



Hamster Care Sheet

About

Hamsters have no detectable body odor. They are inexpensive to buy and outside of cage cleaning and proper food are relatively maintenance free. These adorable rodents are subject to very few health problems and diseases. Since they sleep during the day, they are active at night when most people are home. A hamster can be a wonderful family member and an excellent pet.

Hamsters tend to be solitary animals and often do better living alone. Some types, like the Roborovski and Campbell's, can live in pairs or groups, but it is not necessary. Keeping males and females together is not recommended since they are prolific breeders. Having a couple hamsters is wonderful, but if they breed you may end up with many more than anticipated. If you decide to have more than one, make sure you have a second cage in case they don't get along.

Care

The easiest way to make sure your hamster's diet provides everything he needs is to buy the best prepared food you can find. Then supplement its diet with pieces of fresh fruits and veggies, throwing in an occasional mealworm or cricket. A varied diet is as important to hamsters as it is to people.

Pellets are a food where the ingredients are ground up, mixed, and formed into little pieces. The requirement to gnaw on pellets and the balanced nutrition of pellets make them a suitable part of your pet's diet.

Mixed seeds & grain are just like they sound, a food mixture of seeds and grains. Some mixed foods include a variety of dried fruits, nuts, and seeds. This type of food provides a variety of choices for your hamster to enjoy and is an excellent part of his diet.

Timothy hay, alfalfa or a mix of the two are a nice addition to the diet. In the wild, hamsters are grass eaters and may enjoy nibbling on some hay. Not all will eat it, but it is worth a try.

To add some variety and added nutrition there are many fresh foods your companion may like. Try acorns, apples, bananas, green beans, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, corn, zucchini, cucumbers, grapes, kale, oranges, peas, spinach, sweet potatoes, and turnips. The key with fresh food is to supply it in small portions since hamsters store away excess food. Rotten food is not something you want in your pet's cage.

Your pet hamster requires a safe cage that provides room to run around, exercise, eat, and sleep. You can provide this as simply or as lavishly as you want as long as the basic requirements are met. When providing a cage you must remember he is a chewer and an excellent escape artist. He can chew through wood or soft plastic, such as the screening on top of tank cages. There are a variety of different habitats that you can choose for your hamster's home.

A wired bar cage as an excellent home. Just make certain the bars are close enough together that your hamster can't wriggle through. Be sure that any door can be securely latched, your pet is capable of moving a sliding door with his teeth and escaping.

A glass aquarium with a screened top can also be used as a home. An aquarium has corners that a hamster likes, it's high enough to add an exercise wheel, and he can't climb glass making it almost escape proof.

Tube cages, like CritterTrail, are expandable habitat's. With lots of interlocking tubes, wheels, lookouts, and other add-ons, the type of home you can make for your hamster is unlimited. A tube cage can be like a mini playground.

The size of the cage depends on what type and how many hamsters you intend to own. A cage that is 15 inches long by 12 inches high is appropriate for one hamster or two dwarf hamsters. For your pet, bigger is better, so go with the biggest cage possible. The larger the cage, the happier your hamster will be.