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HOUSING YOUR PET CHINCHILLA

What type of cage does my pet chinchilla require?

The cage should allow a lot of movement by the chinchilla. Multilevel cages, similar to those designed by many ferret owners, work well. Like other rodents, chinchillas love to chew. Wire-mesh cages are preferred to wooden cages. Many doctors recommend covering at least a part of the floor with Plexiglas or wood in order to take some of the pressure off of the feet of the chinchilla from the wire bottom of the cage.



Chinchillas are very susceptible to heat stroke; environmental temperature should be kept below 80 °F (27 °C); high humidity should also be avoided.

My pet seems lonely. Can I house more than one chinchilla in each cage?

Most owners house one or two pets in a cage; often the two pets are mates. While chinchillas are social pets that rarely fight, injury and death can occur from fighting. Care should be taken when introducing a new pet into your resident pets' cage. If you'd like several chinchillas, it would be best to purchase them as youngsters.

What can I place in my chinchilla's cage?

Wood can be placed in the cage to allow the chinchilla to chew and help keep its teeth filed down. Chinchillas require a dust bath for normal grooming. This should be provided daily and removed after use. The "dust" can be purchased at local pet stores and consists of one part of Fuller's earth and nine parts of silver sand.

What about toys?

Chew toys can also be placed in the cage, as can soft towels for bedding. The smallest piece of the toy should be too big to be swallowed by the chinchilla.

Does my pet chinchilla need bedding material in his cage?

Soft towels can be enjoyed by your pet chinchilla. Inspect the towel often to make sure the chinchilla isn't chewing it; if swallowed it could cause intestinal obstructions. Cage lining

material can be placed under the wire-mesh bottom of the cage. Newspaper is inexpensive and works well as a cage lining material. Wood shavings that are sold for other rodent cages can also be used.

Anything else I need to know?

Cages should be cleaned at least weekly with soap and water (rinse well).

*This client information sheet is based on material written by Rick Axelson, DVM & Shawn Messonnier, DVM
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