



Water Dragon at a Glance

Difficulty of care: **Advanced**

Average lifespan: **Up to 15 years**

Average adult size: **2–3' long**

Diet: **Omnivorous (mostly insects)**

Minimum habitat size: **55 gallons (juvenile), 540 gallons (adult)**

Temperature: **80–85 F (cool zone), 95–100 F (basking)**

Fun fact  About 75% of a water dragon's length is their tail.



Enclosure Setup & Maintenance

- Water dragons need tall, well-ventilated enclosures with plenty of climbing space and a large water area for swimming. Juveniles require at least a 55-gallon tank, while adults need a much larger 540-gallon enclosure, usually custom built.
- Use moisture-retaining substrates like sphagnum moss or coconut fiber, and avoid gravel or wood chips.
- Provide multiple hiding spots, sturdy branches, rocks, and plants for climbing and security. Add a visual barrier to the tank walls to prevent nose injuries from rubbing.
- Maintain a basking area of 95–100 F and a cooler zone of 80–85 F. Humidity should stay between 70%–80%.
- Offer 10–12 hours of UV light daily and replace bulbs regularly. Spot-clean daily and deep-clean the enclosure weekly, ensuring all items are rinsed and dried before reuse.



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Supply Checklist

- Large, tall enclosure
- Moisture-holding substrate
- Water and food dishes
- Hides, branches, and plants
- Heat lights and fixtures
- UVB lighting
- Thermometer and humidity gauge
- Calcium and multivitamin supplements
- Live insects and worms

Health

Healthy water dragons are alert, active, and have clear eyes and a strong appetite.

- **Signs of illness:** Weight loss, lack of basking, or refusing food
- **Physical issues:** Swelling, lumps, or trouble walking
- **Shedding problems:** Often linked to low humidity

Regular vet visits and proper habitat conditions help prevent most health problems.

Fun fact ↪ Hissing or puffing up is a sign of stress.

Diet

Water dragons eat a diet made up mostly of insects. About 90% of their food should be gut-loaded insects and worms, such as crickets, earthworms, mealworms, waxworms, and grasshoppers. These insects should be dusted with supplements, alternating between calcium with vitamin D and calcium without vitamin D, and with a multivitamin added once a week.

Fruits and vegetables should make up less than 15% of their diet. Suitable options include leafy greens, carrots, sweet potatoes, and fruits like mangoes and berries.

Occasionally, appropriately sized frozen and thawed mice can be offered as treats, but only when the lizard is large enough. Never feed live rodents.

Juveniles should be fed daily, while adults eat every two to three days. Fresh, clean water should always be available in a shallow dish large enough for soaking.

Fun fact ↪

They may change color based on temperature or humidity.

