

Siberian Dwarf Hamster

Scientific Name: *Phodopus Sungorus*

Brief Description:

Cute, very energetic and captivating. That's how we would describe the Siberian Dwarf Hamster. They love to exercise and are excessive food hoarders. Easy to care for and adorable is what makes these little creators, a very popular pet, across North America.



Average Size: The average size of a Hamster is three-to-four inches in length.

Average Life Span: The average life span of a hamster is approximately three years.

Feeding:

- Fresh food and water should be available, always.
- Small amounts of grains, fruits, vegetables, or timothy hay, provided daily.
- Food items not consumed within twenty-four hours should be removed.
- Good quality hamster food will include the following:
 - o Sixteen percent protein.
 - o Four percent fat.
 - o Four to six percent fiber.
- Treats should not exceed ten percent of total intake.
- Do not feed caffeine, chocolate or alcohol.
- Hamsters on premium foods should not require additional vitamin supplements.

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Housing:

- Hamsters acclimate well to average household temperatures.
- Avoid extreme temperature changes.
- Enclosure should not be in direct sunlight.
- Enclosure should not in a drafty area.
- Enclosure should be made of glass, plastic or metal.
- Enclosure should be escape proof and have a solid bottom.
- Provide the largest habitat possible.
- Use one-to-two inches of bedding in the habitat.
 - o Proper bedding includes one-to-two inches of bedding.
 - o Use hardwood shavings and pelleted or recycled products.
 - o Do not use cedar bedding as it may cause harm.
- House adult hamsters, separately.



Maintenance:

- Remove wet spots daily.
- Change bedding weekly.
- Wash all items in the habitat on a weekly basis.
- Clean the habitat, once a week with mild soap and water.
- Rinse and allow to dry before returning hamster back into its habitat.

Temperature: Stable room temperature is adequate. No special requirements.

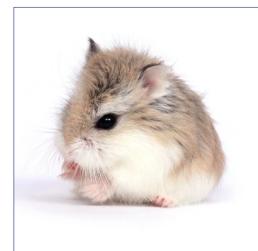
Humidity: No special requirements.

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Lighting:

Hamsters are nocturnal, keep out of direct sunlight. Use room lighting as needed.



Water and Accessories:

- Provide your hamster a sipper bottle, hung from the side of the cage.
- Provide small toys to play with and a running wheel for regular exercise.
- Your hamster will require a food bowl, chew stick and nesting house.

Reproductive:

- Distinguishing between the sexes is very simple.
- Breed male hamsters only after fourteen weeks.
- Breed female hamsters only after ten weeks.
- A female will be ready to breed when a thin, stringy, cobweb-like mucus exists within the regions of the female's vulva.
- Female can be placed one hour before dark in the male's enclosure.
- Observe mating activity for verification.
- Females can harm males during the mating process.
 - o Remove male from enclosure if there are any signs of female aggressiveness.
 - o Quite often, aggressiveness can be fatal.
- Remove male after mating.
- Pregnancy can last fifteen-to-sixteen days.
 - o Female becomes restless and discharges a small amount of blood from her vulva.
 - o Litters range from five-to-ten pups.
 - o Pup's are born hairless, with ears and eyes closed.

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Reproductive: (con't)



- Provide female with nesting and bedding materials.
- Provide food and water.
- Do not disturb in any way. Do not disturb the nest and do not clean enclosure.
- Pup's should not be touched or handled until they are at least seven days old
 - o We can't stress disturbance or handling of young enough. Be cautioned as the probability that the female cannibalizing her pup's is very real.
- Females is excited or disturbed will stuff pups into her cheek pouch and deposit them into the nest a short time later, if she believes they are in danger.
 - o Occasionally, pups suffocate as a result.
- Young hamsters will begin eating solids at ten days.
 - o Soak pelleted food to soften it and place on or near floor level of enclosure.
 - o Sipper tubs must be positioned low enough so that the smallest pups can reach them.
 - o Be vigilante as pups may not be strong enough to extract water.

Grooming:

Hamsters stay clean and do not need baths. A teddy bear hamster's fur needs to be combed regularly with a soft brush, other hamsters may be combed as necessary.

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Notes and Comments:

Hamsters are active during the night and sleep during the day (nocturnal). They are easy to handle once trust is established between you and your hamsters; they may become irritable and nip if suddenly awakened from a nap or startled.

Hamsters chew on objects to maintain the incisor teeth, which grow continuously. Use cheek pouches to transfer food from one location to another.

They are solitary, never house more than one adult hamster per habitat.

