

pet care guide

WORMING

Routine worming should take place every three months as ferrets are susceptible to the same worm parasites as cats and dogs. All ferrets should be vaccinated between 6 and 10 weeks of age, a booster a month later, then yearly against canine distemper and kennel cough.

TOILET TRAINING

Ferrets can be toilet-trained to use a kitty tray much like a cat. Place the tray in a quiet spot in the house or in their cage. Litter should be replaced frequently.

IN ORDER TO KEEP YOUR SMALL ANIMAL IN TOP CONDITION, WE RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

- Food** – grain mixture and pellet food, also fresh fruit and vegetables, or EVO for ferrets.
- Vitamin fortified supplement** – add one teaspoon to your animals normal daily food.
- Salt lick stone** – supplement of salts and minerals to the diet, as they cannot store salt in their bodies.
- Flea and mite treatment** – available in spray or powder form. Put it on your animal and its environment to stop insect infestation.

- Wormer** – to prevent intestinal worms.
- Cage/hutch/tank** – roomy enough for the animal to eat, sleep, and go to the toilet.
- Bedding** – shavings, straw, hay, litter or nesting material.
- Shampoo and conditioner** – to eliminate odours.
- Suitable brush** – to keep shiny, healthy coat.
- Drinking bottle** – keeps water fresh and clean.
- Ceramic/stainless steel food bowl** – easy to keep clean and too heavy for your pet to knock over.
- Hutch cleaner** – to keep the hutch clean and hygienic.
- Assorted toys** – for exercise and to keep your pet amused.
- Litter tray and litter** – for rabbit toilet training.
- Harness** – used when taking your pet on walks.
- Nail trimmers** – to trim your animals nails.
- Chewing treats** – to maintain dental health.
- Multivitamin supplement** – especially important for guinea pigs, who need vitamin C in their diet.



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SMALL ANIMALS

how to **keep**
your **pets**
healthy

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CARING FOR YOUR SMALL ANIMALS



HOUSING YOUR SMALL ANIMAL

When choosing a home for your new little friend, remember to select a house that will best allow your animal to eat, sleep and go to the toilet comfortably. There should be a sheltered area that is big enough for your new animal to sleep in. All homes need to be "predator proof" and have good ventilation. Make sure that the cage can close securely, as small animals, are adept at getting out of their cages.

On the floor of your pet's cage should be some type of bedding material, such as shavings, straw, hay, litter or nesting material.

CLEANING YOUR SMALL ANIMAL'S HOUSE

Your animal's house needs cleaning at least once a week. We suggest not using household disinfectants to clean the cage, as they may be harmful to your pet. The best way to clean your pet's cage is to use a specially formulated disinfectant, available from our store. Please ask our staff which cage cleaner product is most suitable.

FEEDING YOUR NEW SMALL ANIMAL

Small animals need constant food. While your animal has been in our care, it has been fed grains, pellets, fruit and vegetation. Ask our staff about the balanced diets we have available.

- All small animals require grains for nutrition, and as their teeth continually grow, they need cooked food pellets that wear their teeth down. If they do not get pellets, their teeth may grow too long for them to eat.
- Small animals tend to love apples, carrots and celery. As a guide, we suggest that your animal be given approximately one or two pieces of fruit per week. Avoid feeding too many leafy green vegetables as this can cause diarrhoea. Never give them lettuce, as this is too waterbased and can cause sickness.
- Vegetation should be given two or three times per week and in small amounts.

Some small animals require a salt lick stone, as when they sweat, they lose salt. They cannot store salt in their body as they do not get salt from their food, the lick stone offers them

a supplement of salts and minerals to their diet. If they were in the wild, they would obtain salt from different types of bark, soils and roots.

Small animals quite often foul in their water, so for hygienic reasons, we suggest providing them with a drinking bottle, which they will instinctively know how to use. This can be put in their home, and refilled when close to empty. Try to keep the drinking bottle out of the sun, so the water does not get warm. Be sure to use either stainless steel or ceramic bowls for your animal's food, so they cannot chew through or spill them.

TOILET TRAINING RABBITS

It is possible for rabbits to be trained to use a kitty litter tray. Lift the droppings and place them in the tray. Leave the tray in the same vicinity to encourage ongoing use. Litter should be replaced frequently.

WORMING

Small animals get worms, just like any other animal. You should be worming your animal every 3 months to help prevent intestinal worms. Simply add the wormer to your animal's drinking water.

FLEA AND MITE PREVENTION

Small animals can also have fleas and mites. The best way to try to avoid fleas is by applying a Flea Powder, Flea Spray or a Flea Rinse, in association with a Mite and Lice Spray to assist in preventing mites. Please check the packaging to ensure it is suitable for your animal, to avoid discomfort to your pet.

Ferrets HOUSING

Ferrets can be happily housed in a shady area, either inside or out, in a cage that is big enough to have a sleeping area, a toilet area, and an eating and drinking area. Ferrets need socialising everyday, just like most animals, as ones that do not receive attention can quite often end up hard to handle or depressed.

FEEDING

Ferrets need a diet that is high in animal protein. Evo Ferret formula is been recommended as the best food available for ferrets. Soft/canned pet foods are not hard enough to rub plaque off teeth and can cause tooth decay. Fresh, raw, fatty meat (lamb, chicken or beef) can be fed to them frequently, and a weekly feed of raw chicken wings or necks help clean a ferrets teeth. They can occasionally be given an egg yolk (no egg white) along with fruit and vegetables. They can be rewarded with lactose reduced cow's milk (ordinary milk and soy milk is bad for the animal).

Never feed your ferret dairy products, chocolate, fish-based biscuits, cooked bones, salty or sweet foods, dried coconut, dog chews, or sausage mince.

HEALTH

To assist in the prevention of fleas and mites, regular use of a flea powder on the ferret and a mite and lice spray on any wooden areas of the cage will help.

The human flu virus can be caught by ferrets and visa versa. Be careful when handling your ferret if you have the flu.

Desexing is a must, especially in females, recommended at the age of around 6 months. Desexing reduces their natural odour, and prevents females from developing potentially fatal infections that can occur if they are not mated.

Avoid giving your ferret rubber toys - they are too easily shredded and swallowed. If a piece is swallowed, it can result in a blockage of the digestive system.

A weekly bath is a good idea. Get your ferret used to a bath at an early age, so he/she will become accustomed to it. Ferret shampoo and deodorant are available. A ferret's nails grow quickly and need regular trimming. Take care not to cut the vein running inside the nail which is easily visible.

