

## Chinchilla

Average Size: 9"-10" body, plus 6" tail

Life Span: up to 15 years

### Diet and Feeding:

**Staple diet:** Choose a fortified chinchilla diet. Fill the bowl approximately 3/4 full.

**Hay:** A small handful of Timothy hay daily adds fiber to your chinchilla's diet.

**Fruits & vegetables:**\* Treat your chinchilla to a small piece of apple or carrot, or two raisins every day.

**Treat sticks:** These hard and crunchy treats keep your chinchilla's front teeth trimmed, so always keep one in the habitat.

**Water:** Change and fill your chinchilla's water bottle or dish with clean water every day.

\*Remember that fresh food items require their own dish and should be removed from the habitat after four hours to avoid spoilage. Treats should be less than 10% of total food intake.

### Housing/Habitat:

**Housing:** Your chinchilla needs a well-ventilated home with a solid floor, large enough for a food dish and water bottle or bowl, and a hiding house. There should be plenty of room for all cage accessories, and for her to move around freely. Minimum cage size is 30"L x 29"W x 18"H.

**Bedding:** Chinchillas love to dig, so lots of clean aspen or other appropriate bedding is a must. Line the home with 3"-4" of bedding, and change it weekly or more often if needed.

**Dust bath:** Add 2" of chinchilla bath dust to a container 2-3 times per week to let your chinchilla take a dust bath. The container should be large enough for her to flip and roll around. Remove the container when the bath is done.

**Cage placement:** Place the habitat in a cool 65-75° F (18-24° C), low humidity area, out of direct sunlight.

### Normal Behavior and Social Interaction:

**Chinchillas are nocturnal.** They like to run and play at night and sleep during the day, so be prepared for them to be active and noisy after dark. However, they can adapt to being active in the daytime.

**Chinchillas are sociable.** Chinchillas raised together can live together peacefully (house same gender pairs only). With regular, gentle handling, they will bond strongly with their pet parents.

**Chinchillas are clean.** They keep their soft fur clean by taking a dust bath 2-3 times per week. Watching your chinchilla take a dust bath is very entertaining!

**Lifting & handling:** Handle your chinchilla gently—scoop her up in both hands and hold her snugly against your body with cupped hands so she'll feel safe and secure.  
***Remember to never grab her fur or tail—her hair will be pulled out.***

**Nipping.** As you tame your chinchilla, be prepared for gentle, harmless nipping, as they use their mouths to become familiar with their environment.

***Chinchillas are temperature sensitive. They overheat easily, and should be kept in a cool environment.***

### Health/Cleanliness:

Please remember that all pets may bite or scratch, and may transmit disease to humans. Keep your pet's home clean and wash your hands before and after handling your pet or cleaning her home. Infants, young children, pregnant women, people with compromised immune systems, and the infirm or elderly are at greater risk of infections and should use caution when in contact with the pet or its habitat. Consult your doctor for more information.

**The information on this care sheet is NOT a substitute for regular veterinary care.**