

Leopard Gecko Care Sheet

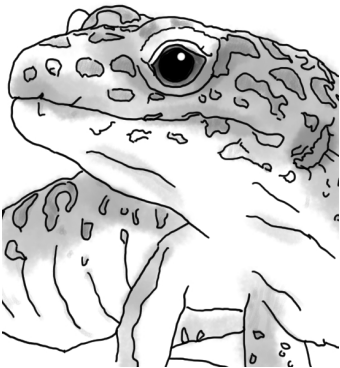


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Congratulations on your new pet. The leopard gecko has been captive-bred in the United States for more than 30 years and is one of the most commonly kept lizards today. These hardy lizards come in a variety of colors, patterns and sizes. Adult leopard geckos will grow to 6-9 inches in length; this makes them a great species for the home. Given the proper care they will live 6-15 years. A leopard gecko's tail will break off if it is grabbed, care must be taken when handling a gecko.

HOUSING-----

A 10-20 gallon aquarium houses one or two leopard geckos from hatchling to adult size. Larger tanks tend to cause the geckos to stray away from their proper heat and hide box. Be sure to have a secure screen top on your gecko cage that will support a light fixture and provide good ventilation. A hide box filled with moist moss or vermiculite is needed, so your leopard gecko can shed its skin properly. Leopard geckos need 40-60% humidity inside the hide box. Misting on a regular basis should provide that, check periodically with a humidity gauge. Your gecko will need a water dish. Live or artificial plants can be added for a nice decorative touch. A good substrate would be R-Zilla terrarium liner, Reptilite sand or calci-sand and flat stones. Logs and rocks make good hiding and climbing places.

HEATING AND LIGHT-----

The best way to heat your leopard gecko is by using an Exo-Terra Heatwave terrarium substrate heater. Heating one end of the cage is best. This allows for a temperature variation that your lizard needs. Heat rocks tend to become too hot for leopard geckos and should be avoided due to the risk of burns. An incandescent light can be used to supply light and heat during the day, and a red bulb or ceramic heated at night. Use a thermometer to check temperatures. Daytime temperatures should be between 80-85 degrees fahrenheit with a 90 degree basking area. Nighttime temperatures should be in the 70's. Because leopard geckos are active at night (notice their vertical pupils), they do not need to bask under a special UVB light.

DIET-----

Live insects are a must for your gecko as they are carnivores. Feed your gecko crickets 3-4 times a week. You can also treat your pet to wax worms and meal worms once a week if you wish. Crickets should be gut loaded with Fluker's Orange Cubes to provide your gecko with good nutrition. Dusting insects with vitamins and minerals as well as calcium and D3 is also important for good health. Another way to give the extra powdered supplements to your gecko is to keep a small shallow dish filled with vitamin-mineral powder at all times. The gecko knows how much its body needs, and it will lick up the powder accordingly. It is normal for leopard

geckos to eat their shed skin. A shallow water dish with fresh water must be available at all times. It should also be stable, so it cannot be spilled. Cage substrate should be kept dry, so be careful about spillage. Make sure that young and adult leopard geckos can climb easily out of the dish you use. Place a rock in the dish so that crickets do not drown and foul the water.

CLEANING-----

Leopard geckos are clean reptiles and require minimal cage maintenance. They will use a corner of the cage as a bathroom which makes daily poop pick up easy. Dead crickets should also be removed daily. The water dish must be cleaned daily to avoid bacterial growth. Once a month, move your gecko to a safe place and remove and clean all decorations with Healthy Habitat. Discard all sand and moss and scrub the entire tank. Rinse everything thoroughly, dry and replace with clean substrate and decorations.

HEALTH-----

You should always wash your hands before and after handling any reptile. Your Leopard gecko is a hardy lizard and should remain healthy with the proper care and feeding.

FERTILITY-----

Leopard geckos can be bread in captivity.

CHECKLIST-----

- _____ 10-12 Gallon aquarium with a tight fitting screen top (long rather than high)
- _____ basking light
- _____ under tank heater
- _____ shallow water dish
- _____ Reptilite, calci-sand, cage carpet
- _____ rocks and logs to climb and hide
- _____ hide box with moss for shedding
- _____ Orange Cubes to gut load crickets
- _____ vitamin/mineral dust
- _____ calcium/D3 powder
- _____ thermometer