

# Dwarf Hamster Care Sheet

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1250 Upper Front Street, Binghamton, NY 13901 607-723-2666

**Your Pets Super Store**



**Congratulations on your new pet. Dwarf hamsters make good household pets as they are small, cute and easy to care for. Most commonly you will find Djungarian or Roborowski hamsters available. They are more social than Syrian (golden) hamsters and can often be kept in same sex pairs if introduced at a young age. Djungarian are brown or grey with a dark stripe down their back and furry feet. They grow to three to four inches in length and live up**

**to two years. Roborowski hamsters are brown with white muzzle, eyebrows and underside. They grow to less than two inches long and live two to three years.**

## GENERAL

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Give your new hamster time to adjust to its new home. Speak softly and move slowly so your hamster can learn to trust you. Put your hand in the cage and let the hamster smell you. In a short amount of time the hamster will recognize you and feel safe. Be sure to always wash your hands so you smell like you. Hamsters are naturally curious and can be encouraged to sit on your hand for a special treat. Cup your hands under and around the hamster so he feels safe, never squeeze or move suddenly and stay low to the floor so that if he jumps he won't get injured. Dwarf hamsters tend to be less aggressive than standard hamsters and are frequently referred to as "no bite" hamsters. Keep in mind however that any animal will bite if frightened or injured. Being so small, they can jump and run very quickly so are not a good choice for very young children. Dwarf hamsters are often called desert hamsters because of their origin. Like many desert animal they have less odor, which makes them easier to care for.

## HOUSING

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Dwarf hamsters can be kept in a glass aquarium with a wire top or a wire and plastic habitat by Habitrail, or Crittertrail especially made for small hamsters or mice. Because of their size a standard hamster cage would allow for an easy escape. Keep the cage up off the floor in a bright area without drafts or direct sunlight. Hamsters are comfortable at between 64-80 degrees Fahrenheit. They will need a heavy or attached food dish and a water bottle. A soft bedding like Carefresh will keep them clean and comfortable. Aspen bedding may also be used, but avoid cedar, pine and fluffy bedding as these can be harmful. Dwarf hamsters like to burrow so a two inch deep layer of bedding will allow them to do that. Being shy creatures, they will want

## HOUSING - continued

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a sleeping/hiding house. Hamsters are very active and can run up to five miles a night so they should be provided with a solid exercise wheel such as Super Pet's Silent Spinner. Like other desert animals they will enjoy a weekly dust bath. Chinchilla Dust should be used along with a small dish. A variety of toys can be moved in and out of their habitat to alleviate boredom. Accessories such as tubes (wood or plastic), ladders, slides and TRIXIE Hamster Mansions will keep your pet well entertained. Wooden items and safe branches will keep teeth in top condition.

## DIET

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Dwarf hamsters eat fewer pellets and more seed than standard hamsters. Pick a hamster mix like Kaytee brand foods that has a good variety of seeds, nuts and dried fruits and vegetables. Foods high in moisture can give your hamster diarrhea and should be avoided. Fresh, clean water should be given daily.

## CLEANING

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Spot clean soiled cage areas daily and remove any wet food. Wet dirty areas can produce mold and bacteria that can make your hamster sick. Once a week, clean the entire cage with warm soapy water. Rinse and dry the cage and toys well before returning the bedding and hamster. Use hot water and a bottle brush to clean the water bottle.

## HEALTH

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Hamsters are hardy creatures when given proper housing, cleaning and food. Rotten food and dirty water will cause diarrhea, as can severe stress, which can be treated but is better avoided. It is possible for hamsters to get mites and fleas. Consult one of our pet care specialist or your veterinarian for appropriate treatment.

## FERTILITY

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Hamsters can and will reproduce often. Be aware that if you have a male and female together you can quickly be over run with hamsters, with nowhere to take them.

## CHECK LIST

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- \_\_\_\_\_ten gallon aquarium or dwarf hamster / mouse habitat
- \_\_\_\_\_heavy dish for food
- \_\_\_\_\_water bottle / bottle brush
- \_\_\_\_\_sleeping / hiding house
- \_\_\_\_\_soft bedding like Carefresh
- \_\_\_\_\_fresh hamster food high in grains, nuts, and seeds
- \_\_\_\_\_treats for training
- \_\_\_\_\_safe chew branches
- \_\_\_\_\_solid exercise wheel
- \_\_\_\_\_tubes, ladders, slides