



## Cages

Your Guinea Pig needs the largest cage you can afford.

The cage you select should be large enough so your Guinea Pigs can

have room to move and also accommodate a food bowl, a protected withdrawal area and water container. Water bottles can be attached to the wire grill of the cage and there are a variety of plastic and glass bottles available.

Cages should provide easy access for you to clean the cage. A hinged lid is ideal for this purpose.



Outdoor cages (whether kept under cover or in the open) should have a waterproof area for the guinea pigs to keep dry and out of cold draughts.



Mobile cages allow for easy movement of your pets from indoors to outdoors and often include a range of accessories which make them great value for money!

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## Breeding

Guinea Pigs can breed from the age of 4-5 weeks of age. It is suggested that sows and boars be separated as soon as they are identified to allow them to mature before breeding. On average, a litter will consist of 1 to 6 pups with 2 or 3 being the norm.

## Diet

Specialised pellets are available from Absolutely Fish and Pets. This should form the base for a good balanced diet for your pet. Guinea Pigs are herbivores and require fresh, clean vegetables and grasses daily. Vegetables which we humans are inclined not to eat, such as carrot tops and peelings, corn husks, broccoli stalks and celery tops can be added to a selection of hard vegetables such as carrot, beans, fresh grasses and sweet potato.

Beetroot and rhubarb leaves, oxalis, potato and its peelings should not be fed as these vegetables are toxic. Excess lettuce may cause diarrhoea. Naturally, clean fresh water should also be provided daily.



# Happy Guinea Pigs



The ultimate compact pet, guinea pigs (*Cavia porcellus*), also called the cavy, is a species of rodent belonging to the family Caviidae and the genus *Cavia*.

These animals are not in the pig family, nor are they from Guinea. They originated in the Andes in South America. The guinea pig has enjoyed widespread popularity as a household pet since its introduction by European traders in the 16th century.



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## Lifespan

On average, guinea pigs live for around 5 to 8 years (the world record is about 14 years!).

## How many Guinea Pigs?

Guinea Pigs enjoy the company of other guinea pigs and tend to do better in pairs or small groups. Groups of boars (males) are best formed with two or three younger animals that can then grow to adulthood together.

## Colours & Hair Styles

Guinea Pig hair styles and colours are many and varied. Colours range from red, chocolate, buff, white, lilac, cream, grey and a few others as well!

Hair styles range from short hair right through to extremely long hair varieties. Some have a crest on their heads, while the Abyssinian has a bad hair day for most of its life!



## Playing

Guinea Pigs do not tend to play like other pets, however they can be encouraged by use of Rollers pictured here.



Harnesses with leads are also available for "walking" guinea pigs for a bit of exercise.

## Chewing

As the Guinea Pig's teeth are constantly growing - they need to chew to keep their teeth in good condition and to stop them overgrowing.

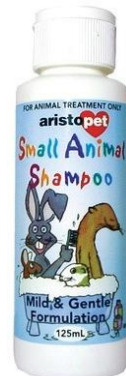


There are some great chew toys available to help them do this. Soft wood houses and platforms can also be used to dress their living areas and also provide chewing opportunities.



Always make sure Guinea Pigs are supervised when out of their cages

to avoid them chewing things they are not supposed to chew (cords, furniture, etc).



## Grooming

Guinea Pigs are great swimmers so do not mind having the occasional bath and shampoo! In cooler weather make sure they are dried off quickly to avoid chills.

## Bedding

Cages are often lined with wood shavings or a similar material.



Safe beddings also include those made from recycled paper products which have good absorbant properties and often assist in masking odours.

## Health

Guinea Pigs are susceptible to extremes of heat and cold. They should be sheltered from temperatures above 30°C, sudden cold snaps and draughts.



If housed outside, guinea pigs may also suffer occasional hair loss. resulting from damp conditions. Check the coat regularly, especially around the eyes as grass seeds trapped in the hair can cause irritation.



Occasionally, mites may be present but are easily controlled with a good spray on product. Occasional worming will also assist with keeping your Guinea Pig healthy.

