



## Chinchillas Care Sheet

### About

Chinchillas are native to Chile and Peru. In the wild they live in groups and make their home in burrows and natural outcroppings and crevices.

These small, cute rodents have plush, soft coats of fur. They weigh around 1 to 1.5 pounds and can be up to a foot long. They have rounded ears and eyes on either side of a broad head. Their fur is very dense, soft, and pleasant to touch. The fur is often gray, but can be beige, tan, black or white.

**These beautiful rodents can live as long as 20 years.**

Chinchillas can make wonderful pets for the right family. They are smart, inquisitive, and loving animals. They are active, vocal, and entertaining to watch. Since they can live up to 20 years they can be long time companions.

***They are not recommended for young children. Children are often overzealous with affection and could frighten or injure a chinchilla. A chinchilla could possibly bite a child out of fear. Although loving animals, they do require gentle and careful handling.***

These adorable creatures are social animals and need a lot of interaction. A lone chinchilla requires a great deal of attention and can become very attached to its owner. If you are unable to devote that much time to your pet, it is better to have two chinchillas than one lonely unhappy pet. Two chinchillas can play and interact and not be completely dependent on their owner.

### Care

A chew proof cage at least 16" x 20" x 16" is the minimum size for one chinchilla. You should get the biggest cage possible so your pet has lots of room to sleep, play, and move around.

Pelleted or shredded paper bedding material.

A stoppered water bottle, food bowl or feeder, and a hay rack.

Hide areas and tunnels for playing and sleeping.

A large exercise wheel with a solid floor.

Dust bin and dusting powder for bathing.

A variety of chew proof toys to keep your pet entertained.

Untreated wooden toys for chewing and wearing down a chinchilla's ever-growing teeth.

Commercial pellet food for chinchillas.

Hay, Timothy or alfalfa hay are popular choices.

Various treats including commercial pet treats, nuts, seeds, and dried fruits.

Lift your pet like a kitten. Slide your hand under the chinchilla's belly and place your other hand on top of the chinchilla. Use the hand under the chin to support its hind legs and bum so it feels secure. Don't hold the chinchilla too tightly but do remember that they can be squirmy, so you need to hold them firmly. It is very important you don't squeeze, especially around the upper torso because they have what is known as a "floating ribcage" and you can cause severe internal injuries to him or her by doing this.

Give your chinchilla a dust bath for 10-15 minutes anywhere from daily to twice a week. Too much will cause dryness. but too little will cause their coats to build up oils which can cause a disfiguring and deadly fungus to grow on their skin.