

Regular Maintenance

Good maintenance is critical to the success of a Hermit Crab tank. Hermit Crabs do not thrive in unsanitary conditions. Regular cleaning and appropriate feeding are vitally important.

However, as long as the tasks are performed regularly, the work is not overly time consuming.

Daily

Feed Hermit Crabs and check on behaviour for potential issues (health, moulting, injuries). While feeding, perform a quick visual check to ensure that substrate, heating (where appropriate) are all ok. Ensure adequate supplies of fresh and salt water are available.

Weekly

Wash out food and water dishes to ensure they are clean and free from uneaten foods and waste.

Clean the glass sides of the tank.

Check each crab is healthy.

Every Month

Wash the gravel / sand in the bottom of the tank and dry till it is just damp. Clean any ornaments or other items in the tank if necessary.

Ensure there are sufficient spare shells incase the Hermit Crabs need a change of home.

At all times ensure humidity is maintained at appropriate levels.

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Setting up a Hermit Crab Tank

- Decide on the location of your tank before you start. Ensure that it is out of draughts and direct sunlight.
- Setup heating mats and/or lights and turn them on to test them. Provide heating at one end so that the crab can regulate its heat by moving closer or further away from the heat source.
- Ensure the gravel or sand is clean and not excessively wet. Line the bottom of the tank with the substrate.
- Decorate the tank with appropriate items to allow the crabs to climb, hide and move around freely.
- Mix the correct amount of Hermit Crab Salt and fill one water dish. Dechlorinate some fresh water and fill another water dish.
- Provide fresh food in a third dish.

Foods

A range of foods can be offered including Hermit Crab Cookies and Variety Bites.



Fish pellets, shredded coconut, apple and tiny pieces of fresh fish can also be fed as treats.

Only put in small quantities at a time to ensure that it is fresh when eaten.



HERMIT CRABS

The Land Hermit Crab makes a wonderful pet. It is friendly, intelligent, odour free and very clean.

This crab has evolved to live on land and uses an empty shell as a portable home, as well as for protection.



These crabs are long lived and if cared for will live up to 15 years. What a great pet!



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Tank Choice



Use an aquarium with a glass cover.

Humidity of between 50-70% is essential to the crab's health.

The floor of the aquarium should be kept dry and can be covered with shell grit, aquarium sand, or in winter coarse sawdust to keep them warm.

A piece of driftwood or mangrove roots provides a great playground. Land hermit crabs love to climb.



Water

Two bowls of water must be provided - one with freshwater, the other with seawater. (Synthetic sea salt can be used to make up the seawater. Use one level teaspoon (5cc) of synthetic sea salt per 100mls of fresh water.) A small amount of water is carried in the shell, and this is essential to the crabs well being. The Hermit Crabs use the fresh and salt water to regulate the salinity of the water in their shells. Ensure that the water bowls are sturdy and can not be tipped over. Keep the floor of the enclosure damp but not wet. Change the water frequently to keep it clean.



Heating

The Land Hermit Crab is tropical and is best kept at about 30°C. Do not let the temperature drop below 20°C. Heating can be provided by installing a low wattage under one end of the aquarium. Make sure a thermometer is used to monitor temperature. It is best to heat only one end of the enclosure as this will allow the crabs to select their preferred body temperature.



Moulting

Like other crabs, the land hermit crab needs to moult its outer shell, usually twice a year. During this period it will stop eating and may burrow. After it has moulted, the crab needs to be left alone for several weeks until its new shell hardens.

Extra Shells

The crab will climb out of its shell and “put on” a new one from time to time. Keep a few spare shells in the aquarium for this purpose. It is essential that your crab has a slightly larger one to put on after it has moulted



Decorations

Should be made up of substances that will not negatively affect the Hermit Crabs. Dead coral, lava rock and coral rubble are all suitable choices. Driftwood or Gold Vine can make great climbing playgrounds for Hermit Crabs. Artificial plants and ornaments can also add to the environment for your crab to explore and interact with.

