

Corn Snakes

Average Size: Adult Corn Snakes may reach lengths of approximately 55"-60"

Lifespan: Corn snakes can live 20 years or more.

Diet and Feeding:

Corn snakes are carnivores. This means they are strictly meat eaters. Rodents comprise most of their diet.

Frozen mice: Corn snakes will obtain all of the nutrition they need from rodents (please ask a PetZoo associate about frozen rodents). Choosing the right size frozen rodent is easy—just choose the one with a body circumference closest to the size of the thickest part of your snake's body.

Feeding amounts & frequency: Feed young snakes 2-3 times a week. Offer adults food once a week.

Water: Provide a water dish large enough for the snake to submerge itself in. Change water daily.

Housing/Habitat:

Housing: Use a 20-gallon or larger glass terrarium with a lockable screen lid. Corn snakes are exceptional escape artists—even the smallest openings can be accessed for escape, so look for an enclosure designed with this in mind.

Hiding place: Provide a natural or artificial rock, wood or plastic hiding area.

Humidity: Keep the humidity level at or above 30%. A hygrometer (humidity gauge) can help you keep track. When your snake is shedding higher humidity levels are acceptable.

Temperatures:

Day: maintain a daytime temperature of between 70-85 degrees F (21-29 degrees C)

Basking: use an under-tank heater, heat rock or spot light to create basking area of 90-95 degrees F (32-35 degrees C).

Night: maintain a nighttime temperature of between 60-75 degrees F (16-24 degrees C)

It is important to provide a good temperature gradient. Snakes should be able to move away from basking temperatures to an area with daytime temperatures. Place a thermometer at each end of the enclosure to ensure a proper heat gradient.

Lighting: Most animals benefit from a photoperiod (the time that there is daylight) of 10-12 hours per day. UVA/UVB lighting is not necessary for corn snakes, but may accent their coloration and provide more viewing enjoyment.

Bedding: Line the terrarium floor with 2-3" (3-8 cm) of bark bedding or other snake approved bedding. Shredded coconut bark substrates help to maintain higher humidity levels. Clean out waste weekly and change all bedding at least once a month.

Nocturnal or Crepuscular: This means they are active primarily during the night or twilight hours and usually sleep during the day.

Communal housing: Corn snakes can be housed communally, however, king snakes are snake eaters and must be housed singly (should you own or consider owning a king snake). Snakes should always be fed singularly.

Terrestrial: Corn snakes are ground dwellers. Some species are fossorial, which means they burrow.

Normal Behavior and Social Interaction:

Supervision.

Always supervise children when they are interacting with a snake of any size.

Handling.

Give your snake 3-4 days to adjust to his new home, then try holding him for brief periods of time. Hold your snake gently but firmly trying not to constrict his movement, but rather allow him to move between your two hands (using the hand over hand handling method). Most corn snakes will calm down and move more slowly when allowed some initial free movement. Corn snakes rarely bite, but don't handle your snake during feeding time or when he is shedding.

Health/Cleanliness:

Please remember, that while uncommon, snakes may bite and may transmit disease to humans. Keep your pet's home clean and wash your hands before and after handling your snake or cleaning his 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.