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EASY HAMSTER CARE TIPS FOR A HAPPY HAMMY

- 1. A LARGE CAGE**
You should have a cage with at least 500 square centimeters of space. A 20x30 cm cage is ideal.
- 2. A PROPERLY SIZED HAMSTER WHEEL**
For a Syrian hamster, minimum 3 inches diameter. For a Dwarf hamster, minimum 2.5 inches diameter.
- 3. SOMETHING TO CHEW**
Hamsters love gnawing on things they need help to chew on to keep their teeth sharp.
- 4. CLEAN THE CAGE EVERY WEEK**
Hamsters are clean animals and they will help you keep their cage clean. Clean the cage every week.
- 5. FRESH FOOD AND WATER (EVERY DAY)**
Your hamster and you hamsters need fresh food and water every day.
- 6. FEED PROPER HAMSTER FOOD**
Hamsters need a diet that is rich in fiber, protein and vitamins. This means no sugary treats.
- 7. LET YOUR HAMMY SLEEP**
Hamsters are nocturnal. They are active during the day. Keep them in a dark place during the day.
- 8. NO LOUD SOUNDS**
Hamsters have a very sensitive hearing and any loud sounds can be stressful to them.
- 9. DON'T TOUCH BABY HAMSTERS**
Hamsters have a good nose, and it's a baby hamster's main sense of touch. Avoid touching them.
- 10. GIVE IT ATTENTION EVERY DAY**
Hamsters are solitary animals but they still need at least 10 minutes of human attention every day.

HAMSTER CARE

WARNING: Hamsters are solitary animals. They should not be housed together. Dwarf hamster breeds are the exception and can be housed together. Needs Space to Run! In addition to only keeping one hamster per cage, except during the two exceptions above, it's important to note that in the wild, in the night hours a Syrian will come out of hiding and run around for miles in search of food or a compatible mate. As it searches out food, it will collect seeds in its cheek pouches making its face look full and plump before returning to its hamster burrow. This instinctive behavior and this breed's desire to run free is the reason why you need to give your pet as much space to run around in as you can provide. Get the largest cage you can afford or have space for; it should include tubes and tunnels connecting other living chambers. However, if you can't afford this or don't have the space needed, every hamster, Syrian and dwarf hamster breeds alike, should have a hamster wheel to provide for an additional source of exercise. Back to Top

Caring for a Golden Hamster
The Golden Hamster is the traditional Syrian breed of hamster. The name is not that of a unique breed but rather it comes from the deep golden brown coat of the hamster. In the wild, Syrian or Golden hamsters have this same appearance; a golden brown body with a white belly and chest. Like all larger breeds of hamster, the Golden does best when it is housed in its own habitat. By nature, these guys are solitary animals who spend the majority of their lives by themselves in their dens. Another important part of keeping a happy hamster is to give it plenty of space to run and plenty of toys to keep them occupied. In the wild, Golden hamsters can run a few miles a night in search of food or a mate. An adult can grow to 6 to 8 inches (15-20cm). It can weigh up to 5 to 7 ounces (140-200g). It will need 1/3 to 1/2 ounce of food daily (10-15g). It will consume 6 tablespoons (30ml) of water per day. The lifespan of a Golden Hamster is about 2-3 years. This larger type of hamster is one that is suitable for children because they are easier to handle and are less jumpy than the dwarf-sized hamsters. If you train your hamster to be comfortable with being handled while it is still young and you teach any small children to be gentle with their new pet, you can help avoid getting an injured or runaway hamster. For the most part, with continued interaction, you can teach your golden hamster to not fear being held. Just remember that most animals when afraid or threatened may nip or bite so proper training on handling techniques is important. Learn more about how to take care of a hamster. Back to Top

Teddy bear hamsters, also known as an Angora, fancy, or long haired Syrian hamster, are a close cousin of the golden Syrian breed, if not actually the same breed. Both males and females of this fancy hamster breed have long hair, but it is the fluffy coat of the female that truly describes their namesake. The coat of the female Teddy Bear grows to about one to two inches long (2.5-5cm) and looks more fluffy than stringy. Many breeders describe this characteristic as a velvet coat. The males on the other hand, ironically wear a skirt of long stringy hair of up to 4 inches long (10cm). The coat colors of this type of hamster can range in shades of gold to red. The female Teddy Bear hamster is on average slightly larger than their male counterparts but both can look larger than the average Syrian type because of their long hair. They can reach 4 to 6 inches long (10-15cm). Grooming Advice Since the long hair produced by these types of fancy hamsters is due to breeding programs that encouraged this trait, they will need routine grooming assistance to help untangle matted hair. Both females and males should be groomed by using a comb or brush. A small cat flea brush usually works well. In order to be successful in your grooming efforts of a teddy bear hamster, you should begin the grooming process when these hamsters are still young. You should begin with short sessions and work your way up. If gentle brushing while carefully holding your hamster in your hand doesn't remove the matted hair, trimming is also an option. In fact, trimming will likely be less stressful than brushing. Only trim a little bit at a time and don't hold your teddy bear on its back. You can help reduce stress while grooming by feeding your hamster a small piece of fruit or vegetable. This will help make them associate grooming with receiving a snack. Care Tips

Learn how to take care of a hamster by following this advice: If you have a male Teddy Bear hamster, use crinkled paper bedding and avoid wood shavings since it will get stuck in the long hair, matting and tangling it. Don't use a hamster wheel that has metal rungs for any hamster but especially not for long-haired hamsters. The hair can get stuck in the rungs and injure it. Instead, use a large hamster wheel without open rungs. Back to Top

There's debate about whether the black bear hamster is a true breed of hamster or if it's just another color variation of the Syrian hamster. The black bear variation was at one time larger than the standard Syrian breed. Show quality black bears may have been 5 to 6 inches in length (12-15cm) but due to commercial breeding they are roughly the same size as the standard Syrian. The same can be said about the similarities in their temperament and ease of taming. The name black bear is an American term that refers to a hamster that resembles that of a black bear and it's unlikely that it's name came from the hamster breed's disposition. The difference in this trait really just comes down to each individual hamster's personality. Typically its coat is either all black or one that is all black with the exception of a white under belly and feet. The black coat color can also be shades of dark brown that appear to be black. The coat length and texture can be rex, satin or long-haired. The version with the white patches might also be called a panda bear hamster. Back to Top What is a Panda Bear Hamster? A panda bear hamster is a hamster that looks like a panda bear. Its body is mainly black with patches of white on its belly and or feet. This type of hamster is also called a black bear hamster. What ever one decides to call these hamster types, it's ultimately just a color variation of the Syrian breed. There are no special requirements needed to take care of this hamster variety. It's best to care for them like you would a Syrian or Golden hamster. They will do best if you keep them in their own separate cage with plenty of room and hamster accessories to run around on. The panda bear hamster is suitable for children once they are taught how to handle a hamster so as to not injury or drop it. Pet Guides Hamster Guide

ASPCA
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Syrian hamster cage ideas. How to take care of a syrian hamster for beginners. How to care for syrian hamsters.

Hamsters make suitable pets for older children, providing they are taught the responsibilities of their pet's routine for cleaning, feeding, and care. The average lifespan of a Syrian hamster is approximately two years. Syrian or Golden hamsters originate from Syria. In the wild, they live in burrows during the day to keep cool and travel great distances at night in search of food. Hamsters make good family pets. They are nocturnal, so they are more active in the evening and night, allowing the busy family time to enjoy them. They are small mammals so are ideal if space is limited. GENERAL CARE Hamsters are generally hardy animals and normally stay healthy throughout their lives. They can, however, suffer from coughs and sneezes and their nose and eyes may run, so keep them warm and away from any draughts if these occur. Hamsters can also suffer from acute diarrhoea, known as 'wet tail' - if this occurs consult with a vet immediately. There is usually no problem with hamsters' teeth, however, if they do not meet properly they will grow too long, making eating difficult. If this occurs the teeth must be trimmed regularly, which should be done by your vet. Syrian hamsters do not need to hibernate but will go into a state of very deep sleep, similar to hibernation, if there is a sudden drop in temperature below 5C. If your hamster escapes from its cage, try putting a box in the corner of the room with some of its favourite food in - you might find him in the next morning. If you are concerned about your hamster's health speak to your pet shop or vet. CHOOSING YOUR HAMSTER A healthy hamster should be: Bright and alert. Have no signs of discharge from eye, ears, mouth, and nose. Have a clean anal area. Have a glossy coat with no bald patches and no sores on the skin. Should have no signs of breathing problems. Should move around the cage easily with no stiffness or staggering. Shouldn't feel too skinny or bony. HOUSING Cages with plastic bases and a wire top are ideal as they are easy to clean and should be escape-proof. The cage should be big enough to provide adequate space to divide their accommodation into an eating, sleeping and toilet area. More space or two adjoining rooms or stories will add to their environmental enrichment. Some cages have extra rooms and tubes available, which provide good stimulation for your pet. Hamsters are indoor pets and should be kept in a stable temperature, ideally between 17C and 23C and avoid sudden changes in temperature. The cage should not be placed in draughts, direct sunlight, next to a radiator or in damp or humid conditions. Hamsters require lots of exercise and their cage should include a suitably-sized jumbo exercise wheel. You can also purchase a hamster ball, which your pet can be placed into to roam around a safe area of your house. Soft, dust-free woodchips make a good floor covering for your hamster's cage. Soft shredded paper can be used as bedding and nesting material - it is recommended not to use fluffy bedding. The cage should be emptied and fully cleaned with a pet safe disinfectant at least once a week. FOOD AND WATER Hamsters are omnivores and so will enjoy a varied diet. A good, commercial Syrian hamster mix or pellet will provide the nutrition they require. This can be supplemented 2-3 times a week by small amounts of fresh fruit (not citrus) or vegetables (not onion). Hamsters have pouches in their cheeks, which they use to carry and hoard food, check for any uneaten fresh food and remove daily. Extra protein in the form of cooked chicken, boiled egg or mealworms can be given a couple of times a week. Your hamster will also enjoy a small bowl of milky porridge several times a month. Additional vitamin supplements can be added to your hamster's diet. Feeding bowls should be gnaw-proof, easy to clean and hard to knock over. Fresh clean drinking water must always be available. It can be provided by a gravity-fed water bottle designed to suit your hamster's cage. HANDLING It is important that you handle your hamster regularly to help you build up a relationship with him. When you first get your hamster home, leave him to settle in for 24 hours to allow him time to get used to his new surroundings. Slowly place your hand in the cage so he gets used to your smell. When he seems happy, gently cup one hand under him and one hand over him, and pick him up. Always concentrate on holding your Syrian hamster as they can be very quick and can slip out of your hands. Do not try to handle your hamster if he has just woken up as they feel vulnerable at this time and may bite. SHOPPING LIST Book on hamster care Cage/housing unit Litter and bedding material Food and food dish Water bottle and bottle brush Exercise wheel Gnaw block Treats Toys The Animal Welfare Act 2006 means all pet owners have a legal duty of care to their pets. Anyone who is cruel to an animal or is found not to be providing the five animal welfare needs, as listed below, can be fined and sent to prison. The Five Animal Welfare needs: 1. Environment: Pets should be given the correct housing according to its size, this includes shelter, space to exercise and a secure, comfortable place to rest. 2. Diet: Pets should be offered the correct type and volume of food to cover all their nutritional needs alongside access to clean, fresh water. 3. Behaviour: All pets should be allowed to exhibit normal behaviour patterns and should be provided with the facilities to do so. 4. Company: Some animals require the company of their own kind, whilst others should be kept on their own. 5. Health: All animals should be protected from pain, suffering, injury, and disease, and given veterinary treatment if they become sick or injured. Syrian hamster breeds, often called Golden hamsters, were discovered in the Middle East, in and around the country of Syria, sometime around 1797. Today, you can find this breed at your local pet shop in several variations. All of these types are nicknamed after their physical characteristics. By: Tim Winter | Last Updated: April 2, 2021. As an adult this breed will be 6 to 8 inches in length (15 to 20cm). Weighing 5 to 7 ounces (150 to 200 grams). Its body should be full and rounded but not obese. It has large upright ears (compared to its broad head). The tail is short and hardly visible on long-haired breeds. Colors come in: gold, brown black, gray and everything in between. Patterns come in: calico, stripes (bands), spots and variegated. Coats: short hair, long hair (or fluffy), satin (shiny), rex (curly). In its natural habitat, the Syrian hamster lives a solitary life. It will spend the majority of its time by itself sleeping underground in its burrow or scrambling from one living chamber to the next through its network of subterranean tunnels. This loner behavior that can be observed in a wild Syrian hamster is the same reason why you shouldn't house multiple Syrian breeds in the same hamster cage. One of the two times Syrian hamsters can get along are during nursing and during mating. In regards to baby hamsters that are nursing, the acceptance of being around each other ends in a matter of 6 to 7 weeks of age. After this time, the young hamsters will begin to become territorial and try to stake out their own living quarters. When another hamster enters another hamster's selected territory, a fight will likely ensue. These fights can lead to serious injury. For this reason, you need not give your pet hamster a playmate. During mating, a male and female can be kept together but only as long as they are actively breeding. You will know when to separate the couple when they lose interest in each other or start to become aggressive towards each other. It's important to be ready for this aggression so as to stop it before any injuries occur. Dwarf hamster breeds are the exception and can be housed together. Needs Space to Run! In addition to only keeping one hamster per cage, except during the two exceptions above, it's important to note that in the wild, in the night hours a Syrian will come out of hiding and run around for miles in search of food or a compatible mate. As it searches out food, it will collect seeds in its cheek pouches making its face look full and plump before returning to its hamster burrow. This instinctive behavior and this breed's desire to run free is the reason why you need to give your pet as much space to run around in as you can provide. Get the largest cage you can afford or have space for; it should include tubes and tunnels connecting other living chambers. 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