

Hamster

Average Size: approximately 5"-7" long

Life Span: up to 3 years

Diet and Feeding:

Staple diet: Choose a fortified diet appropriate for hamsters. Fill the bowl approximately 3/4 full.

Vegetables:* One teaspoon of chopped carrots and dark green veggies, like mustard greens, collard greens or kale may be given daily. Take care not to overfeed these fresh foods. They are high in moisture content, and too much can cause an upset stomach.

Fruits:* Treat your hamster to one teaspoon of finely chopped apple or banana twice a week.

Oatmeal: A pinch of plain, uncooked oatmeal added to your pet's food dish every day helps provide the fiber needed in her diet.

Treat sticks & chews: These hard and crunchy treats are yummy and keep your pet's teeth trimmed. Always keep one in the habitat. Treats should be less than 10% of total food intake.

Water: Change and fill your hamster's water bottle 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 prevent spoilage.

Housing/Habitat:

Housing: Your hamster needs a well-ventilated home, large enough for a food dish and water bottle, a hiding area (if one isn't built in) and an exercise wheel. There should be plenty of room for all cage accessories, and for her to move around freely.

Bedding: Hamsters love to hide and burrow, so lots of clean aspen or other appropriate bedding is a must. Line the home with 1"-2" of bedding, and change it weekly or more often if needed.

Cage placement: Place the habitat in a cool, low humidity area, out of direct sunlight.

Normal Behavior and Social Interaction:

Hamsters 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!

One hamster per habitat, please. Hamsters can learn to enjoy human interaction, but they're not crazy about other hamsters, so only one hamster per habitat.

Hamsters are hoarders. Hamsters have large cheek pouches to carry food, which they'll store in a special hiding place.

Hamsters are very clean. You'll notice your hamster grooming herself a lot while she's awake.

Hamsters are easily startled. Be careful, if she gets scared, she may bite. Take extra care when awakening her.

Handle your hamster gently. Scoop her up in both hands and hold her with cupped hands so she'll feel safe and secure.

Treats and chew sticks. Your hamster's front teeth never stop growing, so she needs lots of healthy things to chew on like treats and chew sticks.

Exercise. Hamsters have tons of energy and need to run on a wheel in their habitat, or in an exercise ball every day.

Health/Cleanliness:

Please remember that all pets may bite or scratch, and may transmit disease to humans. Keep your hamster's home clean and wash your hands before and after handling your hamster 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 hamster or its habitat. Consult your doctor for more information.

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