

# Uromastyx Care Sheet

CREATURE COMFORTS

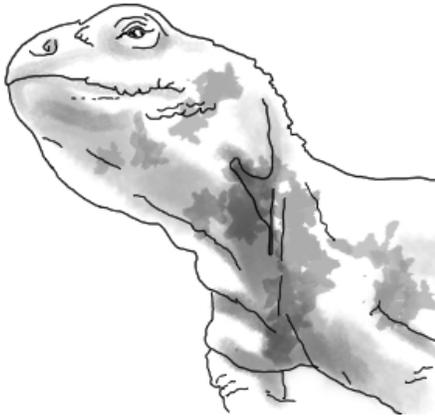


**Your Pets Super Store**

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Congratulations on your new pet. Uromastyx lizards come from the driest, hottest and most barren parts of the world. These are very active, heat loving lizards that thrive in a hot, dry desert environment. They thrive under extreme conditions unsuitable for a lot of other lizard species. They tend to be hardy and relatively easy to care for. With proper care your lizard should live up to seven years.

## HOUSING-----

A vivarium set up that closely resembles their natural environment should be provided. A 40 gallon breeder tank would be the minimum size for an adult, bigger is always better. These lizards cannot get enough space, so go BIG! The enclosures need good side and top ventilation for airflow. Too much humidity for these desert animals can be harmful. For large adult animals, Zoo-Med's Vitasand or Excavator sand make excellent substrates. Cage carpet can be used at any life stage and is a safe and easy to keep clean. These need to be changed weekly, spot cleaned daily. Cage furnishings can be sparse to elaborate, depending on your tastes. Live plants tend to be destroyed or eaten and generally are just too messy for these active lizards. Your pet will be more comfortable if you place a background on the sides and back of the tank. A large, safe hide box or rock cave on the cooler end is needed for security for the animal. Provide a nice, flat rock under the basking light for the lizard to bask on, as well as logs and rocks to climb on. Always make sure the furnishings are secure and won't topple over and hurt or kill your animal. Large rocks need to be secured so the lizard cannot burrow underneath and accidentally crush itself to death.

## HEATING AND LIGHT-----

Uromastyx require high day time temperatures. The basking light should consist of an incandescent light bulb of 100 to 150 watts, from Exo-Terra's sunglo or heatglo series in a reptile dome lamp by R-Zilla or Exo-Terra with a porcelain socket (for high heat sources). The basking area should be at one end of the enclosure and be large enough for the whole lizard to rest under at between 110-120 degrees fahrenheit. The light should be a safe distance away from the animal. You will need a good digital thermometer to be sure temperatures are correct. The opposite side of the enclosure, the cooler end, should be in the high 80's to low 90's, which is also a good overall cage temperature. At night the temperatures should dip into the upper 60's to low 70's with light sources turned off. Under tank heaters can be used to maintain ambient daytime or nighttime temperatures, however do not use heat rocks as these can injure you pet. A UVB bulb is needed to aid in the production of Vitamin D3 and enhances natural skin colors. R-Zilla provides a fixture with a desert series bulb that will give your reptile what it needs. Any UVB bulb needs to be replaced every 6-9 months. Uromastyx will want 12-14 hours of daylight in the summer months and a minimum of 10 hours in the winter. Never light an animal 24

hours as this will not allow the lizard to recharge for proper metabolism and normal function. If your room temperature dips below 70 degrees at night, an alternate heat source may be supplemented for some warmth, i.e., a red or moonlight light bulb or a thermostatically controlled heat pad allowing temps to stay in the upper 70's. During the hot summer months, this is usually not necessary, but more likely needed in the colder winter months, depending on where you live.

## **DIET-----**

Uromastyx lizards are primarily herbivorous. They will enjoy an occasional insect such as crickets for juveniles or super worms for adults no more than twice a week. The overfeeding of insects can cause severe health problems. Insects should be well gut-loaded and dusted with a calcium/vitamin supplement prior to feeding. Stick to a primary vegetarian diet for optimum health. A good varied diet should include turnip greens, dandelion greens, romaine and escarole lettuce, organic spring mixes, edible flowers, red clover and other sprouts, mustard greens, endive, collards and thawed out frozen vegetable mixes. Fresh greens need to be washed, dried and sprinkled with a vitamin/mineral dust. Cabbages and members of the cabbage families, including broccoli should be avoided, as these are high in oxalates, which bind calcium. Provide a small flat dish with tortoise or juvenile iguana pellets as well. Chopped apples and firm blueberries can be an occasional treat. Under normal circumstances your Uromastyx will get enough water from their diets, but we recommend having a small dish of water available at all times. This is particularly important for young Uromastyx and sick individuals. A shallow soaking dish should be provided.

## **CLEANING-----**

Sanitary measures need to be heeded for the health of your lizards. A daily fecal sweep is important. Clean the tank weekly with Healthy Habitat. Clean soiled or fecal smeared cage furnishings as needed. Always wash your hands with a good grade antibacterial soap after you have finished cleaning and also between cages if you have multiple cages

## **HEALTH-----**

Your lizard should appear plump and well muscled. Seeing ribs or pelvic bones, could be cause for alarm. Retained shed skin on the toes or the tail can also be signs of ill health. These should be gently removed after warm water soaking. If the skin seems compromised in any way, consult your reptile veterinarian.

## **FERTILITY-----**

Consult one of our pet specialists.

## **CHECKLIST-----**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> basking rock                               | <input type="checkbox"/> UVB lighting                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> vitamin / mineral supplements              | <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy Habitat                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cage carpet (2 for cleaning)               | <input type="checkbox"/> rocks and logs for climbing    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> hiding / sleeping house                    | <input type="checkbox"/> low dishes for food and water  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> heat light and dome                        | <input type="checkbox"/> minimum 40 gallon breeder tank |
| <input type="checkbox"/> under tank or night light for cold weather | <input type="checkbox"/> background for sides and back  |