

Finch Care Sheet



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Congratulations on your new pet. Zebra and Society finches are among the most popular of all finches. They are hardy, perky and easy to care for. Bird lovers with little time on their hands may find that a pair of finches would be their ideal choice for a pet. Finches are best for someone who loves to sit and watch their birds since finches prefer mostly to be left alone and if handled, they often become quite stressed. Finches don't like to live alone so they should be kept in pairs. If you have no intention of breeding them, they don't mind being in same sex pairs. With proper care they can live four to seven years.

HOUSING-----

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 direct sunlight. A rectangular flight cage, approximately 24" W x 14" D x 18" H, with metal bars spaced no greater than 3/8" apart, makes a good home for up to three finches; as with all animals, it is best to provide the largest habitat possible. A variety of appropriate perch sizes to exercise feet and help prevent arthritis is recommended. A metal grate over the droppings tray will keep the bird off of the 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 want a separate dish for moist treats and a clip to hold millet.

DIET-----

Specialized pellet diets are highly recommended and should consist of 60-70% of the diet. Fortified seeds are higher in fat than pellets. If your bird is used to a seed diet, convert to pellets gradually. Millet spray should be available at all times. Fresh, dark leafy greens plus slices of raw apples and oranges and grated carrots and sweet potato should be given daily and discarded when not eaten within 24 hours. Finches appreciate quality and variety in their food. Give your finches clean, fresh, chlorine-free water, changed daily. Do not feed birds avocados, fruit seeds, chocolate, alcohol or caffeine as these can cause serious medical problems.

CLEANING-----

Clean and disinfect the cage and perches with Poop Off. Replace substrate or cage liner weekly or more often if needed. Replace food and water daily. The water dish should be rinsed and dried before refilling to discourage algae growth. Replace perches, dishes, and toys when worn or damaged.

HEALTH-----

Provide filtered, chlorine-free, lukewarm water regularly for bathing; remove the water when done. As an alternative, mist the bird with water or a grooming spray. Nails should be trimmed by a qualified person to prevent injury to the bird. One of our pet care specialists can explain the proper procedure. Finches tend to be hardy birds, but it is best to avoid illness by maintaining a clean habitat. Signs of illness would include, beak swelling, fluffed, plucked, or soiled feathers, sitting on cage floor, wheezing or coughing, runny or discolored stools, favoring one foot, eye or nasal discharge, red or swollen eyes and loss of appetite.

FERTILITY-----

Finches breed easily in captivity. It is best to keep same sex pairs to prevent over population.

CHECKLIST-----

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| _____ cage and cage cover | _____ spray millet |
| _____ variety of perches | _____ cage paper or substrate |
| _____ vitamin supplements | _____ variety of branches |
| _____ pellets and fortified seed | _____ bird bath |
| _____ nail clippers and styptic gel | _____ food dish |
| _____ grooming spray | _____ water dish |
| _____ treats and grit | |