

shopping list

Step 1 - Tank

- ☐ Tank; 120 x 60 x 60cm minimum
- ☐ Dry dock / land area
- ☐ Substrate
- ☐ Live plants
- ☐ Artificial plants
- ☐ Driftwood / rock ornaments

Step 2 - Maintenance

- ☐ Water heater
- ☐ Heat fitting and globe
- ☐ UV fitting and globe
- ☐ Thermostat
- ☐ Thermometer
- ☐ Filter
- ☐ Water siphon
- ☐ Water conditioner
- ☐ PH testing kit
- ☐ Turtle neutraliser block / vitamin D3 block

Step 3 - Nutrition

- ☐ Live and frozen food
- ☐ Pellets
- ☐ Feeding tub

Common Health Issues

Metabolic Bone Disease (MBD): Calcium or vitamin D3 deficiency as a result of incorrect diet and/or lack of or incorrect UV lighting.

Obesity: Some adult turtles will gorge themselves and can easily become overweight, particularly if fed on a diet that is too high in protein. This can have a number of negative health complications long term.

Fungal Infection: Turtles can develop fungal skin and shell conditions if water quality is not maintained at optimum levels and cleaned regularly.



If you notice any of the following symptoms, please contact your vet.

- Loss of appetite • Lethargy
- Soft/rubbery shell • Discolouration
- Spots on shell/skin • Floating/inability to submerge

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TURTLE

Chelodina and Emydura genus



FAST FACTS

LIFESPAN: 50-60 years

SIZE: 30-40cm shell size

TANK: A tank of at least 120x60x60cm

Find out everything you need
for your Turtle in 3 simple steps



Tank



Maintenance



Nutrition



YOUR CARE GUIDE FOR TURTLES

Step 1 - Tank



Turtles are solitary animals and should generally be housed on their own. Having more than one turtle in an enclosure may lead to dominance and aggression issues.

A hatchling turtle may be housed in a 60x45x45cm (minimum) tank for the first 12-18 months of their life. The minimum sized tank for one adult turtle is 120x60x60cm. A turtle tank should have a dry dock (land) area as well as a mesh or wire lid (glass lids are not suitable).

The water volume should fill at least half of the tank. A substrate such as coarse gravel or crushed limestone (calgrit) can be used along with the addition of plants and driftwood to provide them with cover.

Ponds can also be used to house adult turtles outdoors.



Step 2 - Maintenance



Turtles are a relatively high maintenance reptile and have a very specific set of requirements in regards to general care, however if all of these elements are provided they thrive in captivity.

Providing adequate heating within a turtle's enclosure is essential for their health and wellbeing. Turtles require a water temperature maintained between 22-26°C (varies between species) and a basking spot of about 28-32°C above their land area. Temperatures should be checked daily and must be regulated with the use of a good quality thermostat. Recommended sources of heat include the use of an aquarium water heater and an incandescent or halogen globe for basking.

Ultraviolet light (UV) plays an important role in a turtles growth and development. A 10.0 (or stronger) UVB tube or compact globe must be used as a source of artificial UV lighting in the turtle's enclosure. UV light is filtered through glass and plastic, and partially filtered through mesh, so ideally must be positioned directly above the turtles tank within 20-30cm of the water. Turtle's should also have access to unfiltered, natural light at least once or twice a week. They require a 'day and night' cycle with heat and UV lights running for approximately 10-12 hours each day, set on a timer.

Turtles are messy animals and therefore regular water changes and a suitable filter are necessary inside their tank to maintain water quality and hygiene. A good quality canister filter is recommended for larger tanks. Regular water changes must be carried out replacing 30-50% of the tanks water every one to two weeks. The gravel should be vacuumed and cleaned during a water change. It is important to test the tanks water using an aquarium testing kit on a weekly basis to ensure correct water parameters are maintained. Any fresh water added to the tank should be treated with a water conditioner to remove chlorine and chemicals.

Step 3 - Nutrition



In the wild, turtles will feed on a variety of live foods including aquatic insects, fish, crustaceans, snails and plant matter. Long-necked turtles are primarily carnivorous, whilst short-necked turtles are omnivorous (consuming both animal and plant matter).

In captivity turtles should be fed a varied diet comprising of live food, pelleted food, frozen food and fresh fruits and veggies, depending on the species of turtle. Live foods that can be offered include crickets, woodies, earthworms, blood worms, feeder fish and yabbies. Live insects should be coated with a calcium and vitamin supplement before being offered to the turtle. Live aquatic plants as well as fruits and vegetables such as apple, grapes, figs, kale, endive, zucchini and carrot can be offered to short-necked turtles.

Hatchling and juvenile turtles should be fed daily and adults can be offered food two to three times a week. It is recommended to place the turtle in a separate 'feeding tub' when offering live and frozen foods as they are extremely messy eaters. Ensure that there is enough water to fully submerge the turtle and then leave the animal in the feeding tub for 15-20 minutes (or until all food is consumed).

Is A Turtle Right For You?

In Australia, the Eastern Long Neck and Murray Short Neck are two of the more commonly kept species of freshwater turtle in captivity.

All species of native turtle grow to large sizes and have very long life spans.

Careful consideration and research must be carried out before deciding to own one as a pet.