

shopping list for needed supplies

- appropriately sized habitat
- book about dwarf hamsters
- high quality dwarf hamster food
- treats
- bedding
- nesting fluff
- food bowl/water bottle
- exercise wheel
- hideaway place
- toys
- wood chews
- mineral chews
- dust and dust bath
- vitamins

sources

Speak to an associate about the Petco library of books on dwarf hamsters.

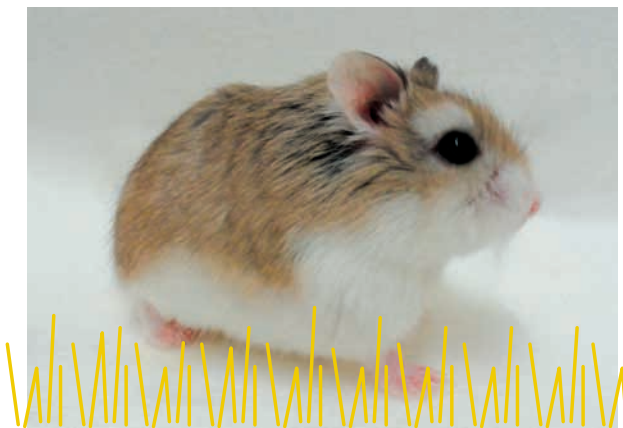
Speak to an associate about our many private brand items available for the care and happiness of your pet.

Because all hamsters are potential carriers of infectious diseases, always wash your hands before and after handling your hamster and/or habitat contents to help prevent the potential spread of diseases.

Pregnant women, children under the age of 5 and people with weakened immune systems should contact their physician before purchasing and/or caring for a hamster and should consider not having a hamster as a pet. For more information regarding hamsters and disease, go to the Center for Disease Control at cdc.gov/healthypets/ and petco.com/caresheet.

dwarf hamster

phodopus spp.



care sheet

Dwarf hamsters, which includes Djungarian, Chinese, Russian and Roborovski hamsters, have a high level of energy. They are clean and captivating companion animals.

dwarf hamster facts:

- average adult size: 2-4 inches long, depending on species
- average life span: up to 2-3 years with proper care
- diet: herbivores

Note: The information on this Care Sheet is not a substitute for veterinary care. If you need additional information, please refer to the sources on the following page or contact your veterinarian as appropriate.

diet

A well-balanced dwarf hamster diet consists of:

- High-quality hamster pellets and limited amounts of grains, vegetables, fruits and timothy hay.
- Clean, fresh, filtered, chlorine-free water, changed daily.
- Do **not** feed chocolate, caffeine or alcohol as these can cause serious medical conditions. Avoid sugar and high fat treats.

feeding

Things to remember when feeding your dwarf hamster:

- Fresh food and water should always be available.
- Limited amounts of grains, vegetables, fruits or timothy hay can be given daily.
- Vegetables and fruits not eaten within 24 hours should be discarded.

- Remember, treats should not exceed 10% of total food intake.

housing

- Hamsters acclimate well to average household temperatures, not to exceed 80°F; be cautious of extreme temperature changes. The habitat should never be in direct sunlight or in a drafty area.
- Habitat should be plastic, metal or glass, escape proof with solid bottom; there should be plenty of room for the hamster to exercise and play. It is best to provide the largest habitat possible.
- 1-2 inches of bedding should be placed in the habitat; proper bedding includes high quality paper bedding, crumbled paper bedding, or hardwood shavings. Cedar-based products are not recommended.
- Dwarf hamsters may

be kept in same-sex pairs if they are raised together, otherwise, keep adult hamsters housed separately. Different types of small animals should **not** be housed together.

normal behavior

- Play during the night and rest during the day (nocturnal) but can adjust to your schedule.
- Easy to handle but move quickly; less likely to nip or bite than other hamsters
- Chews on objects to maintain incisor teeth, which grow continuously; ensure have plenty of wood chew sticks.

habitat maintenance

- Clean the habitat and its contents at least once a week with mild soap and water, rinse and allow to dry completely before placing the hamster back into the habitat.

- Remove wet spots daily; change bedding at least once a week, or more often as necessary.

grooming & hygiene

- Hamsters stay clean and rarely need baths, but can be spot cleaned with a damp washcloth or unscented baby wipes, if needed. Hamsters enjoy an occasional dust bath.
- Consult with a veterinarian if a hamster's teeth or nails seem too long.

signs of a healthy animal

- Active, alert, and sociable
- Eats and drinks regularly
- Healthy fur and clear eyes
- Breathing is clear and walks normally
- It is normal for a hamster's teeth to be yellow; cleaning is not necessary.

red flags

- weight loss
- abnormal hair loss
- diarrhea or dirty bottom
- distressed breathing
- lethargic
- eye or nasal discharge
- skin lesions
- overgrown teeth

If you notice any of these signs, please contact your exotic animal veterinarian.

common health issues

Health Issue	Symptoms or Causes	Suggested Action
diabetes	frequent urination and lethargy	consult with an exotic animal veterinarian.
diarrhea	loose stool caused by poor diet, stress, internal parasites, unclean housing or other illness.	consult with an exotic animal veterinarian to determine cause and treatment.
malocclusion	overgrown teeth.	consult with an exotic animal veterinarian to have teeth trimmed regularly.
mites	external parasites that causes hamsters to lose patches of hair.	consult an exotic animal veterinarian for treatment.