



CANADA
4-H Saskatchewan

Small Pet

Member
Manual

4-H Motto

'Learn To Do By Doing'

4-H Pledge

'I pledge

My Head to clearer thinking,

My Heart to greater loyalty,

My Hands to larger service,

My Health to better living,

For my Club, my community and my country'

4-H Grace

(Tune of Auld Lang Syne)

We thank thee, Lord, for blessings great

On this, our own fair land.

Teach us to serve thee joyfully,

With head, heart, health and hand

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Check out our website at www.4-h.sk.ca

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Introduction

Welcome to the 4-H Small Pet Project!

We hope you have a great time this year making new friends, taking part in 4-H activities, working with your project group, and learning about small pets.

Through the activities in this project you will learn about the different kinds of small pets, the cost to raise them, pet care, handling and much more. If you already have a pet, these activities can help you to learn more about them. If you are thinking about getting a pet, these activities may help you decide which pet is best for you.

To complete a 4-H year, you must...

- ✓ Complete a project and record book
- ✓ Participate in public speaking at the club level
- ✓ Participate in an Achievement Day by...
 - Completing a 4-H questionnaire
 - Exhibiting and demonstration project work
 - Displaying your completed record book
- ✓ Any other requirements specified in your club constitution

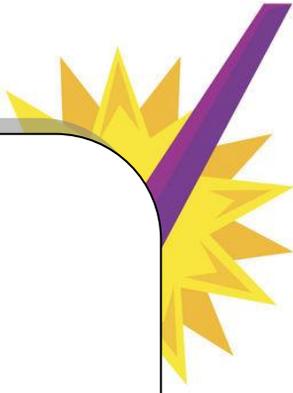


The 4-H Record Book

Record books are an important part of the completion of a member's project. 4-H views a record book important because it...

- Provides a record of information learned from your project.
- Teaches and develops record keeping skills that are an essential part of everyday life.
- Records your club activities, which can be helpful when applying for scholarships, travel awards or a job.
- Provides a permanent record of your achievements.

A record book should include all or most of the following:

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- ✓ Your club name and project you are enrolled in.
 - ✓ A list of members and leaders in your club and project.
 - ✓ A record of general meetings and business conducted.
 - ✓ A record of special 4-H activities you participated in.
 - ✓ Your goals for the year.
 - ✓ A record of project meetings and activities.
 - ✓ A complete account of the work done on each activity (written activities).
 - ✓ A list of other resources that were used during the project year.
 - ✓ An evaluation of your 4-H year.
 - ✓ Record book checklist knowledge and skills.

Tips

- Practice good record keeping habits during the year as you carry out your project. It's much easier to remember what you did yesterday than it is to remember what you did three months ago.
- Information in your Record Book should be complete and accurate. Your entries should be neat and readable as others may want to look through your records, and everyone finds it difficult to read a smudged scribble.
- Organize your material into sections with dividers, and use a 3-ring binder for durability. Add extra pages as necessary, remove or mark those you are not required to do, and consider a 'Table of Contents' as it is of value to you, the judge and others.
- A record book is flexible; make it your book by designing your own cover. Add pictures, newspaper or magazine clippings you have of yourself and your project.
- Keep in mind that binders covered with fabric, and have decorations that are glued on are very attractive, but not necessary, as the decorations may fall off and get lost. Stickers, fancy paper and other scrapbooking materials can produce an equally appealing binder cover.

It is recommended that your record book have at least 4 sections. You can choose to have more if you want. Here is a guideline regarding what material each section might contain:

- **Record Book:** This is the record book you get from the provincial 4-H office. This section should always come first. It contains your club records for the year (i.e. general and project club meetings, record of special club activities, your goals, etc.).
- **Project Information:** This would include any information you used in your project (i.e. resources, samples, etc.).
- **Activities You Participated In:** This is where you record the details of the activities you participated in from club, district, regional or provincial events such as, speeches, fundraisers, clinics, workshops, etc.
- **General 4-H Information:** This is for other general 4-H information that is not directly related to your club or project. This would be information you collected throughout the year from newspapers, Bits & Pieces Newsletter, Canadian 4-H Council, etc.

Judging Record Books

The following is the criteria most 4-H judges use as a guideline in evaluating record books (based on 100 points in total):

- **Cover** (5 points) - Should have your name, club name, project and 4-H crest.
- **Completeness** (40 points) - All pages should be completed; those not completed marked with "N/A"
- **Neatness** (15 points) – Use the same colour pen or pencil throughout – and use liquid paper for mistakes.
- **Accuracy** (30 points) - spelling, information, dates, etc.
- **Organization** and extras (10 points) – Use dividers between sections. The sections should include: record book, project information, activities you participated in, and general 4-H information - photo album pages can be used for pictures, news articles and other information.





Public Speaking

Public speaking is an important requirement of 4-H because it teaches members the skills needed to interact and speak in front of others.

Public speaking is mandatory at the club level. Those that want to progress further in this area are also encouraged to participate in district and regional competitions. If you want

more information on public speaking, contact the provincial 4-H office or your Regional 4-H Specialist.

Achievement Day

Achievement day is a time for celebration. This is a chance for you to show off your project to your family and other members in your club. It is also an opportunity to show the community what you have accomplished.

Achievement days are an ending point to a club year. By planning an achievement day, preparing displays and performing demonstrations, members use the leadership and decision-making skills that they have developed in the past year.

Achievement day is a time

- ✓ To give recognition to members and leaders for work accomplished.
- ✓ To evaluate project work.
- ✓ To let the public know what happens in a 4-H program.
- ✓ To give recognition to sponsors and others who have helped the club in a special way.



General 4-H Information

The Saskatchewan 4-H Vision

We take pride and ownership in being an organization based on our pledge, our values and our belief that the power of the 4-H experience has a positive impact on individuals, families, communities and our country.

With a focus on fun and learning we provide opportunities that will develop skills needed in an ever-changing future. Using the talents and energies of our members, volunteers and staff, we create innovative ideas and programs as well as maintain our successful traditional ones. We work to spread the impact of 4-H, to help the youth of today become the leaders of tomorrow.

The Saskatchewan 4-H Mission

Saskatchewan 4-H is a project-based youth organization. We are dedicated to the growth and development of our members, leaders, volunteers and staff through our motto: “Learn to do by doing”.

The Saskatchewan Core Values

We respect the importance of family and our 4-H traditions by upholding all of these core values:

Honour and Integrity: Treating one another respectfully and fairly

Responsibility: Being dependable and responsible for our actions

Co-operation: Working as a team to achieve our goals

Fun: Creating positive and enjoyable experiences

We do this within a safe and caring environment.

The 4-H Pledge

I pledge:

My HEAD to clearer thinking,

My HEART to greater loyalty,

My HANDS to larger service,

My HEALTH to better living,

For my club, my community and my country.

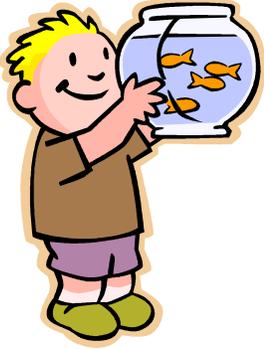
The 4-H Motto

Learn To Do By Doing



Some Small Pet Choices

Goldfish & Tropical Fish



Fish are inexpensive to feed, easy to care for, and fun to watch. There are many different colours, sizes and shapes. Each has its own special features that make it an interesting pet.

Goldfish come in several shapes and colours. Many will grow quite large if kept in a large aquarium or outdoor pond. Goldfish are the most adaptable of all fishes. They can adjust to a wide range of temperatures, and will eat a variety of foods.

Most **tropical fish** are quite small, and the variety of colours and shapes is almost endless. Salt water fish are among nature's most colourful creatures. They are not good for beginners.

Selection

You will probably want more than one fish to start, but don't overcrowd your aquarium. A good rule to follow is one fish for each gallon of water. Goldfish are hardier and easier to keep than tropical fish. When selecting tropical fish, be sure that the species can live together. Some tropical fish require special tank conditions if they are to live and grow.

Guppies are an excellent choice for beginners. They are brightly coloured and multiply rapidly. The zebra requires little oxygen and can thrive in a small tank. Other hardy and attractive species are platyp, neons and glow-light tetras.

For a well-balanced aquarium, you need some **scavengers** – water animals that service as sanitation workers. Catfish or snails such as the cornucopia, mustery or red romshorn will help keep the water clear of animal and plant waste.

Some **plants** well suited for your aquarium are vallisneria, sagitteria, caboma, nitella and ludwegia. Plants supply oxygen, food and hiding places for shy and young fish.

Housing

Fish should be housed in a large square or rectangular glass aquarium so they will have adequate air surface for oxygenation. The rule of one fish for each gallon of water may be modified somewhat, according to the kinds of fish, plants and equipment you use for aeration.

Follow these steps in setting up your aquarium:

- Clean the tank with clean hot water. Never use a soap or detergent; it is harmful to some fish.
- If you are not using a filter system, you may use 2 pounds of clean sand for each gallon of water. With a filter system, use 2 pounds of #3 aquarium gravel. Smaller gravel or sand will clog the system. Slope sand or gravel so that it is deepest at the back where plants will be placed.
- Install filter system (if available)
- Install thermostatically controlled heater (if available)
- Add plants to sand or gravel. Design your own arrangement, but set larger plants at the back, and smaller plants in front. You can use plastic plants.
- Place larger rocks in the aquarium. Some rocks are poisonous to fish, so obtain rocks from a pet store.
- Add water. Place a deep dish in the aquarium, pour water into it so the water will overflow in the aquarium slowly. If tap water has chlorine in it, remove it with one of the di-chloro preparations available in a pet store.
- If a heater and filter are used, start them, and let the water heat to 75 to 80 degrees F.
- Add fish to tank. Make sure the tank water is approximately the same temperature as the water in the container in which you brought the fish home.

Diet

This depends on the kind of fish. Most pet stores have balanced diets available. Goldfish will also eat bread crumbs, bits of hardboiled egg and vegetables, or finely chopped meat. Some tropical fish prefer live shrimp that need to be hatched daily in a shrimp hatcher.

Overfeeding is the leading cause of death. One rule to follow is to feed fish no more than they can eat in five minutes.

Health Care

- Feed properly (do not overfeed).
- Do not overcrowd the aquarium.
- Keep water temperature around 75 degrees F.
- Clean tank and replace milky or smelly water.
- If fish are listless and refuse food, check for insufficient oxygen, low temperature, presence of chlorine, high acidity or alkalinity. If you can find no fault, slowly raise the temperature to 80 degrees F.
- Remove sick fish into a small, shallow tank. Treat sick fish with 2 teaspoons of salt to every gallon of water for several days, or use a sulfa medication available from a pet store.
- One common ailment known as “**Ich**” causes white spots on fish. Raise water temperature to 80 degrees F, and treat with a prepared remedy.
- Another common ailment is “**shimmier**” which causes the fish to move sideways instead of forward. Raise water temperature to 80 degrees F.
- If diseases are widespread, remove all fish from the aquarium. Sterilize with 10 drops of household chlorine bleach to each gallon of water. Let stand for 30 minutes. Rinse thoroughly and refill with fresh water, sand and plants.

There are many kinds of diseases that can attack your fish. Most diseases can be traced to a certain event such as a drop in temperature, careless maintenance, a wound, or a new addition to the tank.

Lizards & Chameleons



Lizards

Lizards are reptiles. They use their tongues for drinking, and cleaning their mouths after they eat, and for smelling. The quick darting of the lizard’s tongue is like the excited sniffing of a dog. They are cold blooded, which means their body temperature is influenced by the temperature of their environment. Different species require different temperatures.

Housing

Lizards need a terrarium. Be sure it’s well built and easy to clean. Size and type depends on the species. Be sure to learn about your lizard’s specific needs. If it’s territorial, free range or large, your terrarium needs to be appropriate. Location and ventilation are important. Provide a cover for the terrarium.

Diet Diet will vary depending on the species. Some are **herbivores** (plant eating) while others are **omnivores** (eats both meat and plants). Always provide a varied diet so your lizard gets essential vitamins and minerals.

Health Care Illness can be avoided with proper care. For lizards captured from the wild, annual fecal exams are important. If a lizard shows signs of illness take it to a veterinarian immediately. A lizard's life span varies from species to species.

Chameleons A chameleon is a member of the lizard family. They change to many different colours depending on a combination of light, temperature and mood of the animal. They can also look up with one eye, and down with the other. Their tails are brittle and easily break off, but in time, they will grow a new one.

A chameleon's body is about 3 inches long, he has four legs, a long tail, short teeth, and a layer of scales on his body. The male has a dewlap, which is an extra fold of skin at his throat.

When meeting another male, or when in danger, he will puff out his dewlap. Given proper care these animals do well in captivity and become quite tame.

Selection If you choose more than one chameleon, you may let females stay together, along with one male. They should all be approximately the same size. A small chameleon with adults will not eat for fear of being attacked.

Never put two males together, regardless of size. They will always be enemies, and continue to fight. If you are not certain of your chameleon's sex, place a mirror in front of him. The male will inflate his dewlap, and try to attack the mirror.

Housing A home for one or two chameleons may be a large mouth gallon jug made into a terrarium. Add about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch of coloured gravel, along with some artificial plants and a small rock, and punch holes in the lid of the jug.

If you prefer a home large enough for your chameleon to have playmates, such as skinks (another type of small lizard), tree frogs or toads, you may build a larger terrarium. It may be a wooden box 2 feet long and 1 foot wide, with a screen or glass top. Keep a terrarium in a warm sunny place with a temperature of 75 to 85 degrees F.

Handling

Always handle him slowly and easily. Place your hand, with your fingers bent over his body, and his head between two fingers. A loop made from thread, and placed over his head will allow you to catch him easier. Be sure to take the string off before placing him back in his terrarium.

Diet

A chameleon eats little, and can go without food for 2 weeks. His tongue is 4" long, and is as long as his head and body together. He can catch a fly with his tongue at the blink of an eye.

During the summer, place a piece of fruit in the terrarium to draw insects. You can also gather insects from trees and around lights. During the winter, you can buy grubs, mealworms or fruit flies from a pet store.

Chameleons are daytime animals and should be fed when it is light. You can teach them to eat from your hand.

Water is most important. Since they will not drink from a dish, sprinkle lukewarm water on the plants in the terrarium at least once each day. Sprinkle a little water on your pet, and his skin will absorb it.

Health Care

Chameleons are relatively free of disease. About the only thing you need to be concerned with is cold temperatures. Since chameleons are cold-blooded animals, the body temperature becomes that of the surroundings. An electric light bulb will help warm the terrarium.

Usually the symptom of a cold is the lack of desire to change colour. The larvae of a batfly might bother him. If you find one of these wormlike larvae on the body, pull it straight out with tweezers.

With proper feeding, love and correct temperature, your chameleon may live to be 5 years old.

Breeding

In June, July or August, the female will lay two or more eggs. Eggs are either light green or light brown. The female will move the eggs in a few days under a small pile of leaves or sand. The mother's job is now complete. After they are hatched, the babies look after themselves.

You can use an incubator from a quart jar. Fill the jar with 2 inches of sand, and cover with moist moss. Punch holes in the jar top. Set the jar in the sunlight, and keep the moss and sand moist. Eggs will hatch in 4 to 8 weeks.

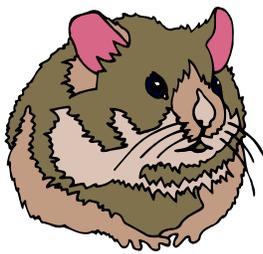
Feed baby chameleon's sugar dissolved in water with an eyedropper, and meat on a fine straw. After 2 weeks, they will be able to catch insects. When baby chameleons are the size of an adult, put them in a larger terrarium. Remember, two males should never be put in the same terrarium.

Training

Chameleons can be trained to do a number of tricks. First, you need to gain his love and confidence. Do this by leading him with a string around the room. Handle him gently so he will not be afraid.

Teach him to jump through a hoop, by coaxing him to jump to his favourite spot. He will climb a ladder with just a little coaxing, or seesaw with a little help. After each performance, be sure to reward him with a bite to eat. You will be proud to show him off.

Hamsters



Hamsters are very calm if handled frequently and gently. They have very little odour. They sleep during the day, and are often active at night (nocturnal). They may bite if startled, and can escape and disappear easily.

Selection

Select an animal between five and eight weeks old. Signs of good health are soft fur, bright eyes and a plump body. Males are often more gentle than females. If possible, buy a hamster that is already in a cage by itself.

Determining the age of a hamster is fairly easy. The insides of the ears of a young hamster are covered with tiny white hairs. As the animal becomes older, these hairs gradually disappear until the ears are hairless and shiny.

Housing

Keep hamsters in cages with clean, dry bedding such as shredded paper, cedar shavings or any other absorbent materials. A metal cage with a removable bottom works well. An upstairs platform with an exercise wheel is a must.

A hamster will select one corner of his cage as a permanent bathroom. This corner needs to be cleaned, and fresh bedding put in every day. Once a week, wash the entire cage with soap and water, and disinfect with a standard aerosol disinfectant to keep down odours and chances of disease. Wait until the cage is completely dry, and then replace the bedding, and your hamster is good for another week.

A hamster appreciates a handful of shredded paper or absorbent cotton to build his nest. In cold weather he'll weave the material into a tiny igloo, while in the summer the nest will resemble a bird's.

Be sure, whichever type of cage you choose, that you keep it on a shelf or table out of drafts, and never in direct sunlight.

Diet

The simplest food is a commercial hamster food that you can buy at most pet stores. Adults require only one tablespoon of food each day. They also can be fed small amounts of lettuce, carrots, celery, and other vegetables. **Do not give him any citrus fruits.**

Provide a food dish. He will load his cheek pouches, and store everything tidily away in a corner of the cage. Let your hamster hoard a certain amount of food, but continuously remove any uneaten greens since they soon spoil.

Fresh water is essential at all times. Water can be provided through a glass gravity flow bottle with a rubber cork. Insert a glass or copper tube through the rubber cork so that when the bottle is attached upside down, water flows slowly into the tube as your animal drinks.

Remember to provide your hamster with a piece of hardwood to grind down his continually growing incisor teeth.

Handling

Handling your hamster each day keeps him tame and friendly. To handle, scoop him up gently in the palm of your hand. Then let him walk from hand to hand while you rub and talk to him. Once you have gained his trust, he'll hang from your hand by a single finger, climb toy ladders, and provide a lot of playful excitement.

There are a few things that you should never do:

- **Never** pick him up until he is fully awake. Hamsters are deep sleepers and shortsighted. If alarmed, he may bite your finger.
- **Never** leave your hamster alone on a high place. He cannot judge distance, and may walk off on air with bad results.
- **Never** tease or frighten your hamster. This could cause loss of gentleness.

Breeding

Gestation is 16 days. The mother has 3 to 12 babies. After one week, the mother can breed again. Two months after baby hamsters are born, they become sexually mature. One pair of hamsters can produce 36 to 144 hamsters in one year. These facts tell us to be extra careful in mating hamsters. Before mating, be sure you have located a home for all the baby hamsters.

Health Care

Hamsters should have sleek, shiny coats. A dull, rough coat may mean an illness. Skin problems may be caused by mites or infections. Hamster urine is light yellow and thick, something like pus. The corner where the hamster urinates needs to be cleaned daily, and the entire cage washed with soap and water once a week.

A healthy hamster, in the evening, will run around his cage, play on his wheel, look for food, clean his fur, climb on his cage wall, and carry his short tail erect.

Health Care Tips:

- **Common Cold** – symptoms are a runny nose, lack of activity and sniffles. Cures: clean the cage; put on dry bedding; keep the cage in a warm spot; cover the cage with newspaper to insure against a draft; give your hamster a couple of drops of cod-liver oil on a piece of bread; clean cage after recovery.
- **Parasites** – such as lice and fleas can be controlled by using an insecticide for cats. **NEVER use an insecticide for dogs!**
- **Check your hamster's teeth** – use a piece of hardwood, rabbit pellets or dog biscuits to keep teeth worn down. If teeth are too long, the hamster cannot eat properly and will become sick.
- **Hamster droppings** – loose droppings result from too many fresh vegetables and fruit. Hard droppings are a sign of not enough fresh vegetables and fruit.
- **Cage paralysis** is caused by improper feeding, lack of vitamin D, and lack of exercise. Symptoms are inactivity, inability to raise its head and crawling along, pushing his nose on the floor of the cage.

Gerbils



These small, active, inquisitive rodents originated in the dry regions of Asia and Africa. They consume little food, require minimum space, are hardy, have little odour, are prolific breeders, and rarely, if ever, bite.

There are about ten different colours: agouti, Canadian White Spot, dark-tailed white, black argente, lilac, blue, cream and gray agouti.

Their life span is often five or more years of age. When choosing a gerbil, look for bright, shiny eyes, perked up ears and a slick hair coat.

Housing

A good home is one that it is spacious, escape-proof, easy to clean, and loaded with useful items, such as a wheel fitted to the side of the cage, nesting box, plastic tubes for tunneling, etc.

Furnish the cage with about 1 inch of litter. It can be most any clean absorbent material, such as sawdust, cedar chips or commercial litter. For his bed, he will need a piece of burlap sack. He will chew up the sack, and place it with the other litter along the edge of his cage.

Since gerbils are fairly odourless, you only need to add a small amount of litter once a week, and clean the cage once a month. Keep the cage dry, and room temperature between 50 and 80 degrees F.

Handling

To provide a sure hold, grasp the tail portion closest to his body, cup your hands, and hold him gently and firmly. Like most pets, gerbils are shy at first. You should handle him often, and calm him by gently scratching his back and ears.

Diet

As vegetarians, they prefer a diet of cereal and grains (sunflower seeds, corn, oats, wheat or watermelon seeds) with fruit or vegetables on occasion. Commercial food is available. Fresh grass, lettuce, bits of apple, potato chips and peanuts are also popular foods. Feed 1 tablespoon of food once a day. They will not overeat. If food is left, take it out when cleaning the cage.

Provide water in a gravity dispenser in order to keep the cage dry. Gerbils will drink very little water. A block of wood or some green twigs to chew on are appreciated.

Health Care

Isolate and carefully check newly acquired gerbils a minimum of 14 days. Wash food and water containers every day.

Possible health problems include abscesses, colds, diarrhea, parasites, heatstroke, malocclusions and sterility. With proper health care your gerbil will live to be 3 or 4 years old. They are relatively free of diseases, and have clean living habits.

Health Rules

- ✓ Feed a balanced diet (include some hard foods)
- ✓ Provide a dry cage
- ✓ Provide shade
- ✓ Keep a block of wood in the cage for gerbils to gnaw on
- ✓ Isolate pets that are sick
- ✓ Use insecticide powder recommended for cats to control lice or fleas (Caution: **never** use insecticide powder recommended for **dogs**.)
- ✓ Clean the cage at least one a month
- ✓ Add a small amount of clean litter each week
- ✓ Keep room temperature between 50 and 80 degrees F

Breeding

Gerbils are monogamous; they believe in having only one mate at a time. If one mate dies, it is advisable to separate the new mates with a wire partition until they become accustomed to each other's smell.

Gestation period is 24 to 25 days. Litter averages about 5 babies. At 3 weeks of age, they will begin eating solid foods. Eyes will open within 3 weeks. Mother will wean babies at 6 weeks. They mature at 3 months and will begin pairing off at 2 to 3 months of age.

Don't disturb mother and babies the first week, and don't touch babies until their eyes are open!

Guinea Pigs (Cavies)



Guinea pigs are about six to nine inches long, and weigh 34 to 42 ounces when full grown. Except for their little ears and staring eyes, they look like little balls of fur. They have four toes on each front foot, and only three toes on each hind foot. They have no tail.

The guinea pig is not a pig, and does not come from Guinea. It's a cavy (rhymes with navy), a rodent related to the porcupine. They originally come from South America. They naturally live in the South American regions of the Brazilian grasslands, and planes of Argentina and Peru. In this country you will see them in homes as caged pets.

Breeds

There are 13 recognized breeds of guinea pigs in this country. The American breed is by far the most common, and comes in a variety of markings ranging from solid colours to various mixtures.

You could buy a Peruvian guinea pig, but if you do, figure on spending a lot of time with it. It has a dust mop coat. Its long hair needs daily combing and brushing. The Abyssinian is a fancy variety too, and must be groomed. The hair of this guinea pig grows in little swirls or rosettes.

Housing

You can keep guinea pigs in almost anything, but make sure their house is ready before you buy your pet. A box or pan about two feet square with 5 or 6 inch sides can be used for one or two guinea pigs. Use metal if you can; it's the easiest to clean. The best guinea pig home will have a solid floor rather than a wire-mesh floor.

The important thing to remember is that your guinea pig needs an even temperature living environment that has adequate ventilation, yet is free from cold drafts or heat extremes.

Guinea pigs like separate sleeping quarters. Divide your box into compartments if you can. Pine shavings are the most common bedding used, and should be changed on a weekly basis.

If the cage space is available, items such as colourful plastic tubes, wood hide boxes, and other toys can be added.

Make sure his pen stays clean. Change the bedding every two days, and give the pen a general cleaning about twice a week. Wash out the entire pen with soap and water frequently.

Feeding

Commercial food is best. Buy small amounts at a time so it stays fresh. Place the food in a heavyweight bowl or crock. Other foods such as grass, carrot and celery tops, dandelions, lettuce, hay and rolled oats may be fed as treats, but should not make up the majority of the diet.

Too much grass or other greens can give guinea pigs diarrhea. If their droppings are unusually soft, stop feeding greens.

The food should be changed daily. In addition to food, he will need fresh water every day. Change the water each time you feed him. A normal feeding schedule is twice daily, with a small morning snack, and water followed by a larger evening meal.

A piece of wood, preferably a soft pine, should be placed with your guinea pig. He will gnaw on it and scratch on it, keeping his constantly growing incisor teeth and nails trimmed.

Handling

Your guinea pig will become a friendly pet if you treat it gently and kindly. When you pick him up, take care not to grab him by the shoulders or the top part of his body. You should always support him from beneath when carrying or transporting.

Slide your hand under his body, palm up and gently lift him with his chest and front legs resting on your wrist. As you handle him more, the more he will become accustomed to you.

Guinea pigs are extremely nervous when picked up. Hold him in the palm of your hand snugly, and stroke him to gain his confidence. Once you have gained his confidence, he will provide you with many hours of love and happiness.

Training

Once the friendship between you and your pet is established, you may begin a training session. Guinea pigs can learn a variety of tricks, and will respond positively to offers of treats during the training periods.

Begin by teaching him to stand up and “beg” for food. It is an easy trick to learn. From that trick you can teach him to sway or waltz on his hind legs, and eventually teach him to make a circle while following the treat you offer in your hand.

Grooming

Regular grooming and dental care needs to be given. Brushing with a soft bristle brush will provide a shiny coat and help remove shedding hair.

Health Care

If you sneeze, you don't think much about it. But if your guinea pig sneezes, you had better be concerned. It may be the start of a virus infection. Put your pet in a separate pen. Always keep an eye out for these signs: breathing difficulties, bedraggled fur, loss of appetite, discharge from nose and eyes, diarrhea, burying its head in a corner, and other unusual actions.

Another concern is lice or mites. If your guinea pig is scratching excessively, or appears to be suffering, the proper treatment should be applied. Dust him with the same flea powder that you use to rid cats of parasites. Be sure to follow the instruction on the container. Also remove and replace all bedding, and clean the cage when treating your pet.

Broken teeth are caused by fighting. To cure, isolate him and feed soft foods. Teeth will grow back in a short time.

Indigestion is caused by overfeeding, lack of exercise, bad ventilation and not enough light. The cure is a dose of castor oil.

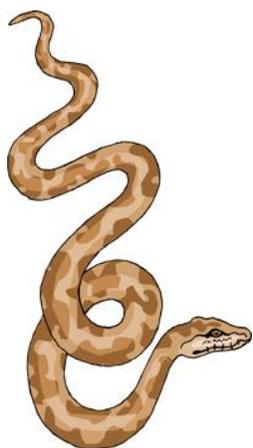
Diarrhea is the most common disease affecting guinea pigs. It can result from feeding too much green food, and not enough dry food, or from a cold.

To cure, place him on warm, dry hay. Give him milk that has been boiled and castor oil. The dose is ½ teaspoon for adults and 10 to 20 drops for young. The amount to give your animal depends on its size.

Basically, if you follow these rules you'll have a healthy and happy guinea pig:

- Clean the cage and all other materials at least once a week.
- Disinfect cage and equipment.
- Keep areas outside of cage neat and clean.
- Feed him a balance diet of green and dry foods.
- Remove any uneaten green food each day.
- Provide a clean, fresh water supply at all times.
- Provide fresh air and enough light.
- Keep away rodents, and other pets such as cats and dogs.
- Provide space for exercise.
- If you have more than one, separate the sick one from the healthy ones.

Snakes



A snake is an interesting and unusual pet. There are hundreds of kinds in the world. Snakes are reptiles and are cold-blooded. This does not mean that their blood is cold, rather that they can't control their temperature. Their bodies are only a few degrees warmer, or colder than the air around them.

Medium-sized snakes make the best pets. They are clean, quiet, and although not affectionate, can be tamed by handling and become gentle. A snake's forked tongue is what it uses to smell its surroundings. Its vision is very good, but its hearing is not. It makes up for this by sensing vibrations on the ground. Your snake may not hear you shout, but can feel you walk up to it even if you tip-toed.

Selection

You may choose to get your snake from a pet store, or capture it in a field or forest. If you choose to catch your snake there are several important things to do. **Never** hunt for snakes alone. Find out if there are dangerous snakes in your area. Wear the proper clothes and boots. Read about the kinds of snakes that make good pets, some never become gentle. Take a bag (a pillowcase will work) and something to tie it tightly closed. It is best to use a stick or pole to look into logs, leaves or holes.

Spring and early summer are the best times to look for a snake. Catch a snake just behind the head; don't squeeze too hard, support the whole body and don't dangle it. This frightens snakes.

When buying a snake from a pet store, it's a good idea to ask the store owner to stop feeding the snake for about a week. Then, when you can watch, offer it some food. This will tell you if the snake is a good eater. The second most important thing to watch for when buying a snake is how gentle it is.

If you capture your pet from the wild and then decide not to keep it, be sure to return it to the same area.

Handling

Pick up your snake with both hands, one just behind his head, and the other supporting his body. With proper handling, he should soon become tame, and will crawl through your fingers and up your arms. Some snakes have become so gentle that they eat from their owner's hands.

If you take your snake to your project meeting, carry it in a pillowcase with the top tied tightly so that it will not get loose, or be injured.

If you are bitten while handling your snake, wash the bite, and put on some first aid cream. Bites from non-poisonous snakes are no worse than bites from any small pet.

Housing

A snake's house is called a **serpentarium**. It may be constructed of wood, or it may be a glass container, such as an old fish aquarium. The top or front of the serpentarium should be covered with a fine mesh screen. Snakes must have warmth, so a light bulb can be used as a source of heat. However, the light should be positioned so that the snake can move away from it to a cooler area.

You should have a thermometer in the cage to insure that the temperature stays at about 75 to 80 degrees F in the day, and no lower than 60 to 65 degrees F at night. Cover the floor with newspaper.

Use a heavy bowl for water, big enough for him to soak if it wishes. A rock for him to rub against, or crawl under and a branch for him to climb will complete your serpentarium. A serpentarium must be kept very clean and dry.

In putting the top (or front) on, be sure it is very tight and secure, as snakes can get through very small cracks. Also, use masking tape to cover all rough edges. Snakes are very curious and can injure their noses by pushing or bumping against the cage.

It is possible to house more than one species in your serpentarium. King snakes should not be housed with other kinds of snakes, however, because they will eat them.

Diet

In nature, snakes eat many kinds of foods. Snakes are carnivorous (meat eating). There are a few snakes living in the world that eat bird eggs.

Pet snakes will probably do well on mice alone. However, some can and will learn to eat scraps from freshly caught fish, and even worms. Some constrictor-type snakes prefer their food alive, but can be taught to eat dead food, if this is more readily available. If you have more than one snake in your cage, you should not feed them at the same time, as they will fight over the food.

A snake's jaw is hinged in such a way that it can swallow food many times larger than itself. Most snakes have six rows of teeth, all pointing backwards to help hold their food.

Most medium-sized snakes need to eat only once a week. The bigger your snake, the more food it will need. Always keep fresh water in a heavy, clean dish in your serpentarium. If you caught your snake in the wild, and it has not started to eat after three weeks, you should return it to the place where you found it.

A snake likes to catch its food live, and swallow it whole. Feed him one or two live frogs or mice each week depending on his size.

Health Care

Snakes are not affected by many diseases, but once they become sick it is difficult for them to recover. Mouth rot is a big problem. Snakes get this from dirty cages, and water or another infected snake.

If your snake refuses to eat, check its mouth carefully for white patches. You can use 2 parts Listerine to 1 part hydrogen to help heal his mouth. (Hydrogen Peroxide can also be used.) Use a cotton swab to apply the solution. Don't pull off the white patches.

If your snake gets cut, clean the wound, and put some antibiotic cream on it.

Snakes can be bothered by mites. One solution to this problem is to place about ¼ of a "No-Pest Strip" near the cage. However, make sure that the strip is outside the cage where the snake cannot touch it. It is best not to handle the strip with your bare hands.

Snakes can develop respiratory diseases if the temperature in their serpentarium is not kept warm enough. If your snake breathes through his mouth a lot, it could have an infection. The only cure for something like this is an antibiotic shot by a veterinarian.

From once a year to once or twice a month, your snake may shed its entire skin. The snake will soak in his water dish, and sometimes rub against a rock as the skin comes off. The skin usually comes off in one piece, inside out.

Your snake should remain healthy if you keep the cage clean, water dish clean and filled with fresh water, and maintain the correct temperature in the serpentarium. Some snakes in captivity live 10 to 20 years.

Turtles



Turtles are inexpensive and easy to care for, and they don't smell or make a mess. Turtles are reptiles that have been in existence for over 25,000,000 years. In all that time they have changed very little. There are over 250 kinds of turtles. Three different names are used to describe them: **tortoise**, **turtle** and **terrapiin**. Most of us think of the box turtle as a terrapiin - a turtle that closes up completely.

Generally speaking, there are two types of turtles. First, the **cryptodiru** turtle can draw his head into his shell. Second, the **pleurodira** turtle swings his head to one side along his shoulder.

Breeds

Turtles commonly sold at pet stores are the **Red-Eared Slider**, which is the most common, and are raised for pets and generally not caught wild; **Green Turtle** is the second most common; **Sawback** is more difficult to keep; **Painted**, **Snapping** and **Soft-Shelled**. There are exotic species that you can keep as pets. But, if you are a beginner, the Red-Ear Slider or Green Turtles are recommended.

Housing

Properly taken care of, turtles grow very fast. Plastic or glass terrariums make comfortable homes. The turtle needs room for exercise, so it is advisable to start with a large terrarium, or a 10-gallon aquarium. The terrarium should have ½ inch of aquarium gravel, water at least twice as deep as the turtle is tall, and several stones well above the top of the water.

Cover the terrarium with hardware cloth. Never use a glass cover because of excessive heat. Place the terrarium so it will get around 2 hours of sun each day. A 40-watt bulb approximately 6" above the rocks will take the place of the sun.

A thermostatically controlled aquarium heater should be used to keep the temperature between 75 and 80 degrees F. When the water in the tank becomes dirty, change it.

Diet

Turtles are omnivores (both meat and plant eaters). They like meat, canned dog or cat food, lettuce, fruit bits and leafy vegetables. Vitamin A and D are needed to prevent pneumonia, depression and swollen joints. Stir vitamin supplement, bone meal or oyster shell flour into the food. Provide fresh, clean water daily.

In a flat dish, give your pet all the food he can eat. Remove food he hasn't eaten within a couple of hours. Turtles can go several days without food, so take that week-end trip, or 2 week vacation, and don't worry about Mr. Turtle.

Health Care

Turtles have few diseases if properly fed, and if proper temperature is maintained.

Turtle diseases can consist of:

- **Soft shell** – treatment consists of small “mineral block” in the water. You can buy these at pet stores. Proper diet is the best prevention.
- **Fungus** – plenty of sunshine is the best prevention. For treatment, use a tropical fish fungus remedy on fungus spots.
- **Swollen eyes** – to prevent, keep water clean, and feed a proper diet. Treatment is antibiotic drops.
- **Sores on plastron (the lower, ventral part of the shell)** –prevention is smoother rocks in the terrarium, and cleaner containers.
- **Loss of appetite** – a turtle may eat a lot one day, and go for a week without eating again. Temperature around 80 degrees F should keep the turtle eating a proper diet.

Your Health

Pet turtles can transmit certain intestinal disorders to people. They can carry a bacterium called **salmonella** that can make people sick. **Wash your hands with soap and water after handling.**

Mice & Rats



Mice and rats are rodents. Some people have a bad attitude toward the tame ones because of wild mice and rats. They are fast becoming a popular “pocket pet” because they are smart, easy to tame, come in many assorted colours, cost little to feed, require a small amount of space, and are fun to watch. Most of all, they are affectionate little animals.

Domesticated mice and rats have been valuable to our society in all kinds of psychological, biological, medical and nutritional studies. Rats are more intelligent than mice, they are easier to tame.

Rats and mice need to be handled every day if possible, or at least three or four times a week. Some scientists say rats that are petted a lot will grow faster.

Selection

Select a young animal that was just weaned, or is about one month old. Look for a smooth coat, bright eyes and perked ears; an animal that is lively and alert. There are many different varieties and colours to choose from: fawn, sable, white, cinnamon, blue, black and brown to name a few.

Housing

Rats and mice cannot be caged together because they are natural enemies. Size of the cage for mice should be a minimum 16 x 12 x 9 inches, with a cover, and no openings greater than 5/16". Rats require a larger cage.

Keep the cage in a well-lit, dry ventilated place with temperatures ranging from 64 – 68 degrees F. Cover the floor with fresh hay, sawdust, paper towels, or some type of commercial cat litter. Add a small amount of litter daily. Do not use newspaper because the ink will rub off on the animals' fur. Mice require a nesting box, but rats do not.

Wash the cage every week with hot water and some type of disinfectant. Control lice and mites by using flea and tick killer suitable for cats.

Handling

Mice or rats should be handled every day, or at least three to four times a week. Start taming him by picking him up by his tail. This does not hurt him. Pick him up by the tail, and place him in your hand. While he is in the palm of your hand, stroke him on his head and back. Once you get him accustomed to you, he will climb in your hand, and explore your pockets.

Diet

Mice and rats eat the same type of food. They prefer starchy foods like seeds, grains and rice. Dry dog food and water is a balanced diet for them. They also enjoy bread, crackers, carrots, apples, grapes and raisins. Fresh water must always be provided. To keep the cage dry, use a dispenser for water.

Feed him at about the same time each day. Perishable foods should be fed at night, and leftovers removed the next morning. Mice and rats are gnawing animals, and should be provided with a piece of wood to help keep their teeth in good condition.

Health Care

With proper health care, rats and mice should live a full life span of about 3 years.

Health Rules

- Cleanliness is a must
- Isolate sick animals
- Use cat flea powder for lice, fleas and mites
- In case of diarrhea, stop feeding greens and fruit
- For cuts or bits, use a medicated cat ointment
- Feed a proper diet

Birds



Many members of the bird family make excellent pets. Most popular are finches, canaries, budgerigars, cockatiels, cockatoos, lovebirds and parrots.

Parrots – besides the parakeets, there are four other classes of parrots. Macaws are large birds, cockatoos and true parrots are somewhat larger than parakeets, and lorikeets are among the most beautiful parrots.

Parakeets are affectionate birds that can be trained to talk, and do tricks. They come in a variety of solid and mixed colours, such as green, yellow, blue and white.

Canaries are noted for their signing. There are two voices: the chopper and the warbler. When selecting a canary, remember that only male birds sing. If you want a singing bird, make sure the canary sings before you buy it. Canaries come in several different colours, and colour markings. One of the most popular is a shade of yellow or orange with black and olive markings. You may select a red, white or blue canary.

Finches are smaller than parakeets and canaries. They are active, and have feathers of blue, green, orange, yellow and red. They constantly call and chirp to one another.

When selecting a bird, get one that is alert, and between 6 weeks and 3 months old. Young birds are easier to train. Make sure the feathers are close together and bright in colour.

Housing

A cage large enough for the bird to fly, and flap its wings without touching the cage. Rectangular cages offer more flying room than tall cages. Add grit or sand to the bottom of the cage.

Accessories must include perches high in the cage for sleeping and resting, and placed near the food and water containers. A water container big enough to bath in plus toys and soft music will keep the bird content and healthy.

Handling

Canaries and finches rarely become tame enough to be handled. A parakeet and other parrots, if handled when young, will respond readily to training.

Allow your parakeet a few days to become accustomed to his new home. Pass a perch or small wooden stick in his cage. Do this for a couple of days, and eventually the bird will step on the stick. Once he is accustomed to the perch, you can substitute your finger. After he has learned to get on your finger, take him out of the cage. The important thing to remember is to be patient, and win his confidence.

Diet

A variety of seeds such as millet, thistle, rape seed and canary grass seed, as well as fruits and insects. Feed commercially prepared bird food.

Parakeet seed is different from that prepared for canaries. Buy small amounts so it will stay fresh. Throw away any seeds left from the day before. Feed a small amount of lettuce, cabbage, apple, grated carrots or spinach. Feed both seeds and greens for a balanced diet.

Provide fresh water daily. Provide a cuttlebone for calcium, and to keep the bird's beak trimmed. Keep cuttlebones securely attached to the cage, and replace with a fresh one every 3 months.

Health

Examine the bird carefully for signs of colds and parasites. Signs to look for include: fluffed feathers, less activity, hunched up body, lifeless dull eyes and appearance. Sick birds should be taken to a veterinarian immediately.

Health Care Tips:

- Feed a balanced diet, and provide fresh water.
- Keep cage clean, and away from drafts.
- Trim bird's nails occasionally.
- If mites appear, use a recommended powder directly on the bird's body, and treat the cage.
- Warm to high temperatures of 85 to 90 degrees F are acceptable.
- In case of diarrhea, constipation, listlessness, no appetite, closed eyes or ruffled feathers, consult a veterinarian.

Some birds can live longer than people. Examples of longevity include: finches; 2 to 8 years; canaries 8 to 15 years; cockatiels 10 to 25 years; cockatoos and some parrots 77 to 100 years.

Teaching Parakeets to Talk

The first step is to have a healthy, alert bird. Let him become accustomed to his new home and companion. Start off with one word at a time, such as “hello”, and do not go any further until he has mastered it. Use a high pitched voice, and work for only about 15 minutes at a time.

You can teach a young male or female bird to talk. Train your bird when no other bird is near. It takes time and patience, but once on his way, learning a new word comes easy.

Breeding

Parakeets and canaries will breed in captivity. All you need to get started is a pair of birds of unrelated stock.

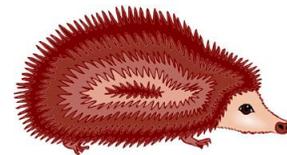
The cage should be around 16 x 18 x 36 inches or larger, with a nest box in one corner. After breeding, the female bird will lay one egg every other day. The average clutch is around six eggs. Incubation is from 17 to 21 days.

Do not remove un-hatched eggs until 10 days after the first bird hatches. Both the father and mother birds participate in feeding, and care of the young. Do not handle young birds until they are about 3 weeks old.

Hedgehogs

Hedgehogs are a good example of “convergent evolution”. That means that they have developed habits, and physical features of different types of animals. For defense a hedgehog has spines like a porcupine, and curls up into a tight ball like an armadillo.

Housing



Hedgehogs are territorial, and do best when living alone. A hedgehog’s home should be kept between 65 and 90 degrees F. If it’s any colder than 65 the animal will go into hibernation.

Hedgehogs are clean animals so providing them with a litter box in their pen will make it easier for you to clean up after them. They prefer a sleeping area that is private and dark. A PVC pipe with a 4” diameter works well.

The pipe should be cut 10 to 12 inches in length, with a cap at one end, and braced so it doesn't roll around.

Diet

Hedgehogs are insectivores (insect eating). Their diet could include live food such as mealworms, crickets, grasshoppers and small frogs. A mixture of high quality canned dog food and cottage cheese, 5:1 ration, and dry cat food can also be fed. Provide fresh water daily.

Health Care

With a varied diet, supplemental vitamins and clean environment, the hedgehog should live out a life span of ten years or more. If the animal stops eating, its stools are not normal, or you notice strange behaviour, contact a veterinarian.

Cats



Cats are one of our most loved pets. All domestic cats are of the same species. Within the species are a number of different breeds. The best known are:

- Long-Haired – Persian and Angora
- Short-Haired – Abyssinian and Domestic Short Hair
- Special Short-Haired – Manx, Siamese and Burmese

Feeding

When your kitten is about 4 weeks old, he will start to eat and drink. Kittens should be weaned when 6 to 8 weeks old. Feed kittens four times a day, feed adult cats twice a day. Feed about the same time at the same place. Remove all leftovers.

Feed a good prepared food, either canned or dry. In addition you may add meat, either raw or cooked. Always cook fish. Raw fish may transmit tapeworms. Provide clean water at all times.

Housing

Cats may go from room to room, and they may take naps on a bed or chair, but they should always have a box or basket of their own. It should be elevated 2 or 3 inches above the floor.

For indoor cats a **scratching post** is a necessity. It enables them to keep their claws trim without scratching furniture or rugs. Whether or not you have a scratching post, you may wish to spray your furniture with a stainless commercial detergent having an odour that repels cats.

The scratching post should be tall enough so that your cat can stretch full length while scratching. It also should be sturdy enough so that he can't knock it over. If you fasten a strip of carpeting around the post, and sprinkle some catnip around its base, your scratching post will be more appealing.

Your cat will enjoy the simplest of toys, and will play with them often. Here are some suggestions: celluloid ball that rattles; cellophane and catnip bag; a spool attached to a strong piece of string, and hung from a chair or doorknob; a rubber mouse that squeaks.

Housebreaking

Cats that get outdoors regularly during the day do not need to be pan trained. If pan training is needed, use a sanitary pan made of rust-less metal such as enamel, rubber or plastic. Fill the pan with earth, sand, sawdust or commercial cat litter. Clean the pan once a day with water and unscented soap. Keep the pan in a secluded location.

It is easy to pan train a kitten, just place him on the pan after every meal, nap or play.

Health Care

A healthy cat should live 10 to 14 years. When your cat becomes ill, take him to a veterinarian. Sickness that should be cared for by a vet is skin disease, colds, prolonged constipation, diarrhea, worms and immunization against infectious enteritis. You may treat your cat for external parasites. Use a recommended preparation.

Comb and brush you cat every day. By doing this, you pick up loose hairs that cats often swallow or shed.

Never pick up a kitten or cat by the scruff of the neck. Never lift him by his legs, or by holding the middle of his body. Always place your left hand under the cat's hindquarters, and your right hand between his front paws and under his chest.

Frogs & Toads



Frogs

Pet frogs are interesting, and fun to watch. They come in a variety of colours, and some can change their colour. They have a head and body, but no real neck. The skin is usually smooth and moist. Frog legs are much longer than their arms, and are a great delicacy. A frog cannot walk, but can leap. A bullfrog holds the record for the farthest leap over 5 feet per jump for three jumps.

Some of the most common are the tree frog, which are the smallest, bullfrog, green frog and yellow legged frog. Salamanders, newts and mudpuppies are all cousins to the frog.

Frogs are amphibious, which means they lead a double life. Their life starts in a pond or stream. At this stage they look nothing like their parents. Young frogs are called **tadpoles** or **polliwogs**. As they grow older, many species move out of water onto land. At this time, they become air breathers, and their gills are replaced by lungs.

It's fun to watch eggs hatch into polliwogs. Polliwogs grow to polly-frogs, and polly-frogs grow to adult frogs. The frog will develop into four stages of growth.

During the spring, take a quart jar, and set out to collect frog eggs. Just follow the singing of the frogs around streams and ponds. You can find eggs at the edge of the water. Most frog eggs are clean and greenish. Fill the jar $\frac{3}{4}$ full of pond water. Hold the jar under the egg mass, and gently push some eggs into the jar. Keep eggs in an uncovered jar until they hatch.

After the eggs hatch, transfer polliwogs to an aquarium. Place 1 inch of clean sand on the bottom of the aquarium. Add several small rocks, and set out a few water plants. The aquarium should be filled with pond water. As polliwogs grow, add extra rocks so they can get out of the water.

There is another type of home that you can make for a frog. It is a cage with a solid bottom, a glass front, and a small mesh wire for sides. Make the cage 24 inches long, 18 inches wide, and 18 inches high. Put soft moss on the floor, and a cake pan of water in one corner. Keep top closed at all times.

Feeding

Polliwogs require a different diet than adult frogs. For polliwogs in captivity, feed spinach leaves, and 1/8 hard-boiled egg yolk. Frogs require live food. Most any insects or mealworms will be sufficient.

Health Care

Change the water in the aquarium when it gets dirty. Keep excess food picked up. In case of sickness, turn frogs loose in their natural habitat.

Toads



Toads are familiar animals, and you can find them in backyards, and gardens feeding on insects, usually late in the afternoon. The old tale that toads cause warts is not true. Toads have rough or warty skin. This warty skin secretes a substance that is irritating to the eyes and mouth of an enemy. This is why a dog or cat quickly drops a toad it has picked up. After handling a toad, you should always wash your hands with plenty of soap and water.

A toad is a kind of frog. He has dry skin, no teeth or upper jaw. He spends most of his life on land, but goes to ponds, rivers or swamps to lay eggs. The young toad is called a tadpole. Toads come in several colours. Some are plain brown; others have black, greenish or red spots. Birds, turtles, fish, snakes, ducks, owls, hawks and many more animals are the toad's enemy.

In the spring, look around the edge of ponds or streams for toad eggs. The eggs are long, jelly-looking strings. Fill a quart jar about ½ inch full of pond water. Hold the jar in the water, and gently push some eggs into the jar. Keep the lid off, and in a warm sunny place, until eggs hatch. Then transfer the tadpoles to an aquarium.

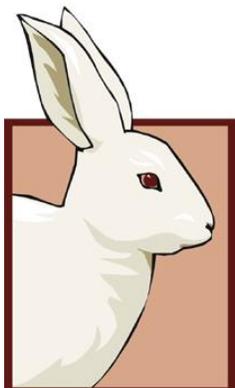
The aquarium should have about 3 inches of water at one end, with sand and rocks at the other end. When the tadpoles become toads, remove them from the aquarium.

A good shelter for toads is a cage 2 feet x 2 feet x 18 inches high with a glass front, and small mesh wire on each side. Fill a cake pan with soft earth, and place in one end of the cage. Place a shallow source of water in another corner.

Feeding

Toads drink water through their skin, and not by mouth. This water comes from dew. Most toads stay buried in the soil during daytime and come out at night to feed on insects. Toads, in captivity, should be fed earthworms, larger insects or mealworms.

Rabbits



If properly housed and cared for, rabbits make satisfying pets. They are highly social animals, and can live peaceably in a cage with other rabbits or guinea pigs.

Breeds

Of the many attractive rabbits, some of the most common are American Chinchilla, Californian, Checkered Giant, English Spot, Flemish Giant, Himalayan, New Zealand, Rex, Satins and Silnes Martens. If your space is limited, one of the smaller breeds such as the Dutch, Polish or the Netherlands is the best selection.

Handling

Rabbits need to be handled very carefully. Never pick up a rabbit by his legs or ears. It is best to grasp the loose skin over his shoulders with one hand, and his hindquarters with the other. Rabbits become tame when you handle, and pet them often.

Housing

Pet rabbits should be housed in a hutch at least 3 feet long, 2 feet wide and 2 feet high. The bottom and sides should be made of a wire mesh to allow plenty of air.

Place a board inside the hutch for your rabbit to sit on instead of having to sit on the wire mesh. The hutch should be strong enough to be safe from dogs.

During the winter, fill a wooden box full of straw so he can burrow into it to stay warm. Keep the hutch in a dry place with plenty of light.

Feeding

Rabbits need a well-balance diet. Commercially prepared pellets are available at most pet stores. Occasionally you may want to treat your rabbit to a carrot, apple, cabbage or lettuce leaf.

Attach a block or spool of salt to the inside wall of the hutch. A heavy ceramic bowl can be used for feed and water.

Health Care

Probably one of the best health tips is to keep the hutch, food and water dish spotlessly clean. To prevent colds, keep the hutch in a dry airy location, free of drafts.

In case of continued scratching of ears and loud sneezes, consult your veterinarian. You can use a commercially prepared powder to control external parasites, such as fleas and lice. If the dewlap or fold of skin under the rabbit's chin becomes sore from drinking water, place the water container on a board to raise it so the dewlap cannot get wet.

Breeding

Male rabbits are called bucks, and females are called does. If you decide to raise a litter of rabbits, be sure to make prior arrangements to sell or give away the babies.

It is best to obtain an already pregnant doe. The buck takes no part in rearing the babies, and must be separated from them.

The gestation is only one month. The litter is usually 7 to 10 babies. Small breeds can be mated at 4 to 5 months of age. A few days before the babies are expected, place a nest box in the hutch. The rabbit will pull fur from her body to line the nest.

In around 10 days the baby rabbits will open their eyes, and within 4 weeks they come out of the nest to feed with their mother. At 2 months of age the mother will wean them. At this time, you should separate the sexes.



Picking the Right Pet

We've covered some of the small pets you may be interested in. You can also learn more about pets by talking to friends, searching the internet, finding information in a library, attending a pet show, or contacting a local animal shelter. In this activity you will gather information about a pet you now have, or one you'd like to have. Pets can be any living creature that lives in, or near your home, and depends on you for care and feeding.

Find information about your favourite pet, and its needs, such as housing, health concerns, the food it likes to eat, and record your findings below.

My favourite pet is a _____

His housing needs are

His health concerns are

He likes to eat

An interesting fact a about my pet

Why I like my pet

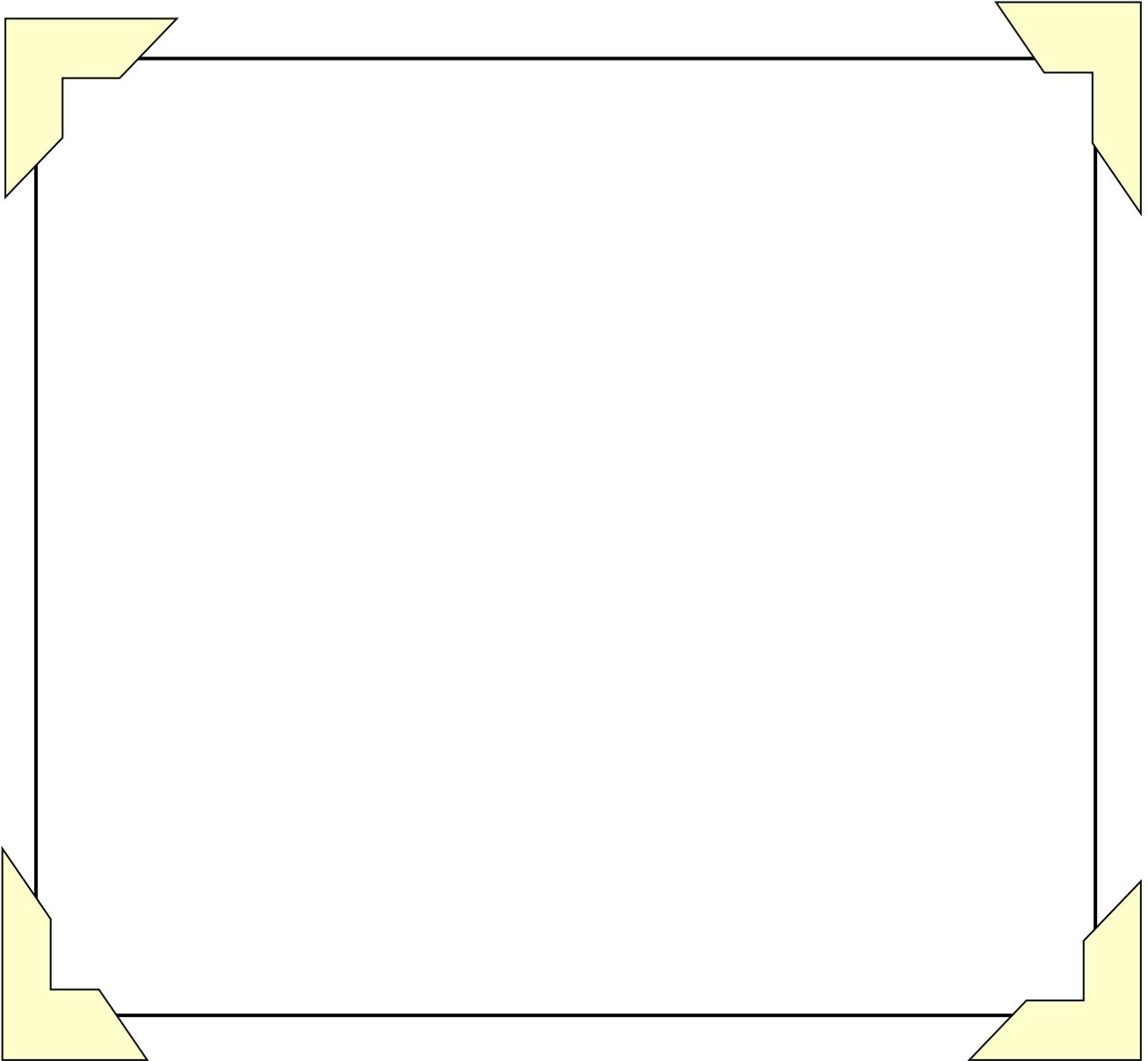
My pet's habits are

Where did you find information about him?

Why would the whole family be involved when deciding to get a pet?

My Favourite Pet

Draw, take a picture of your pet, or cut a picture from a magazine, and place it here.



Pet Costs

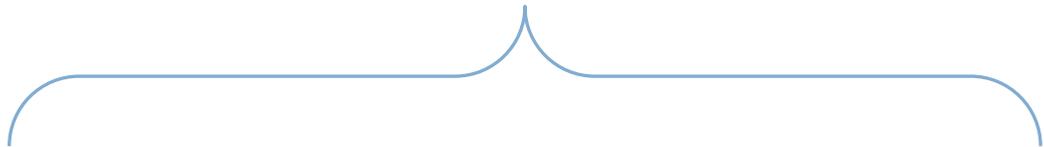
The cost of owning a pet can range from a few dollars a year to hundreds of dollars. Costs are things like pet food, veterinary care, and many other things. You can save money by shopping carefully, and comparing costs. In this activity you will practice your decision-making skills as you shop to find pet supplies.

Make a list of all the items you will need to care for your pet. Then decide how often you need to purchase these items. Before you go shopping estimate (or guess) how much you think these items will cost. Go to two different stores that sell pet supplies and write down the actual costs of all the items on your list.

Pet Shopping List		For _____ <i>(name or kind of pet)</i>		
Supplies I need	How often I need to buy (monthly/yearly/once)	Cost Guesses (estimate)	Real Cost	
			Store 1 Name	Store 2 Name

How does shopping at more than one store help you save money?

What will you consider the next time you shop for something?



Additional Activities

- For one month collect coupons on pet supplies. Coupons can be found in newspapers, magazines, special mailings, pet stores, etc. At the end of the month count them. How many can you use for your pet? How much money could you save if you used coupons to buy pet supplies? If you collect more coupons than you can use before the expiration date, share them with your friends.
- Keep the receipts of all the supplies you buy for your pet (food, bedding, toys, treats, etc.) for six months. At the end of that time total the amount you spent. Think of ways you could reduce your costs but still provide your pet with the quality of care it deserves. Share your ideas with your group.



How did you find the answers to your pet's ancestry?

What is the climate? _____

Was it forested or desert-like? _____

Tell some interesting facts about your pet's ancestry.

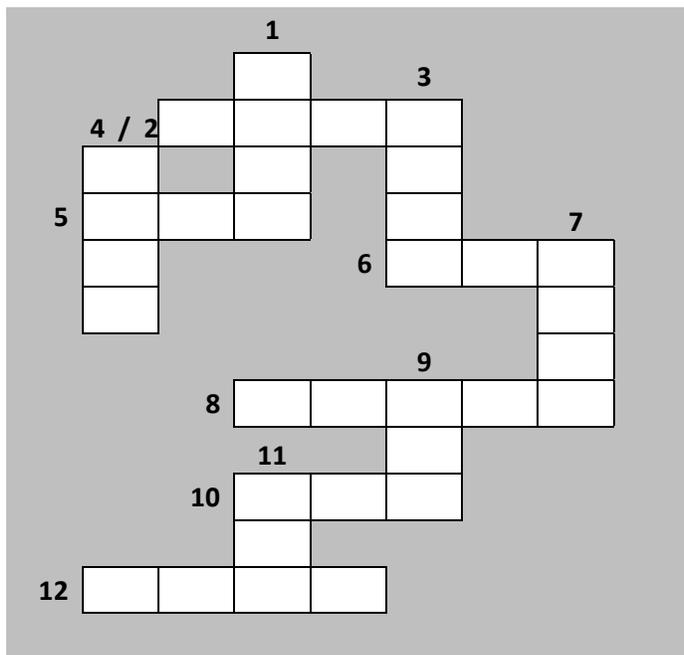
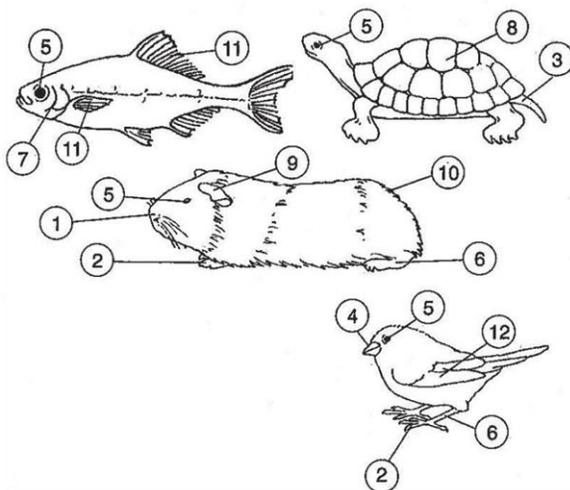
How can learning about your pet's ancestry help you understand his behaviour?

How does learning about his history help you provide for his needs?

Pet Parts

A turtle has a shell for protection. Every living creature has a body with many different parts. Each part has an important purpose or function. For example, birds have wings to fly, and feathers to maintain body temperature.

Complete the crossword puzzle, and then match the parts in the Pet Parts Word Bank with the words that describe their most important use to a pet. Connect the part and the function with a line.



Pet Parts Word Bank

<u>Part</u>	<u>Function</u>
1. Beak	a) Breathing
2. Ear	b) Hearing
3. Eye	c) Protecting
4. Fin	d) Balancing
5. Foot	e) Crushing
6. Fur	f) Seeing
7. Gill	g) Running
8. Leg	h) Smelling
9. Nose	i) Flying
10. Shell	j) Swimming
11. Tail	k) Keeping Warm
12. Wing	l) Grasping

Draw a picture of your pet, or cut one from a magazine. Identify and label all the body parts you can. Be sure to include the function of each part. Again, you will need to research, and find out this information from the internet or library.



Why is learning about your pet's body important?

How could you use your knowledge next time you take your pet to the vet?

What does your pet do all day?

Have you ever quietly watched, and listened to your pet? If you have, you probably know that your pet can teach you many things. By watching your pet closely you can tell when he's hungry, bored, playful or sick. Have fun practicing your observation skills as you do this activity.

Quietly observe your pet for 30 minutes each day, on three different days, at three different times. Write in the chart below what you see or hear your pet doing. Some items you might want to record include eating habits, how he exercises, when he sleeps, how he interacts with other people or pets, plus anything unusual.

My Pet's Diary

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Date			
Time			
What My Pet Did			

How does the time of day make a difference in your pet's behaviour?

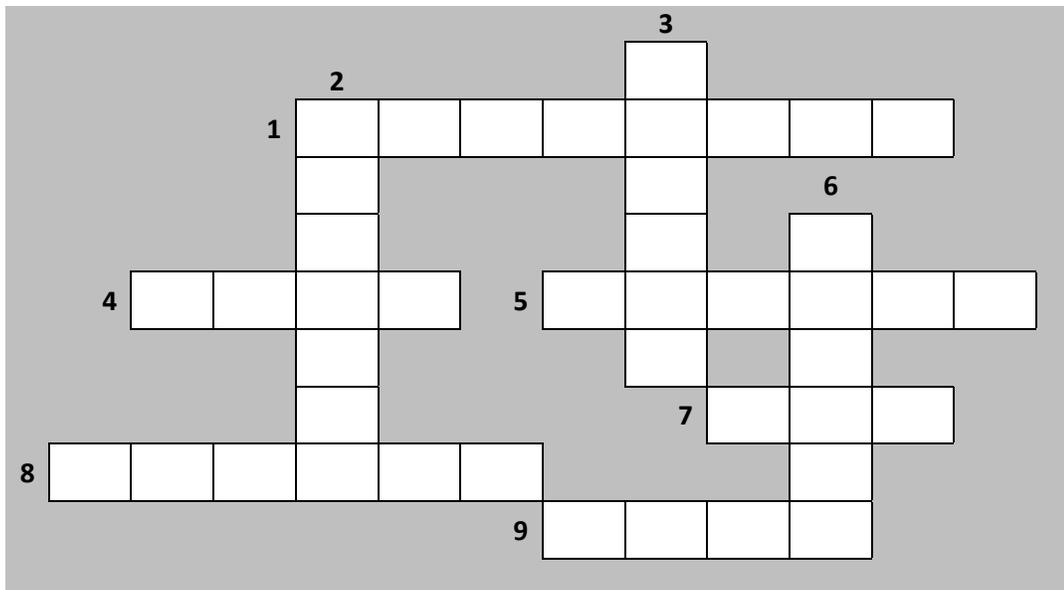
What new things did you learn?



Now complete the crossword puzzle below and see if you can tell what pet is being described by the clues. You can find the nine species in the **Pet Species Word Find** on the next page.

Crossword Puzzle

<u>Across</u>	<u>Down</u>
<p>1. When frightened I will let you know by curling up in a tight ball.</p> <p>4. I can be heard by listening with a hydrophone.</p> <p>5. I sometimes communicate by changing my skin colour.</p> <p>7. When I'm frightened I let out a high-pitched screech that cannot be heard by humans.</p> <p>8. When I'm feeling ill my coat gets unusually oily.</p> <p>9. When I am good I like to squeak and grunt.</p>	<p>2. I frighten easily if disturbed from my sleep and will often bite if I'm suddenly awakened.</p> <p>3. I will often let you know how I feel by talking or squeaking.</p> <p>6. When I am content I like to sing by whistling.</p>



Pet Species Word Find

F E R R E T A G B
R H P A R R O T C
C A V Y D H U F L
E M T G E R B I L
P S F G T G Z S H
I T D L C A T H I
G E E Y R A N A C
H R J D E S U O M

Canary

Cavy

Fish

Hamster

Lizard

Parrot

Rat

Cat

Ferret

Gerbil

Hedgehog

Mouse

Pig

Turtle

Caring for Your Pet

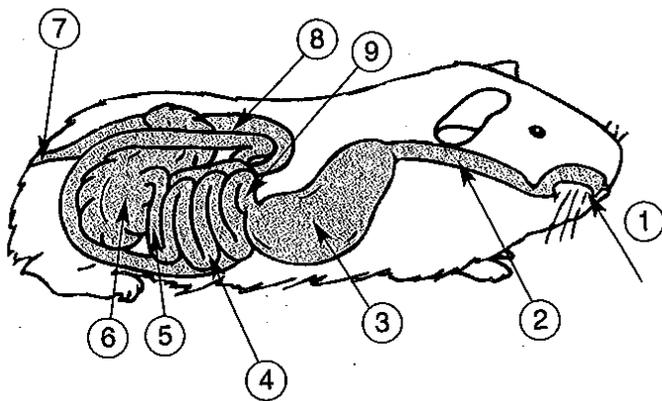
Feeding Your Pet

When the ancestors of your pet were in the wild they found, and ate a wide variety of food. Your pet relies on you to provide all the nutrients he needs each day such as the right amounts of protein, fat, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals and water. Understanding your pet's digestive system will help you select the foods that will meet your pet's nutritional requirements, and be good tasting.

Match the numbered parts shown on the hamster's digestive system with the names shown in **Digestive System Parts**. Then find a picture that shows your pet's digestive system and tape or draw the picture on the next page. Research and label each part of the digestive system.

Digestive System Parts

- _____ a. Anus (Rectum)
- _____ b. Esophagus
- _____ c. Large intestine
- _____ c-1. Cecum
- _____ c-2. Colon
- _____ d. Mouth
- _____ e. Small Intestine
- _____ e-1. Duodenum
- _____ e-2. Jejunum
- _____ e-3. Ileum
- _____ f. Stomach



Inner Workings

- **Mouth** – the teeth break the food into small particles and an enzyme begins carbohydrate digestion.
- **Esophagus** – muscle contractions move the food from the mouth to the stomach.
- **Stomach** – serve as a vat where chemicals are added to the food to start the digestion of fats, protein and carbohydrates.
- **Small Intestine** – in this very complex, very long tube composed of jejunum, duodenum and ileum, digestion and absorption continue. More nutrients are absorbed here than anywhere else.
- **Large Intestine** – composed of the cecum and ileum the main function is to absorb water. It also adds mucous material to the remaining food to aid in movement of food through the tract.
- **Anus** – the opening through which the undigested portion of the food is eliminated.

My Pet's Digestive System

Why is it important to learn about your pet's digestive system?

How does understanding his digestive system help you make good decisions about his diet?

Fit & Trim

All animals need good nutrition. Nutrition means getting the right kind of food in the right amounts to keep the body healthy. Nutrients include vitamins, minerals, protein, water and energy. Your pet relies on you to provide it with a nutritious diet. Just as you need energy to grow, and stay active, so does your pet. Calories measure the energy food provides. If you eat too many calories for your activity, and growth you gain weight. When you eat few calories, compared to your activity, and growth level, then you lose weight. The same is true for your pet. A balance of calories and activity are important to keep you, and your pet healthy. This activity will help you discover your pet's nutritional needs.



Below is a list of ingredients (**Feed Ingredient Word Bank**) that can be found in many different pet foods. Begin this activity by checking the ingredient that is included in your pet's diet. (*Hint: read the ingredient label on your pet's food box or bag to find the answer.*) Then complete the **Feed Ingredient Word Find** by using all the words from the word bank. Finally, finish this activity by completing the **Menu Box** on the next page.

Feed Ingredient Word Find

S Y M U I C L A C A
 O E L T P M I R H S
 Y A S Z O B Z I N C
 B S L S T A I R O P
 E T H S A R N O E E
 A B S A T L R N P A
 N M I L O E O A T S
 O E F T L Y C M A F
 I S N I M A T I V L
 L V O A F L A F L A
 T A E H W D E E S X

Feed Ingredient Word Bank

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yeast | <input type="checkbox"/> Peas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wheat | <input type="checkbox"/> Seed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potato | <input type="checkbox"/> Oats |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alfalfa | <input type="checkbox"/> Iron |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fish (meal) | <input type="checkbox"/> Molasses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shrimp | <input type="checkbox"/> Barley |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calcium | <input type="checkbox"/> Vitamins |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soybean Oil
(meal) | <input type="checkbox"/> Milo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Zinc | <input type="checkbox"/> Flax |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Salt |

Menu

In this space write your pet's diet.

Main Meal:

Treats:

Don't forget fresh water daily!

Why is it important to know your pet's nutritional needs?

What are the best sources for finding nutritional information for your pet?

What would happen to your pet's health if you didn't make the right choices about the type of food to feed it?

What foods did you select as supplements and why?

Some pets are given the same diet every day for their entire lives! You'll want to make sure your pet is fed a diet that meets his requirements. Sometimes a wider variety of foods is necessary to supply all the vitamins, minerals, energy and protein needed. One way to select feed is to compare the labels on your pet's feed and other similar products.

Clip the nutrition label from a box, or bag of pet food. Tape the label in the space provided. Answer the questions about your label.

My Pet Food Label

Pet Food Facts

What animal should eat this food?

How much should the animal eat each day?

What feed ingredients are used to supply?

Energy _____
Protein _____
Minerals _____
Vitamins _____

What other food might be needed to make sure your pet receives a "balanced" diet each day?

What foods are appropriate to provide variety to your pet's diet?

Planning a Safe Environment for Your Pet

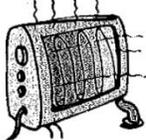
As a pet owner you have made the decision to be responsible for your pet's needs. Being responsible means planning a safe environment for your pet to live in. Keeping your pet healthy, and safe from disease, and making sure friends or family members who play with your pet know how to handle it correctly, is all part of being a responsible pet owner. In this activity you will look at pictures of safety hazards and tell why they are hazardous.

Here are pictures of possible safety hazards found in the home. In the space next to each picture describe how this might be a hazard for a pet. Then check your pet's environment for any possible unsafe situation.

1



2



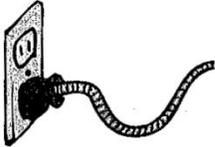
3



4



5



What possible hazards did you find in your pet's environment?

What did you do to eliminate these hazards?

Why is it important to make your pet's environment free from hazards?

How does planning ahead help you provide your pet with a safe and secure environment?

Harmful Household Plants

Common household plants such as English Ivy, Elephant Ear, Philodendron and Azaleas are poisonous, and harmful to your pet if eaten. Safe plants include the Spider Plant, Swedish Ivy and Dracaena.

Your Pet's Home

Every living thing has a home. A home can be a house, a tree, a hole, etc. Your home is different than your pet's home in size, looks and location. But your home makes you feel secure and comfortable, and that's how your pet's home should make it feel.

What is it about your home that makes it right for you? Does your home give you space for sleeping, eating and playing? Does it protect you from bad weather and rain? Your pet's home should provide the same types of things. This activity will help you identify your pet's housing needs as you practice your planning skills.

First think about what your pet's home should include. Use the **Pet Shelter Checklist** to help. Then design a home for your pet and label what you include.

Pet Shelter Checklist

- Light source
- Safety features (lid, lock, etc.)
- Ventilation
- Proper temperature
- Bedding area
- Location of pet's home in your house
- Food/water containers
- Exercise space
- Other needs (perch, chew string, tunnels, etc.)

My Pet's Home

What did you include in your pet's space?

What was the most difficult part of designing your pet's living space?

Why is it important to plan your pet's home?

What are the differences between your space, and your pet's living space

Home Alone

There may be a time when you are gone, and can't be home to take care of your pet. You will need to plan ahead, and teach a family member or a friend what to do. In this activity you will make a plan for caring for your pet when you are not home.

Complete the instructions below for your pet. After you fill in the chart, go through the directions with someone who might care for your pet. Post a copy near your pet's cage.

Pet Care Instructions			
For _____			
	How Much?	How Often?	Why Needed?
Food			
Water			
Exercise			
Cleaning Area			

How will you decide who is the best person to care for your pet if you cannot do it yourself?

Why is it helpful to plan ahead for your pet's care?



Keeping Your Pet Healthy

Remember the last time you saw a doctor for a checkup? Your eyes, ears, reflexes, temperature, pulse and respiration were probably checked.

When your pet visits the veterinarian many of the same things are examined. You can help your pet stay healthy by carefully checking your pet, and being able to recognize a healthy animal, so you can spot potential problems. In this activity you'll practice developing your examinations skills.

Pretend you have been asked over the phone by your veterinarian to describe how your pet looks. The vet has asked all the items listed on the chart. Add additional items to check, such as teeth and toes (if your pet has toes). After you have recorded all the symptoms of a healthy pet, list at least one symptom of a sick pet for each item.

Vital Signs

- **Temperature:** if the body temperature raises or lowers dramatically, something may be wrong. Your normal temperature is 98.6 degrees F. Normal temperature for birds is 105-110 degrees F, and rodents 102-104 degrees F.
- **Pulse Rate:** the pulse rate can be felt each time the heart beats, and forces blood through the arteries causing them to expand. The number of heart beats is equal to the pulse rate. A smaller animal has a higher heart beat than a larger one. Normal pulse rates for a guinea pig is 240-280 beats/minutes, birds 300 and hamsters 450.
- **Respiration Rate:** respiration is breathing. Counting the number of times the ribs or flanks rise and fall in one minute equals the respiration rate. Normal rates: guinea pigs 60-90 per minute; birds 12-110; and hamster 74.

Pet Examination Chart

Species _____
 Name _____
 Date _____

	Healthy Pet	Unhealthy Pet
Eyes		
Nose		
Skin or Fur		
Body Temperature		
Respiration Rate		
Pulse Rate		
Overall Appearance		
Behaviour		
Appetite		
Vaccinations Required		

What are the signs that your pet is normal?

What might change if your pet is sick?

Where could you find more information on the health of your pet?

Why is it important to know the signs of a healthy pet?

What could cause your pet's vital signs to change?



Additional Activities

- Take the body temperature, pulse rate and respiration rate of your pet one time each week for four weeks. Graph the results.
- Select a disease that would affect your pet's vital signs. Write a brief summary about the disease and how it can be prevented.



Keeping Healthy

Pets require the right diet, environment and care to stay healthy and contented. When any one of these is not adequate, sickness and disease may result. Immediate action is necessary for some diseases, or your pet may die. Being able to recognize the symptoms of possible diseases will help you keep your pet healthy. In this activity you'll be introduced to diseases, and symptoms of several different pets.



Match the disease/symptom with the species and treatment.

Pet Diseases and Symptoms		
Disease/Symptom	Species	Treatment
1. Lice or mites	Bird	a) Vaccinate for protection
2. Ich – white spots on the body		b) Keep the terrarium clean and give fresh water
3. Swollen or red eyelids	Cavy	c) Clean, dry, ventilated cage and medication
4. Lesions on the skin		d) Give Maracyn, a medicine
5. Cage paralysis – can't move head or claws		e) Turn off the aquarium light for several days
6. Skin necrosis – abscesses in the skin	Frog	f) Use approved powders and sprays
7. New castle disease – a bad cold, then unable to stand		g) Antibiotics or sulfa therapy. Lower terrarium temperature at night
8. Fin and tail rot – ragged fins	Fish	h) Raise the aquarium temperature to 80 degrees F
9. Dry, husky cough		i) Apply a warm weak boric acid wash to eyes
10. Pneumonia – bubbles at nostrils and sneezing	Lizard	j) Lance and disinfect wound with 3% hydrogen peroxide solution
11. Popeye – swollen eyes		k) Proper diet, vitamin D and exercise

Why is learning about diseases important?

How do you decide when to treat something yourself and when to call a vet?

Disease Prevention Tips

- ✓ Clean pen and food container weekly
- ✓ Feed a balanced diet
- ✓ Provide fresh water daily
- ✓ Never transfer water or feed containers from one pen to another
- ✓ Protect from cold, drafts and excessive moisture

Additional Activities

- Make a list of the most important diseases, symptoms and treatments for your pet.
- Visit with a veterinarian or someone who raises your kind of pet about possible disease problems.

Handling Your Pet

Have you ever done something special for a friend? How did it make you feel? It is also important to treat your pet with kindness. One way you can do this is by handling your pet properly, and showing others how to do the same. If an animal is mistreated, or handled wrong it will protect itself by scratching, biting or hissing. You will also find that the next time you want to handle your pet it may not want you to disturb it. In this activity you will help others learn how to properly handle your pet.



Research the handling tips for your pet, and record your findings below. Write three to four helpful tips for handling your pet. Show your family and friends this list, and help them learn to properly handle your pet. Post a copy of these tips near your pet's cage. This will help remind others how to handle your pet when you're not around.

Handling Tips For Your Pet	
Pets Name	
#1	
#2	
#3	
#4	

How did you help your family members properly handle your pet?

What are some other things you could share with others about your pet?

How can you tell when your pet is not feeling comfortable and safe?

What are some other ways you show kindness towards your pet?

Word Scramble & Matching Game

Complete the word scramble and matching game below. Unscramble each of the animal names, and draw a line from the animal to the handling tip for that animal.

<p>1. EGBLIR</p> <p>___ ___ ___ ___ ___</p>	<p>a) This soft, furry, short-tailed rodent likes to sleep during the day. When handling it is best to gently wake it before you pick it up.</p>
<p>2. ROFG</p> <p>___ ___ ___</p>	<p>b) This reptile should never be picked up by its tail or it might break off. (It will grow back.)</p>
<p>3. MERAHST</p> <p>___ ___ ___ ___ ___</p>	<p>c) This long-tailed rodent is very quick and active. When handled it should be cupped in your hands and held securely.</p>
<p>4. KNEAS</p> <p>___ ___ ___ ___</p>	<p>d) This amphibian needs moist skin to keep healthy. It is usually best not to handle it very often.</p>
<p>5. HCMAEEOLN</p> <p>___ ___ ___ ___ ___</p>	<p>e) This tailless rodent should be handled by placing the animal on your forearm and hand, with your free hand supporting its back. It will usually grunt and squeak to tell you how it feels.</p>
<p>6. EUGIN IGP</p> <p>___ ___ ___ ___ ___</p>	<p>f) This reptile prefers to hold you. When handling this animal you need to move slowly and gently.</p>

Play Time

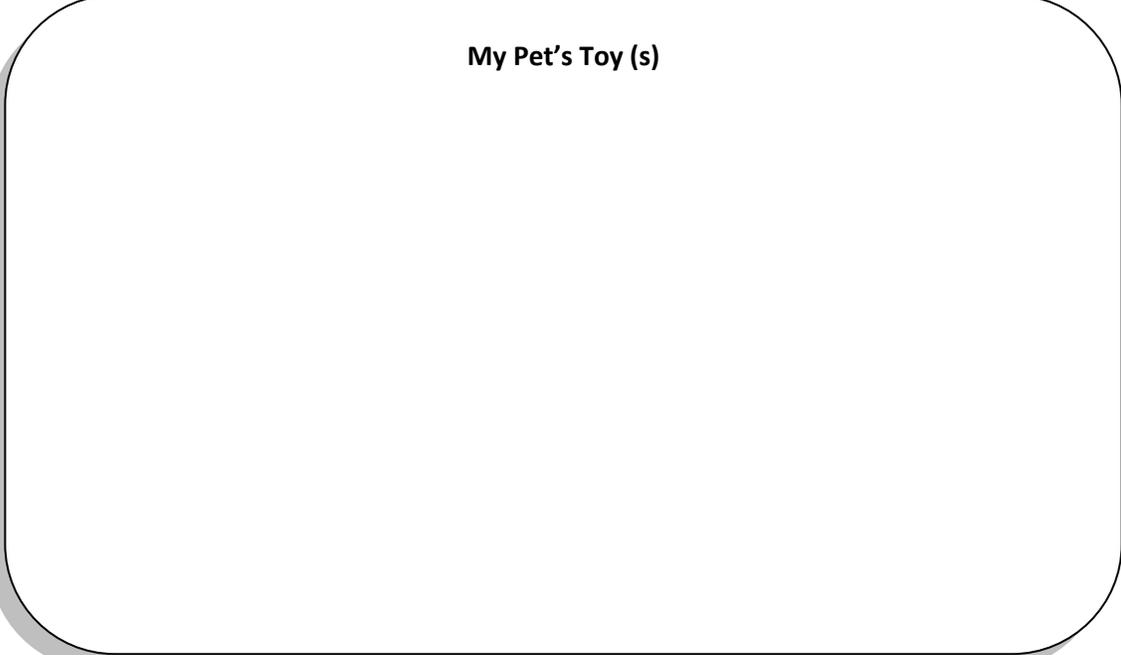
Having fun things for your pet to do when you're not around is important for its well being. In this activity you will watch your pet's behaviour and design a toy.

Begin by watching your pet. Pay special attention to the things he likes to do: jump, dig, chew, hide, etc. List the things you observe. Next make a toy for your pet. Think about things you have around the house that could be used. If your pet likes to tunnel, what could you use to make tunnels? Be creative. Keep in mind the objects you use must be clean and safe (no sharp edges or chemical residues). Be sure they can't get tangled up. Don't use anything that might bring harm if they chew on it.

Things my pet likes to do:

In the space below, paste a picture or draw a toy you made for your pet, and paste or draw pictures of his other favourite toys. Don't forget to label them.

My Pet's Toy (s)



How did you make the toy?

Why was it helpful to watch your pet's behaviour before you designed the toy?

How does a toy keep your pet healthy?



Additional Activity

Visit a store that sells pet toys, and select a toy for your pet. Examine the toy, what it is made of, how your pet would use it, how long would it last, and how much it costs. Decide if it would be better to buy the toy or make something similar at home.



Fitting & Showing Your Pet

Being able to show your pet to others is fun to do. Sometimes you'll show him to friends and visitors, and other times you may want to take him to more public places, such as pet shows or school. In order to prepare yourself, and your pet you will want to plan ahead.



Pretend that you plan to enter your pet in a pet show, or take your pet to school. The show will include opportunities for strangers to talk to you about your pet, as well as for them to touch and possibly hold your pet. Use the “**My Show Plan Checklist**” to organize how you will prepare. Then write in your own words what you did to prepare for the show.

My Show Plan Checklist	
Training My Pet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pet will accept being handled by strangers <input type="checkbox"/> Pet will be comfortable in strange locations <input type="checkbox"/> I will be prepared to talk about my pet and answer questions <input type="checkbox"/> I will know how to properly show my pet 	Housing, Transportation and Supplies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Carrier to transport pet <input type="checkbox"/> Something interesting in which to exhibit pet at the show <input type="checkbox"/> Supplies needed for show and showing <input type="checkbox"/> Health requirements and entry forms
Preparing the Pet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Groom your pet 	
What I did to prepare for the show:	

How did you find additional information to complete your plan?

What might happen if you don't prepare both your pet and yourself for a public show?

How does developing a plan help you be more prepared?



Additional Activity

With your group, role play a show experience. Take turns playing the role of someone who isn't familiar with your pet, and someone who is judging you and your exhibit. Oh, don't forget to invite your pet!



Glossary

Abscess – a localized collection of pus in any part of the body usually caused by breakdown of tissue and surrounded by an inflamed area.

Absorption – the movement of materials that have been digested in the alimentary canal to the blood and lymph vessels.

Aeration – mechanical release of air at the bottom of an aquarium that results in the exchange of carbon dioxide for oxygen at the surface of the water.

Afterbirth – the placenta and membranes that are expelled from the uterus after the birth of the fetus.

Agouti – a pattern in which individual hairs have several bands of light and dark pigment with black tips.

Albinism – a heritable condition that results in pure white animals without pigmentation in the skin, eyes and hair.

Alimentary Canal – the pathway food takes from the time it enters the mouth until it leaves the body. It is composed of the mouth, pharynx, esophagus or gullet, stomach, small intestine and large intestine.

Amphibians – animals of the class amphibian. They live parts of their lives in water, and parts on land. They hatch as aquatic larvae, breathe by using gills, and grow to adult forms with air-breathing lungs. Frogs and toads are amphibians.

Anatomy – the study of body parts of an animal or plant.

Ancestor – a person or animal from which others came later. Grandparents and great grandparents are one's ancestors.

Aquatic – living or growing in or near water.

Aquarium – a water-filled container in which aquatic plants and animals live.

Assimilation – the body cells take the blood whatever nutrients they require for growth and repair.

Avian – pertaining to birds; a bird.

Aviary – a building or enclosure for breeding, rearing and keeping of birds.

Bedding – material used for animals to sleep on. Can be straw, sawdust, woodchips, newspaper, etc.

Bird – an animal that has wings, and a body covered with feathers. It is warm blooded, lays eggs and has a backbone.

Breed – a certain kind of animal. A poodle is a breed of dog.

Boar – a male cavy.

Calories – energy value of food.

Captivity – held in a certain place. Not allowed to run free.

Carapace – a hard, bony outer shield covering the back or part of the back of some animals, such as turtles.

Carnivore – an animal that eats only meat.

Caudal – the tail region of an animal.

Cavy – see guinea pig.

Characteristics – a unique quality of a person or animal.

Chinchilla – a small mammal, rodent; not recommended as a pet for children.

Claws – a sharp, curved nail on the foot of a bird or animal.

Cloaca – the common opening for the colon, urethra and reproductive tract in birds, and egg-laying mammals.

Cold-blooded – having a body temperature that changes with the air or water around it. Fish, amphibians and reptiles are cold-blooded.

Colony – a group of the same kind or species such as ants.

Coprophagy – when an animal eats its own waste.

Cuttlebone – a block of minerals, such as calcium for birds.

Decapods – living creature with ten legs.

Degus – a rat-sized New World burrowing rodent, having long, smooth fur and black-tipped, tufted tail.

Dermatology – study of the skin and its disorders.

Digestion – the process of breaking food down from complex into simpler compounds through the action of digestive juices and bacterial activity.

Digits – fingers or finger-like body parts.

Disinfectants – an agent (often a chemical substance) that destroys infection-producing organisms.

Domesticated – to tame or train so it can live comfortably with humans.

Dormancy – not active for a period of time.

Dystocia – a difficult labour.

Embryo – the young before hatching from an egg.

Estrus – the period of time when a female is receptive to receiving a male for mating.

Estrous cycle – the complete cycle of reproductive changes in female mammals.

Ethnologist – person who studies the behaviour of animals.

Ferret – a long, furry animal that looks somewhat like a weasel.

Fish – animals belong to the class Pisces (Latin for fish). They usually have fins, gills and a streamlined body.

Frog – a tailless, amphibian that lives mostly in water.

Function – the purpose for what something was designed.

Gerbil (*Gerbillus lateronia*) – a small mammal, a rodent that belongs to the order Rodentia.

Gestation Period – the time when a female animal is pregnant, or having young growing in her body.

Guinea Pig – (Cavy) a small mammal, a rodent that belongs to the order Rodentia.

Hamster – a small mammal, a rodent that belongs to the order Rodentia.

Herbivore – an animal that eats only plants.

Hob – a male ferret.

Homeothermic – warm-blooded; able to maintain a relatively constant, and warm body temperature that is independent of the temperature of the surroundings.

Humane Society – an organization that helps find good safe homes for animals.

Hutch – a pen or coop for small animals.

Ichthyology – the science that deals with fishes.

Inbreeding – the mating of closely-related animals.

Jill – a female ferret.

Large intestine – a tube-like organ in the digestive system. The main function is to absorb water. It also adds mucous material to the remaining food to aid in movement of food through the digestive tract.

Malocclusion – the improper meeting of teeth (e.g. Buck teeth, wolf teeth).

Mammals – animals that belong to the class Mammalia. They have self-regulating body temperature, hair and unborn young that develop inside the mother animal's body.

Mouse – a small mammal, a rodent, that belongs to the order Rodentia.

Mutation – a sudden unpredictable change in the genes (carriers of inheritance) that appear suddenly and may be inherited.

Neuter – to castrate or spay an animal.

Nocturnal – active at night.

Nutrient – minerals, vitamins, carbohydrates, etc. needed by plants, animals or humans in order to live and grow.

Omnivore – an animal that eats both meat and plants.

Origin – the source or place from where something came.

Ovary – the gonad or sexual gland of the female in which ova are formed.

Oviduct – tubular passage that carries ova to the uterus.

Oviparous – animals that lay eggs.

Ovoviviparous – bearing live young that hatch from eggs within the mother’s body, as in lizards.

Ovum (ova) – the female reproductive cell, an egg.

Parasite – an organism that lives on or in a different organism. It contributes nothing to the survival of its host. Parasites can live inside a body (internal parasite) or outside a body (external parasite).

Pet – a non food animal included in a household as a companion, and on a status almost that of people.

Plastron – the part of the turtle’s or tortoise’s shell that covers the belly.

Polydactyl – a cavy with extra toes on its hind feet.

Puberty – time at which an animal achieves sexual maturity and can reproduce.

Quarantine – restrictions placed on entering or leaving premises to avoid the spread of disease.

Rectum – the portion of the large intestine that ends at the anus.

Rodent – any of a number of animals (mammals) that have a pair of large front teeth for gnawing.

Skeleton – a framework of bones that supports the body of all animals with backbones.

Small Intestine – a very complex, very long tube composed of a duodenum and ileum, in which digestion and absorption continue. More nutrients are absorbed here than anywhere else.

Species – a classification that groups plants and animals that have certain characteristics, for example, lions and tigers are two different species of cat.

Sow – a female cavy.

Stomach – the main function is to serve as a kind of vat where chemicals are added to the food to start the digestion of fats, protein and carbohydrates. Some nutrients are absorbed through the wall into the bloodstream.

Tadpole – the larval form of a frog or toad.

Terrarium – an enclosure in which small animals are kept.

Territory – area patrolled and defended by an animal which it considers to be its own.

Toad – a tailless amphibian resembling a frog. It lives mostly on land.

Tortoise – any of the terrestrial or land turtles.

Toxemia – a complication of pregnancy.

Uterus – the part of the reproductive tract in female mammals in which the fetus develops during pregnancy; also called a womb.

Vertebrate – An animal with a backbone.

Warm-blooded – having a body temperature that stays nearly the same no matter what the temperature of surrounding air or water. Birds and mammals are warm-blooded.

Weaning – converting a young animal from milk diet to solid foods.



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