

Caring for your

Ferret



life span

5-10 years

diet

Dry Food

Feed either a ferret food or high-quality cat food that contains animal-based protein.

Avoid kitten food as this contains higher fat levels than is necessary.

Fresh Food

Ferrets enjoy fruits and vegetables as a dietary compliment.

32% meat-based protein
18% fat
Maximum 3% fiber

housing

- Although technically nocturnal, ferrets easily adjust their schedule to human activity.
- House ferrets in multi-level cages with solid-bottom flooring.
- Provide toweling and other items for burrowing and hiding.
- Ferrets are also commonly litter pan trained (Do not use clay litter).
- Ferrets should have about 2 hours of **supervised** play outside of their cage per day.
- Ferrets do not tolerate heat well. They are susceptible to heat stroke in temperatures over 80°F.

treats & toys

- Ferrets are very curious animals and like to play with a wide variety of toys, including tunnels, towels, stuffed animals, and many other toys you can find at your local pet store.
- Treats may be useful for training your ferret, however it's best to stick to their regular diet when feeding time occurs.
- Ferrets like to chew—make sure they don't have access to household items that could cause an obstruction.

restraint

Ferrets are sweet-natured, gregarious animals that may be minimally restrained. Ferrets may be manually restrained:

1. Scruff and stretch. Instead of holding the rear limbs as in a cat, grasp the pelvis in one hand. (NEVER dangle from neck!)
2. Roll the ferret up in a thin towel to create a ferret burrito.

healthcare

- Annual examinations are recommended until ferrets are 3-4 years old, then biannual exams are recommended.
- Frequent exams are important as ferrets are prone to cancer and endocrine disease.
- Almost all pet ferrets in the United States are descented and neutered before they enter the market.
- As induced ovulators, all female ferrets should be spayed to prevent the risk of persistent estrus and potentially fatal anemia.
- **Vaccinate annually** against rabies virus and canine distemper virus (CDV). Ferrets are exquisitely sensitive to CDV and should never be vaccinated with products intended for use in dogs.
- Ferrets can contract heartworm disease just like dogs and cats. Prevention can be used monthly.
- Contact your veterinarian if you ever notice: hair loss, increased sleeping, weight loss, loose stool, or vomiting.
- Starting at age 3, we recommend yearly blood screening:
 - Blood glucose
 - Adrenal panel
 - Blood chemistries
 - Complete blood count

