



# Guinea Pig at a Glance

Difficulty of care: **Beginner**

Average lifespan: **5-7 years**

Diet: **Mostly hay; daily vegetables; limited pellets; small amounts of fruit; vitamin C required**

Minimum habitat size: **36" L x 30" W x 18" H for one guinea pig**

Temperature: **65-75 F; never above 80 F**



**Fun fact** ↪ Their teeth grow continuously; chewing hay helps keep them healthy.

## Enclosure Setup & Maintenance

- Guinea pigs need a large, solid-bottom cage with wire bars no more than ½ inch apart. Start with at least a 36" x 30" x 18" enclosure for one guinea pig and increase size by 20% for each additional pet. Keep them in same-sex groups unless neutered or spayed.
- Place the cage away from other household pets, direct sunlight, and drafts, and maintain temperatures between 65-75 F.
- Line the bottom with paper bedding, aspen shavings, or machine-washable liners. Add hideouts, toys, tunnels, and food and water dishes.
- Provide a safe playpen or guinea-proofed space for daily exercise.
- Clean the cage every day because guinea pigs produce a lot of urine, and dirty bedding can lead to skin and respiratory issues.

## Supply Checklist

- Appropriately sized cage
- Playpen or guinea-proof exercise area
- Bedding or cage liner
- Hideout or house
- Water bottle or bowl
- Food bowl
- Hay, pellets, vitamin C, and treats
- Toys, ramps, and tunnels



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## Diet

Guinea pigs need hay available at all times; Timothy and other grass hays are ideal. About 75% of their diet should be hay.

Offer 1-2 tablespoons of fortified pellets daily. Provide up to 1 cup of vegetables such as dark leafy greens, carrots, cilantro, parsley, and bell peppers. Give fruit only once or twice a week in small portions.

Keep fresh water available in a bottle or bowl. All guinea pigs need 10-50 mg of vitamin C per day from vegetables or supplements.

**Fun fact** ↪ Guinea pigs often get the “zoomies” when excited.



## Health

Schedule yearly vet visits. Watch for signs of illness such as labored breathing, loose stool, discolored urine, lumps, lethargy, itching, or not eating.

Common issues include ear infections, ringworm, mites or lice, heatstroke, and dental problems. Contact a vet if you notice anything unusual.



**Fun fact** ↪ Guinea pigs “wheek,” purr, and coo to communicate.