

## Degu Care Guide by Garden State Pet Center

Welcome to the world of degus – intelligent and social rodents that make wonderful pets. Here's a comprehensive care guide to ensure the well-being of your furry friends:

Degus can make fantastic pets. They are inquisitive, intelligent and have a range of interesting vocalizations. Although they are a delightful species, a lot of thought and care is needed when looking after these playful rodents. Becoming the best pet parent is all about understanding the needs and quirks of your new companions. So with that in mind here are some facts and tips to help you understand these clever critters. Degus have a long life expectancy in comparison to other rodents. They can live anywhere between 6-8 years! Degus are social animals and in the wild would live in groups (usually 2-5 females and 1-2 males). It's for this reason that degus as pets should be kept either in a pair or as a social group.

### 1. **Housing:**

- Provide a spacious cage with multiple levels for climbing and exploration.
- Use a bedding material like aspen shavings for burrowing.
- Ensure good ventilation to maintain a healthy environment.

### 2. **Diet:**

- Feed a high-fiber diet with hay as the main component.
- Include a balanced pellet mix specifically formulated for degus.
- Provide fresh vegetables daily, such as sweet potatoes (peeled, uncooked), carrots, leafy greens (spinach, dandelion leaves, parsley), and green beans every day.

### 3. **Social Interaction:**

- Degus are highly social; consider having at least two to prevent loneliness.
- Spend daily bonding time to build trust and provide mental stimulation.

### 4. **Environment:**

- Keep the cage in a quiet, stress-free area.
- Maintain a temperature between 68-75°F (20-24°C).
- Provide a hiding space for security and cozy sleeping areas.

### 5. **Grooming:**

- Degus love to dust bathe, so provide a small container with chinchilla dust.
- Check their teeth regularly as they continually grow, providing chew toys to help wear them down.

### 6. **Healthcare:**

- Schedule regular check-ups with a small animal veterinarian familiar with degus.
- Monitor for signs of dental issues, diabetes, or respiratory problems.

### 7. **Enrichment:**

- Offer a variety of toys, especially those that encourage chewing.
- Provide branches or safe wood for climbing and gnawing.
- Rotate toys to keep them engaged and prevent boredom.

### 8. **Exercise:**

- Allow supervised playtime outside the cage in a safe and secure area.
- Install an exercise wheel to encourage physical activity.

9. **\*\*Hydration:\*\***

- Ensure a fresh water supply at all times, using a sipper bottle to prevent spills.

10. **\*\*Educate Yourself:\*\***

- Stay informed about degu behavior and needs.
- Join degu owner communities or forums for support and shared experiences.

Remember that degus are diurnal, so they are most active during the day. With proper care, attention, and a stimulating environment, you'll enjoy a happy and healthy companionship with your delightful degus.