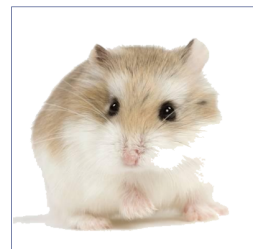


Hamster

Scientific Name: Cricetinae

Brief Description:



Hamsters are extremely popular pets throughout North America. Short-haired, long-haired and European Hamsters are actually very clean and entertaining and captivating, companion pets that are best to kept alone. Instinctually, Hamsters are known to be hoarders because they have cheek pouches that are used to store and move food from one place, to another.

Average Size: Their size depends on which species of hamster in question. Dwarf Hamsters grow to approximately four inches, whereas their Syrian counterparts and grow to seven inches.

Life Span: Hamsters can live anywhere from two-to-three years.

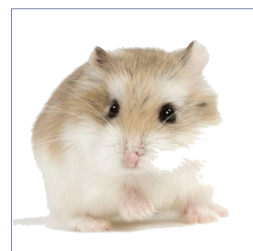
Feeding:

- Provide your pet Hamster with a steady supply for fresh food and de-chlorinated water.
- Your pet will appreciate small amounts of grain, vegetables, fruits and timothy hay.
- Any food items not consumed within twenty-four hours should be removed.
- Provide high quality food containing sixteen percent protein, four percent fat and maximum of.

Hamster

Scientific Name: Cricetinae

Feeding: (con't)



- o Pets on premium food do not need additional vitamin supplements.
- four-to-six percent fiber.
- Treats should not exceed ten percent of total food intake.
- Do not feed chocolate, alcohol or caffeine.
- Hamsters love raisins and alfalfa hay, provide this twice a week, or five-percent of total intake.
- Hamsters love apples, bananas and melons, provide this once a week, or five percent of total intake.

Housing:

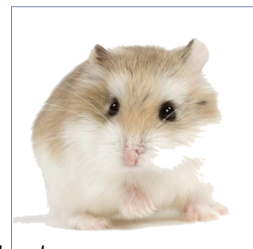
- Hamsters acclimate well to average household temperatures.
- Be cautious of extreme temperature changes.
- Do not leave habitat in direct sunlight or drafty areas.
- Habitat should be glass, plastic or metal, escape proof and with a solid bottom.
- Its best to provide the largest habitat possible as the Hamster needs room for exercise and play.
- One-to-two inches of bedding should be placed in the habitat.
 - o Bedding can include hardwood shavings, pelleted or recycled products.
 - o Cedar bedding may cause harm is not recommended.
- House adult hamsters separately.

Hamster

Scientific Name: Cricetinae

Maintenance:

- Remove wet spots on a daily basis.
- Change bedding weekly as needed and wash all items in the habitat.
- Clean habitat once a week by scrubbing it with a mild soap and water.
 - o Rinse and allow to dry before returning hamster back into the habitat.



Temperatures: Room temperature is adequate. No special requirements.

Humidity: No special requirements.

Water and Accessories:

- Provide a sipper bottle for your pet Hamster, hung from the side of the cage.
- Provide small toys and a running wheel for exercise.
- Keep a food bowl, chew stick and nesting house as well.

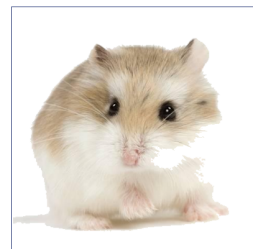
Reproductive:

- Determining the sex of a hamster is simple process.
- Male Golden Hamsters should be bred when they are fourteen weeks old.
- Female should be first bred when they are ten weeks old.
- As the time of copulation approaches, thin, stringy, cobweb-like mucus exits the female's vulva.

Hamster

Scientific Name: Cricetinae

Reproductive: (con't)



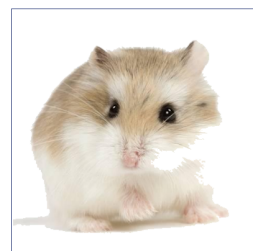
- Place the female into the male's cage, about one hour before dark.
- The pair must be observed for mating activity and/or fighting.
 - o Separate them if any aggressive behavior is observed.
- Females can become aggressive and harm the male.
- Pregnancy lasts fifteen-and-a-half-to-sixteen days.
- Before delivery, female will become restless and discharge a small amount of blood.
- Litters range from five to ten pups.
- Pups are born hairless, with ears and eyes closed.
- Provide female hamster with plenty of nesting and bedding materials.
- Provide female with plenty of food and water.
- Do not disturb your hamsters or new born.
- Do not clean the cage or touch the new borns until they are at least seven days old.
 - o Touching or disturbing can lead to cannibalism of the young.
- Excited or disturbed female hamsters will often stuff her pups into her cheek for transport to another location within the enclosure.
 - o Pup's can suffocate during this time.
- Young Hamsters begin eating solids at ten days.
- Solid food must be soaked to soften prior to feeding by the weanlings.
- Sipper tubes must be placed low enough so the smallest pup's can reach them.
- Some pups will not be strong enough to extract water from supper tubes.
 - o Be vigilant and provide an alternative water source.

Hamster

Scientific Name: Cricetinae

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.



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.