



# Cherry Head Red-Footed Tortoise at a Glance

**Fun fact** ↻ Cherry head red-footed tortoises are named for the reddish-orange scales on their head and legs.

Difficulty of care: **Advanced**

Average lifespan: **50–80 years with proper care**

Average adult size: **9–14”**

Diet: **Omnivorous (greens, hay, limited protein, small amount of fruit)**

Minimum habitat size: **Juvenile indoor: 36”x 18”x 16”;**  
**Adult indoor: 36”x 72”x 16”;** **Outdoor: 48”x 72”x 24”**

Temperature: **Warm side 85–95 F; cool side 75–80 F;**  
**basking 90–100 F; never below 70 F indoors**

## Enclosure Setup & Maintenance

- Use the largest habitat possible. Juveniles need a minimum 36”x 18”x 16” indoor enclosure; adults need at least 36”x 72”x 16”. Outdoor habitats must have walls buried 8–12” and measure at least 48”x 72”x 24”.
- Provide moisture-retaining substrate such as coconut husk, cypress mulch, or untreated soil outdoors. Maintain 70–90% humidity. Keep enclosures out of direct sun and use secure lids.
- Provide a warm zone of 85–95 F, a cool zone of 75–80 F, and a basking spot of 90–100 F. Offer 10–12 hours of UV light daily unless they have natural sunlight.
- Include a large soaking dish and clean it daily. Add hides and flat rocks; avoid hot rocks.
- Spot-clean daily; deep-clean indoor habitats weekly and outdoor habitats monthly using reptile-safe cleaners or a 3% bleach solution.

## Supply Checklist

- Properly sized indoor or outdoor habitat
- Substrate, hay, sphagnum moss
- Food and water dishes
- Hideouts, plants, climbing décor
- Heat bulbs, fixtures, under-tank heater, thermostat
- UVB lighting and fixture
- Thermometers and humidity gauge
- Mister
- Commercial tortoise food
- Calcium, vitamin D, and multivitamin supplements



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## Health

A healthy tortoise has clear eyes, ears, and vent, a smooth shell, and a trimmed beak. Watch for swollen eyes, shell or skin sores, lethargy, poor appetite, or overgrown beak/nails.

Seek veterinary care if anything seems off, and schedule annual vet checkups.

**Fun fact** ↻ These tortoises are generally tolerant of gentle handling and can be personable.

## Diet

Feed your tortoise mostly dark leafy greens and high-fiber hay (70%). Offer animal protein—such as earthworms or hard-boiled eggs—once weekly (20%). Limit fruit to 10%.

Provide calcium and vitamin D supplements: juveniles two to three times weekly; adults once weekly. Add a multivitamin once a week.

Clean, fresh water must always be available.



## Fun fact

↻ They can live indoors or outdoors, depending on climate.