

GUINEA PIG CARE SHEET

BEHAVIOR

Freezing: Frightened

Threatening: Ruffled fur, tooth chattering, 'grr' sounds

Yawning: Submissive gesture

Rumba: Courtship, shifting body weight from one side to the other

Urine Spraying: If a female doesn't want to mate she will spray the male

Jumping: Mostly young Guinea pigs will jump straight up for fun (popcorning)

Squealing: Begging for food

Screaming: Afraid or in pain

Whining: When they are alone and unhappy

Purring: During courtship and when threatened

GENERAL NOTES

- Lifespan of 5-7 years.
- Guinea pigs are not solitary. They prefer to live in groups.
- Females generally get along
- 2 males will generally get along as long as the cage is big enough, but if they continue to fight they must be separated.
- Siblings will normally get along.
- Guinea pigs and rabbits will generally get along as long as they are acclimatized properly. (Feed Guinea pig food – it has added Vitamin C which rabbit food is lacking)
- Never put a cage in direct sunlight or near a heater, or near drafts.
- 15 - 20°C is the ideal temperature range.
- Noises don't bother them too much as long as they aren't high pitched.
- Minimum cage size is about 4 square feet per Guinea pig.
- Bottom tray should be no more than 6 inches high so that they can see out.
- Use a hay rack and water bottle
- Ceramic bowls are best since they will not tip over easily

- The hide or house should be big enough for all the Guinea pigs to fit in.
- Supervised time in an outdoor or indoor play pen will be beneficial to Guinea pigs, mainly avoiding boredom and being able to play and explore.
- A plastic travel case is recommended for transport, there will be less stress and the air quality is better.
- When a Guinea pig is first brought home don't disturb it for the first week, let it explore its cage and become at ease.

DIET

- Guinea pigs should be fed small amounts several times a day. The hay rack and water must be full at all times.
- Vitamin C must be added to the diet to avoid scurvy which is common in Guinea pigs.
- Guinea pigs should be given a maximum of 2 table spoons of pellets a day.
- A variety of greens can be fed to mature guinea pigs, but only in small amounts.
- Safe foods: Kale, Spinach, Turnip greens, Parsley, Romaine lettuce, Cucumber, Plantain, Corn, Carrots, Carrot tops, Green and red bell peppers, Tomatoes, Broccoli*, Cauliflower*, Collards*, Bok choy*, Apples, Apricots, Bananas, Blueberries, Cantaloupe, Grapes, Melons, Oranges, Strawberries. ***Limit quantities; can lead to gas**
- **Do Not Feed:** Seeds, Onions, Rhubarb (toxic), Iceberg lettuce, Oils, Nuts, Chocolate (toxic), Apple seeds, Cabbage, Beans, Potatoes (toxic).

CLEANING

- Clean the food and water dishes daily with hot water.
- Once a week do a cage cleaning
 - Replace bedding.
 - Clean the cage and accessories with hot water and if required an animal safe cleaning product.

GROOMING

- How to pick up a Guinea pig pg. 43.
- Shorthair can be brushed only when they are dirty.
- Longhair should be brushed several times a week.
- Check toenails regularly to make sure they aren't getting too long.
- Check teeth to make sure they aren't getting too long, provide lots of chew toys to avoid this.