

Hamster Information Sheet

Thank you for purchasing your hamster from Animal City, a family-owned business serving Connecticut for over seventy years. Hamsters make wonderful pets when given the proper care and attention. This information sheet will offer general advice on providing your new family member with the best possible care.

General Information

Hamsters are nocturnal rodents that come from various parts of Europe and Asia. They are loners by nature and will often fight to the death when kept together. Dwarf Hamsters are an exception to this rule and can usually be kept in pairs or trios. They live an average of two to three years. Some common hamsters that are available at Animal City are golden hamsters, teddy bear hamsters, black bear hamsters, Siberian dwarf hamsters and desert dwarf hamsters.

Caging

Hamsters can be kept in plastic cages, wire cages and glass tanks. Wire cages are preferred for their quality and durability, especially if a child will be the primary caregiver. The cage should provide plenty of room and have a minimum floor space of 100 square inches, preferably larger. Hamsters will use the multiple levels of some of the fancier cages, making them a worthwhile expense. Wheels are a necessity and will be used on a nightly basis. Shelters within the cage should be provided for the hamster's sense of security.

Bedding

Pine shavings are the most readily available and cheapest type of bedding one can buy. There are also many popular newspaper litters, such as Care Fresh, that can be used for such purposes. Chlorophyll or lemon scented litters may also be used to deodorize the smell of urine.

Food and Water

Hamsters should be fed rodent lab blocks as their primary diet. Seed mixes should be avoided because they are not nutritionally complete. For treats one can offer their hamster broccoli, peas, carrots, grapes, apples, strawberries and bananas. Water should be provided in a plastic or glass bottle with a stainless steel ball and tip. Vitamins should be added to the water to promote overall health. Caregivers using vitamins will notice a stronger looking hamster with a shinier coat.

Handling

It is advised that sleeping hamsters not be handled due to a greater risk of being bitten. It is best to hold them towards the end of the day or any other time the hamster may be awake. Hold them close to the floor in case they fall. Young children must be supervised and adults should be aware that many hamsters have suffered premature deaths as a result of children squeezing them to death. Always wash your hands before handling them in case you have any food smells on you hand. As with any animal, you should wash your hands after handling them.

Cleaning

The bedding should be changed on a weekly basis and it is advised that the cage and accessories be sterilized at least once a month with a bleach and water solution. A spray bottle with one part bleach to three parts water works very well.



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