

Gerbils

FACTSHEET

All animals need the following five things to be happy and healthy: a comfortable home, suitable diet, companionship, normal behaviour and vet care.

Find out how you can care for gerbils by using the information below.



HOME

Animals need a comfortable home with enough space to exercise.

Gerbils are designed to dig so they need a home in which you can put a nice thick layer of bedding for them to build tunnels in. Why not try converting a fish tank into a super duper gerbilarium?



Try and find one at least 100cm wide, 30cm deep and 30cm high and remember to make a well fitting mesh lid. Make sure you don't have any wire shelves in it though because they would hurt your gerbil's feet!



COMPANIONSHIP

Some animals need friends of their own kind, some would rather live by themselves.

Gerbils love to curl up with their gerbil friends in a ball when they are sleeping and like to go out foraging for food together. It is best to keep girls with girls though and boys with boys.



VET CARE

Animals need to be kept healthy and see the vet if they are sick or injured.

Gerbils can suffer from mites if they are housed on sawdust or wood shaving so use either shredded paper or organic peat.



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NORMAL BEHAVIOUR

Animals need exciting things to do and space to behave normally.

♥ Shoe boxes or cereal boxes are great for building nests in.

- ♥ Give your gerbils piles of meadow or forage hay to put into their nests too and watch them pull it down into their tunnels.
- ♥ Gerbils love to chew, so try and make sure that the toys you give them won't have sharp edges if they are nibbled on. Try giving them things such as kitchen and toilet roll tubes instead. Gerbils will often chew these and take them into their tunnels to make nests from.



DIET

Animals need a healthy diet and access to fresh water at all times.

It's important to feed your gerbils a high quality gerbil food. They naturally forage, which means go looking for food, so try scattering their food around their home for them to find.

Try giving them apple or pear wood to gnaw on too.



DID YOU KNOW?

So that they can dig their tunnels underground, gerbils need their tank to be about **¾ full** of their bedding, allowing them enough room on top to **stand up on their back legs** without touching the roof.

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