: this usually is an impatient command for food right now!
-  Humming: can be either sing-song or like a soft grunt, often accompanied by the figure 8 pattern around your feet, which is the bunny tune for 'Love is in the air'.
-  Whimpering: means that the rabbit is very frightened.
-  Scream: you do not want to hear this sound as it sounds like a baby's cry and will chill you through to the bone. It means that the rabbit is afraid for its life and/or is in extreme pain.

### BEHAVIOR


-  Chinning: A form of marking territory, including favorite toys, food, people, and other pets by rubbing their scent glands under the chin onto the object. It is basically Fluffy's way of saying: 'Rub, Rub, Rub; Chin, Chin, Chin; Mine, Mine, Mine!'
-  Stomp! This could mean one of several things: either the rabbit is warning one about potential danger, is having a bunny argument with another rabbit, or she wants attention NOW. In outdoor, grassy areas, the thump is a silent warning through the ground to other wild bunnies.
-  Frightened pose: the rabbit may huddle in the back corner of their cage or try to flatten himself out, including his ears. One thing is common- the eyes are bulging and he is very scared. We have found that they will try to hide in the corner to avoid being lifted, as rabbits are prey animals in the wild for large birds or other predators, so it is instinctive for them not to like being handled. Often, a calm, soothing voice and allowing the rabbit to sniff you before handling may help her to feel secure.
-  General comfort squat: the bunny will have a rounded pose with her feet tucked under her and are simply relaxed.


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 'Dead' bunny pose: most rabbit caretakers will tell you that seeing their rabbit relax like this gives them a panic attack since the bunny is lying motionless on its side or back. Simply take a deep breath, make certain that they are breathing and try not wake the bunny up. This is a good sign that the bunny is secure with her surroundings.


 Ear shudder: if the rabbit shakes its head after tasting something, chances are it didn't like the food or object. However, watch for frequent shaking since this could mean an ear infection.


 Kicking while being held: this usually means that he is uncomfortable, so you might want to switch his position. I find that holding a rabbit close to you like a baby with one hand under the rump and the other supporting the upper back helps a bunny to feel secure.

 Binky: A leap for joy while running, playing, or for the heck of it. We had a rabbit that was the 'Binky Queen' to the point that she did flips in the air then was temporarily stunned as if she could not believe she did it.

 Nipping: this indicates that the bunny has had enough of holding or whatever you were doing. It usually is not an actual bite and just means to leave him alone for a while.

 Cuddling: If your rabbit decides to lie down next to you, it means she is comfortable with you or wants to get some attention.

 Bunny kisses: this could be a lick or even a nose touch, which means your rabbit loves you. If your bunny grooms you, this is a special honor since he is being submissive.

 Figure 8 around the feet: this could also be a sign of affection or could be amorous behavior.

Hopefully this list will help you to understand your rabbit signals and communicate better with her in the future.

## Double 'D' Ranch

Deb and Dale's home for wayward bunnies

[www.Double-D-Ranch.org](http://www.Double-D-Ranch.org)

A rescue and foster care family for domestic rabbits.

Pet rabbits available for adoption.

Rabbit care products and novelties.

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