

Chinchilla Care Sheet

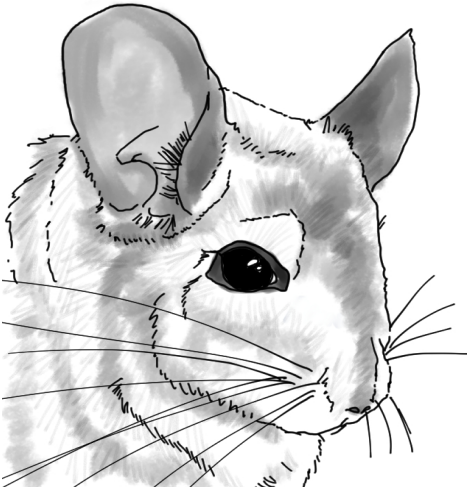


Your Pets Super Store

1250 Upper Front Street, Binghamton NY 13901

607-723-2666

info@ccpetstore.com



Congratulations on your new pet. Chinchillas have curious personalities and soft plush fur and make appealing pets for all ages. They sleep most of the day and become active in the evening. Chinchillas are natural acrobats and some find it hard to sit still, others love to be held and petted. It's best to keep two same-sex chinchillas as companions, as they are very social. With proper care chinchillas can live ten plus years.

GENERAL-----

Avoid sudden movements and loud noises, so your chinchillas will trust you and let you handle them easily. They are naturally inquisitive and may sniff or gently nibble your fingers. Children should always be supervised when holding chinchillas, to prevent accidental falls and injuries. Daily exercise outside the cage, in a chinchilla-safe room, is vital to good health. A daily bath in Chinchilla Dust is recommended.

HOUSING-----

Chinchillas need room to exercise, so choose the largest cage you can afford. Avoid those with wire floors, as they can seriously injure chinchillas' feet. Your chinchillas will enjoy multi-level cages, such as ferret cages. Several shelves at different levels will give your chinchilla the opportunity to jump around and exercise. Add a Leap-n-Ledge or Lava Landing to give more options for jumping and chewing. The Silent Spinner exercise wheel is also a great addition to the cage. Glass aquariums are not suitable as they do not provide adequate ventilation. Chinchillas will be comfortable in normal household temperatures less than 80 degrees Fahrenheit. Chinchillas don't do well with over heating and should have access to a Chin Chiller during the hot days of summer. Do not place the cage in an area that gets direct sunlight. Cover the floor with a layer of safe bedding such as Aspen shavings or Carefresh. Do not use pine or cedar shaving, they contain harmful oils which can damage the respiratory system. Chinchillas need a sleeping/hiding house, a glass water bottle and a food hopper. Wooden toys will keep your chinchilla entertained and help keep teeth in good condition. As with other herbivores, chinchilla's teeth grow constantly. Do not use toys made of plastic or rope. A dust bath should be provided for an hour, several times a week so your chinchilla can keep its' coat clean.

DIET-----

A healthy diet is based on specially formulated chinchilla pellets and good quality timothy hay, available at all times. Fresh water should always be available in a sipper bottle. Dried fruits and vegetables make good treats in small quantities. Kaytee Yogurt Chips are also a good treat. Avoid feeding fresh foods high in moisture as these can cause diarrhea.

CLEANING

Clean soiled areas daily and change the bedding weekly. Food dishes, water bottles, toys and the cage bottom need washing weekly with warm water and a mild soap. Use a bottle brush and hot water to prevent algae from growing in the water bottle. Always rinse and dry the cage well before adding fresh bedding.

HEALTH

Be alert and consult an exotics veterinarian if you notice signs of illness or injury such as: lack of appetite, drooling, changes in droppings, bald spots, discharge from eyes or nose, wheezing or noisy breathing. Open wire exercise wheels can cause serious injuries and should never be used for chinchillas. Do not feed chocolate, caffeine or alcohol.

FERTILITY

Male chinchillas become sexually mature at around four months of age. To avoid health risks and unwanted babies, it's important to accurately sex and separate chinchillas no later than four months old.

CHECKLIST

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| <input type="checkbox"/> large, multi level cage | <input type="checkbox"/> wooden toys |
| <input type="checkbox"/> safe chew branches | <input type="checkbox"/> lava block |
| <input type="checkbox"/> treats | <input type="checkbox"/> vitamins |
| <input type="checkbox"/> large glass water bottle | <input type="checkbox"/> heavy crock or hopper for food |
| <input type="checkbox"/> bedding | <input type="checkbox"/> sleeping / hiding house |