

Chinchilla care at a glance

Accommodation

Minimum size: 120cm x 90cm x 60cm.

Ideal location: Cool, quiet room
House indoors.

Substrate depth: Shallow. Not necessary if litter trays are used.

Suitable substrate types:
Fleece, hemp, shredded paper, shredded card, hay, newspaper.

Nocturnal – mostly active at night

Natural behaviours

Running, jumping, foraging, gnawing, sand bathing.

Reproduction

Gestation period: 111 days.

Age of sexual maturity: 4-6 months.

Split from opposite sex litter mates: 8 weeks.

Neuter: Single males if introducing to females.

Neuter from: 3-4 months and ideally before 6 months.

Average life span
10-20 years



Cleaning

Spot clean daily: Remove uneaten food. Sweep up poos. Wipe down shelves and wheel if needed. Change litter tray and water.

Full clean: Approx 1 x weekly. Empty cage, wipe or wash enrichment and litter trays. Wash fleeces.

Litter trays: Can be taught to use one for wee but not poo.

Vaccinations: Not required
Microchipping: Not required

Companionship

Ideal groups:

- Pair or small group of females
- Pair of males
- Mixed sex pair

Diet

Herbivore – eats only plant-based food.

Main feed: Unlimited hay, 1 tbsp pellets.

Additional food: See feeding charts.

Harmful food: Food with high sugar and water content, nuts and seeds, corn.

Enrichment

Provide: Wheel, tunnels, ledges, hides, safe tree branches.

Daily sand bath.

No plastic.

Minimum wheel size: 40cm.

Chinchillas can be rehomed from 8 weeks old

Top tip

Sand baths are irresistible to most chinchillas. Try using one to encourage them back to their cage after time out.