

So you want to be a FERRET PARENT?



!! CAUTION !!

Ferrets are high-maintenance pets and may be unsuitable for households with other pets or small children!

Datasheet by Kelly
For printable version, please visit Coloden.com/FerretParent

FOOD

Ferrets are carnivores! They can't digest plants, so plant-based food can cause disease over time. Ferrets may be fed raw, whole prey items such as pre-killed mice and chicks. Alternately, there's...

KIBBLE 

5 of first 6 ingredients must be high quality animal protein, like chicken or chicken meal. Note: "by-products" are not high quality!

No grains such as wheat, rice, or corn. Note: Flavors "with gravy" always include grains. No sugars or sweeteners!


     

Pea-fiber may cause bladder stones in some ferrets; consult your vet. Select kibble with as few plant-based ingredients as possible.

- WYSONG makes kibble & wet food especially formulated for ferrets. (Highly recommended!)
- Kitten and cat food is also okay, as long as it meets the above criteria. Avoid dog food.
- Ferrets imprint on their food! Mix 3 kibbles so you have options if one goes out of stock.
- Look for one-ingredient freeze-dried treats such as chicken, turkey, duck, rabbit, shrimp, minnows, salmon, and tuna.

POOP







Ferrets poop a lot. If you're unwilling or unable to scoop poop several times per day, you should not get ferrets.

Recycled paper pellets are the best option for ferret litter. It's absorbent, eco-friendly, and safe.

!! WARNING !!

Clumping cat litter is lethal to ferrets! The fine powder coats the inside of their lungs & painfully suffocates them within a few days. Scented litter, including cedar wood, may also irritate their respiratory tract.

Avoid these types of litter: clumping, sand, clay-based, scented, cedar or other wood.

TOYS


Ferrets love toys! Make sure you get a lot of them to play with and hide. Cat toys, dog toys, and baby toys can all work well.


   


Inspect toys often for small pieces breaking off, or stuffing coming out, as these can cause intestinal blockage if swallowed.

HYGIENE

How to keep your ferret clean & smelling fresh:


 Scoop litter box several times per day, so your ferrets don't step in poop.


 Wash and change bedding as soon as it starts to smell like animal.

 Regularly clean enclosure with a non-ammonia product, such as vinegar or Fizzion.


Trim nails every 1-2 weeks.

Comb fur with flea comb.

 Use wet-wipes to clean feet and dirty/oily spots.

 Consider "Healthy Mouth" water additive (for cats) to prevent tartar buildup & keep teeth clean.

DO NOT BATHE FERRETS OFTEN!


Frequent bathing dries out their skin, leading to more oil production, leading to a stinky & itchy ferret. Give them a bath only if they get into something really nasty. 

Ferrets will largely keep themselves clean. You just need to keep their living space clean.

CAGE


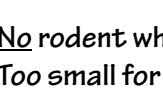
For one ferret: 3 feet x 2 feet x 2 feet
For each additional ferret: Add 6 inches per dimension
Ferret Nation makes enclosures that can be stacked. Two 3x2x2 enclosures make a great cage for several ferrets!

- Bars should be less than 1 inch apart.
- **SOLID FLOORS!** (Bar floors hurt feet.)
- Use blankets or paper bedding.

 Ferrets should spend at least 4 hours per day outside of their enclosure. This can be broken up into several blocks. More time is better.




It's difficult for a human to provide the amount of companionship that's necessary for a healthy ferret - so consider getting two!

  **No** rodent wheels. Too small for ferrets!


!! CAUTION !!


- Ferrets will investigate every nook & cranny in your home. Beware of these lethal dangers!
- Pest traps & poisons, other chemicals
 - Appliances & reclining furniture
 - Power cables

HEALTH

Ferrets require specialized care, so make sure there's a ferret-friendly vet near you. Ask if they can perform diagnostic and surgical procedures on ferrets, or if there's a specialized veterinary center nearby. 

VACCINES

 **Rabies:** If your ferret bites someone & breaks the skin, you may be forced to surrender your pet for euthanasia, unless you can prove they're current on their Rabies shots!

 **Distemper:** Distemper is highly contagious, carried by many types of animals, & **100% lethal in ferrets!**

Commercial breeding practices that produce most of the ferrets sold in the US result in higher rates of serious and expensive illness and shorter lifespans. Expect and financially prepare for veterinary care!

MORE INFO

- Ferrets for Dummies by Kim Schilling
- Kibble Scorecard ferredu.weebly.com/ferret-food-charts.html
- Ferret Proofing Your Home thesprucepets.com/ferret-proofing-your-home-1238653