

## Your New Gerbil/Hamster Checklist

- Glass tank with mesh top for ventilation or a solid bottom cage with narrow bar spacing
  - We recommend no less than a 20 gallon tank per hamster/gerbil
  - Hamsters and Gerbils like to burrow, you can have a portion of the tank set aside for them to burrow or add another small tank or container inside to allow them space to burrow
- Gerbil or Hamster Pellets
  - Avoid pellets with large quantities of seeds or colored pieces. Hamsters and Gerbils will seek these out and waste the healthy pieces similar to a child picking marshmallows out of breakfast cereal.
  - We also recommend large blocks or triangles (not shaped like rabbit food) to encourage chewing and wearing of teeth
- Cage Bedding
  - Acceptable contact bedding materials include fluffy paper bedding or kiln-dried aspen.
  - DO NOT USE CEDAR BEDDING. The chemical in cedar that smells pleasant to humans burns their respiratory tracts and feet.
- Heavy Food Dish
  - We recommend ceramic crocks that are too heavy to tip or stainless steel that can be secured to the side of the cage. Plastic can be chewed to pieces and harbor bacteria while ceramic and metal can be easily sanitized.
- Attachable Water Bottle with Drinking Tube
  - We recommend using bottles designed to be secured to the outside of cages or glass bottles to discourage chewing on the plastic and thus flooding their cage.
- Safe, covered areas such as an igloo or large diameter PCV pipe to use as a den and safe sleeping/hiding area.
  - Hamsters and gerbils will chew on anything and everything. Try getting hiding areas made from thick plastic (such as PCV) or animal safe wood
- Cardboard boxes, toilet paper/paper towel rolls, exercise wheel & other safe toys
  - We recommend at minimum an 8 inch exercise wheel. The larger the Hamster or Gerbil, the larger the wheel will need to be
  - Chew toys—lots of chew toys!
- Appropriate treats such as
  - Apples
  - Bananas
  - Broccoli
  - Carrots
  - Basil
  - Parsley
  - Oats
  - And more!
- Carrier to bring your new pet home and for trips to the vet