

Hamster Care Checklist

A hamster care checklist covering cage setup, bedding, diet, the wheel, cleaning and handling.

Cage & Setup

- ☐ Choose a cage with a large continuous floor area
Bigger than typical starter cages; secure against escapes
- ☐ Position the cage away from drafts, direct sun and noise
- ☐ Add a hideout or sleeping house
- ☐ Include a sand bath for grooming
- ☐ Keep the cage out of reach of other pets

Bedding & Substrate

- ☐ Use deep, dust-free bedding suitable for burrowing
- ☐ Provide safe nesting material such as plain paper
- ☐ Avoid pine and cedar shavings
Their oils can cause respiratory irritation
- ☐ Spot-remove soiled and damp bedding daily

Diet & Water

- ☐ Provide a quality hamster food mix or pellets
- ☐ Offer small amounts of safe fresh vegetables
- ☐ Give occasional protein or treats in moderation
- ☐ Supply constant fresh water in a bottle or bowl
- ☐ Remove uneaten fresh food before it spoils

Exercise & Enrichment

- ☐ Provide a correctly sized solid-surface wheel
- ☐ Add tunnels, chews and climbing items
- ☐ Offer foraging by scattering some food in bedding
- ☐ Allow supervised time in a safe exercise area
- ☐ Provide safe chew toys to manage growing teeth

Cleaning Routine

- ☐ Spot-clean soiled bedding and the toilet corner daily
- ☐ Wash the water bottle and food bowl regularly
- ☐ Clean the wheel and accessories weekly
- ☐ Do a partial deep clean while preserving some old bedding
Keeping some scent reduces stress
- ☐ Refresh the sand bath as needed

Handling & Health

- ☐ Let a new hamster settle before regular handling
- ☐ Build trust gradually with calm, low handling
- ☐ Check teeth, eyes, nose and coat for problems
- ☐ Watch for wet tail, lethargy or weight loss
- ☐ Consult a small-animal vet for any health concern