



Reproduction

Hamsters are born hairless and blind in a nest which the mother will have prepared in advance. She uses shredded material such as leaves in the wild but prefers cotton or toilet paper in captivity.

After one week they begin to explore outside the nest. They are completely weaned after 3-4 weeks. Breeders will sell the hamsters to shops when the hamsters are anywhere from two to eight months old.

Breeding season is from April to October, with two to five litters of 1 to 13 young being born after a gestation period of 16 to 22 days.

The average litter for Syrians is about 7, but can be as great as 24, which is the maximum number of pups that can be contained in the uterus.

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Hamsters



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Great pets

Syrian hamsters make good family pets. They are easy to look after and with plenty of care and attention become very tame.

Hamsters are ideally suited to both children and adults, but are nocturnal and spend most of the day sleeping, becoming active in the evening and at night.

Syrian hamsters are naturally solitary animals and if well cared for are much happier alone; their territorial nature will cause fights if kept in a pair.

If you do wish to keep more than one hamster together you should consider dwarf hamsters, rats or gerbils who naturally live in colonies.

Syrian hamsters on average live for 2 - 2.5 years.



Where should your hamster live?

Hamsters that live in solid sided homes also make less mess, which is a great positive! Get a cage/enclosure that is big enough....many of the hamster cages sold in pet shops are too small!

All hamsters need to be housed with a type of bedding or substrate. Substrate is the material in which you cover your hamsters cage with. It is the primary material that your furry friend will be living on its whole life. Hamsters are burrowing creatures and enjoy digging around. The substrate offers a natural cosy floor. It is also used to build its nest with to keep warm and act as a sponge, absorbing urine.

There are several types of substrate available—kiln dried dust extracted shavings or sawdust, wood pulp (Carefresh) , shredded paper or wood based cat litter.

There are a few types to avoid using; these are clumping/clay cat litter, cedar/pine based shavings and litters and fluffy bedding.

In addition you will need a good quality water bottle, food bowl, toys, a wheel, wooden chew toys, a bed/house and litter tray.

What should my hamster eat?

Hamsters are coprophagic which means they eat a portion of their faeces as part of the digestive process.

Pelleted foods offer a balanced diet, and for this reason we generally recommend these. Hamsters can be picky with loose mixes resulting in an imbalanced diet. A pelleted mix can be supplemented with a variety of other items, as long as the pelleted food makes up the bulk of the diet to ensure well-balanced nutrition.

When feeding a loose mix, make sure your hamster empties the food bowl before adding more as this is the best way to make sure your hamster does not just eat his or her favourite parts.

In addition to dry food your hamster should be offered small amounts of some of the following on a weekly basis: fresh fruit and veg, nuts, pulses, dried fruit, chicken/turkey, egg, cheese and dried mealworms.

Try not to feed junk food, store-bought treats such as yogurt drops and honey/seed sticks are generally sugary, and we recommend avoiding them.