

# Cockatiel Care Sheet

*Because we care !!!*



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**Your Pets Super Store**



**Congratulations on your new pet. Cockatiels are known for mimicking repetitive sounds and noises. They bond easily with their human companions and will follow them everywhere. Caring for a cockatiel requires several hours of love and attention daily, but the reward and satisfaction they'll return to you is tenfold. Cockatiels come in a variety of colors, grey being the most common. With proper care and feeding your pet cockatiel can live 15-20 years.**

## HOUSING

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Birds acclimate well to average household temperatures. The cage should be placed off the floor in an area that is well-lit and away from drafts and sunny windows. Having one or two sides close to a wall will give them a feeling of security. Sudden loud noises and movements can frighten and stress a cockatiel. A cage approximately 24" W x 14" D x 24" H, with metal bars spaced no greater than 1/2" apart, makes a good home for your cockatiel. Always select the largest cage you can afford. Perches should be at least 5" long and 1/2" in diameter. A variety of perch sizes and materials, such as natural branches and sanded perches allow your bird to exercise its feet, which helps prevent arthritis. A metal grate over the droppings tray will keep the bird from standing in droppings. Line the droppings tray with cage paper or corn cob litter for easier cleaning. To avoid contamination, do not place food or water containers under perches. You will need a food, water and treat dish, as well as a clip to hold millet sprays. Toys are very important for such intelligent birds as cockatiels. Those with mirrors, open bells and chewable items such as rawhide and plaster are particularly valuable for cockatiels. It is important to provide colorful toys made of different materials and to rotate them in and out of the cage frequently. Your cockatiel will need to get out of its cage at least once a day. Be sure the area is safe for the bird and that other family pets are kept separate and pay close attention to your pet so it doesn't chew on wires or plants that may be toxic. Many owners trim their cockatiels wings in the summer months when the pet is more likely to escape through an open window or door. Creature Comforts offers a clipping service for a minimal fee if you are not comfortable doing so yourself.

## DIET

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Specialized pellet diets are highly recommended and should consist of 60–70% of the diet. They contain all of the essential vitamins and minerals that your cockatiel needs to promote their health

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## DIET - continued

and well-being. Roudybush and Zupreem both make pellets. Use fortified seeds in moderation as they are higher in fat and less nutritious than pellets. Fresh fruit and vegetables such as strawberries, apricots (no pits), bananas, dark green leafy vegetables (like spinach or kale), peas, carrot tops, celery, and corn should be offered daily. Fresh fruits and vegetables should be discarded when not eaten within 24 hours; cockatiels appreciate quality and variety in their food. Clean, fresh, chlorine-free water should always be available. Do not feed birds fruit seeds, avocados, chocolate, alcohol, or caffeine; these can cause serious medical problems

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## CLEANING

Maintaining cleanliness is essential for your birds health and well being. Wash and dry food and water dishes daily. Fill with fresh seed mix and fresh non chlorinated water. Once a week, remove the bird to a safe place and wash the cage, perches and toys with Poop Off. Dry the cage thoroughly before returning you bird. Cover the cage bottom with clean cage paper or corn cob litter. If you use a cage cover it should be washed weekly, since it will accumulate feather dust. Replace perches, dishes, and toys when worn or damaged.

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## HEALTH

Proper diet and a clean environment are the best ways to insure your pets good health. Your cockatiel will enjoy a bath. Provide chlorine-free lukewarm water in a shallow dish and remove the water when done. As an alternative, mist the bird with water or a grooming spray such as Feather Glo. Offer a short but normal (every day, if you are able to) exercise session where your pet is totally free to explore his atmosphere. Since cockatiels are naturally intelligent, such mental stimulation will help to keep him healthy. Ten to twelve hours of sleep are required for your cockatiel to maintain its health. Birds who are not afforded the needed amount of sleep may become depressed, grouchy or even ill. It is very helpful to cover your bird's cage each night, blocking out annoying light that may undermine your cockatiel's sleep. Birds hide the fact that they are not well, often by the time you notice something is wrong they are very sick. If you notice any signs of illness you need to contact your veterinarian right away. Indications of illness would include: beak swelling, fluffed, plucked, or soiled feathers, sitting on floor of the cage, loss of appetite, eye or nasal discharge, red or swollen eyes, wheezing or coughing, runny or discolored stools and favoring one foot.

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## FERTILITY

Cockatiels will breed in captivity. A breeding pair will bond more strongly to each other than to their human companion.

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## CHECK LIST

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| _____ cage and cage cover           | _____ pellets and fortified seed  |
| _____ bird bath                     | _____ play gym and treats         |
| _____ vitamin supplements           | _____ cuttlebone and millet spray |
| _____ cage paper or corn cob litter | _____ food and water dishes       |
| _____ grooming spray                | _____ nail clippers               |
| _____ variety of perches and toys   | _____ styptic gel                 |