

PISCES

PET EMPORIUM



Dwarf Hamster

Desert Hamster, Roborovski Hamster
Phodopus roborovski

Lifespan: 3 to 3.5 years.

Size: Mature Dwarf Hamsters will range from 0.5 to 0.75 oz and grow to be around 2" long.

Maturity/Breeding: Dwarf Hamsters can become sexually mature when they are as young as 4 to 6 weeks old. The gestation period can be less than 18 days. Dwarf hamsters prefer to live in colonies but keeping a mix of males and females will produce offspring. Males will help raise the young.

Enclosure: Dwarf hamsters do best in aquariums or wire cages made specifically for hamsters. The cage should measure 16" x 12" x 10" (40cm x 30cm x 25cm). Make sure the bar spacing is no more than 0.25" to 0.5" and that the door fastens tightly, so your hamster can't escape. Pine or aspen shavings or other soft absorbent bedding should be used. Dwarf hamsters like to burrow so a thick layer (about 1" to 2") is best. Avoid using cedar shavings in your hamster cage, because the vapors are harmful to the eyes, skin and respiratory system. Your hamster will also require a house to sleep in during the day. Hamsters are nocturnal so the house should be dark enough to not disrupt their sleeping patterns. Make sure you fully clean the cage at least once per week to prevent your pet from getting sick.

Heating: Dwarf Hamsters are sensitive to extreme heat. Maintain an ambient temperature of 21 °C to 22 °C (69 °F to 72 °F). Keep your pet away from drafts and direct sunlight.

Feeding: Dwarf Hamsters are nocturnal so feeding should be done at nighttime. Pisces recommends feeding a dry food specifically for hamsters; they should be fed a rodent block, which is an all-in-one diet. Fresh fruits and vegetables can be offered as treats. They can also be given the occasional meal worm or cricket as a high protein treat. Avoid dried fruits or anything else high in sugar. ***Pisces recommends: Living World Extrusion for hamsters and Versele-Laga Hamster Nature.***

Vitamins, Supplements & Treats: Pisces sells a variety of Hamster treats that your pet will love. If your Hamster is provided with a varied diet of high quality seeds and pellet, then a vitamin or mineral supplement is not usually needed.

Handling: Dwarf Hamsters are extra-quick and flighty, so be careful when handling that you do not drop them. They also do not have good depth perception and will fall if you are not supervising where they are going. Make sure before handling your Hamster, you don't have any food scent on your hands or else the Hamster may be inclined to bite you, thinking it is food.

Health Care: Dwarf Hamsters are susceptible to Wet-tail. This can be caused by stress, bad food, a damp living environment, dirty drinking water and feeding excessive amounts of corn or fresh greens. Wet-tail is a form of diarrhea that if not treated can spread quickly and eventually lead to death. If wet-tail is suspected remove veggies and fruits from your pet's diet, isolate the sick animal, and please seek veterinary advice.

A Dwarf Hamster's incisor teeth will continue to grow throughout its life. It is essential for them to have chew blocks, safe wood structures or toys for them to chew on and to wear down their teeth. If not given enough stuff to chew on then their teeth can grow to unnatural lengths, which will prevent your pet from being able to eat. If this happens, a veterinarian should correct the problem. ***Pisces recommends: Dental Blocks Chew Treats.***

Grooming: Dwarf Hamsters do not require any special care because they spend a good amount of their day grooming themselves.

Exercise/Toys: Dwarf Hamsters do require regular exercise in order to prevent obesity. A wheel should be provided for exercise. If the wheel is wire you want to make sure the spacing is small enough that they don't get their feet stuck.

You can also put your Hamster in a plastic ball to run around and get exercise. Do not leave your pet in the ball for longer than 5 to 10 minutes because the constant motion can cause stress. Dwarf hamsters should also be supervised during play times, especially if the area contains stairs or if you have other pets present. There are many different things you can put in your hamster cage to keep him/her occupied as well. Wood houses, ladders, tunnels and mazes can all provide your pet with entertainment. Hide treats in little boxes and change chew toys and climbing items often to provide mental stimulation. **Pisces recommends: Super Pet Silent Spinner Wheel 4.5".**

Safe Handling of Small Animals*: As with all living creatures, small animals can carry microorganisms which can make people ill. To reduce the chances of infection, always follow these safe handling steps:

- Always wash your hands thoroughly after you handle your pet, its food and anything it has touched.
- Keep your pet in a habitat designed for it; do not let your pet roam around the home without proper supervision.
- Keep your pet, its food dishes and cage components out of the kitchen.
- Don't nuzzle or kiss your pet.
- Infants, children under 5 years of age, pregnant women, the elderly, and those with a compromised immune system have a greater risk of infection. Extra caution should be taken when they are in contact with any animal. Children under 5 should handle reptiles only under adult/parent supervision.

Recommended Books: This care sheet is designed to provide you with some basic information on your new pet. To learn more about how to care for your pet, Pisces recommends: *Hamsters A Complete Pet Owners Manual* by Barrons Books.

Recommended Supplies:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Wire Cage or Aquarium with lid <input type="checkbox"/> Pine or Aspen shavings <input type="checkbox"/> Ceramic food dish <input type="checkbox"/> Water bottle <input type="checkbox"/> Versele-Laga Hamster Nature <input type="checkbox"/> Wheel & Hamster ball | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Chew block/Mineral stone <input type="checkbox"/> House for sleeping <input type="checkbox"/> Timothy hay <input type="checkbox"/> Treats <input type="checkbox"/> Toys |
|--|--|

Your New Pet: It is the responsibility of any pet owner to provide their pet with regular veterinary care to maintain their pet's health and to prevent illness.

Should you experience any problems with your new pet, contact Pisces Pet Emporium. We will make every effort to assist you but we may refer you to a qualified veterinarian if the problem is beyond our ability to treat.

A pet is a large responsibility and should not be purchased without due consideration. Pets should never be released into the wild.



4921 Skyline Way N.E.

Calgary, Alberta T2E 4G5

Phone: (403) 274-3314 Fax: (403) 275-6296

www.piscespets.com

Email: pisces@piscespets.com

Reprint of this handout only with permission of and full credit to Pisces Pet Emporium

**Safe handling information courtesy of PIJAC Canada*