

Guinea pig care at a glance

Accommodation

Minimum size sheltered accommodation: 5ft x 2ft (150cm x 60cm) for a pair. See additional housing guidance

Minimum size exercise run: 6ft x 4ft (180cm x 120cm).

Or a total indoor area of 6ft x 4ft (180cm x 120cm).

Indoor/outdoor: Either but additional precautions and care needed if housed outdoors.

Substrate depth: Shallow.

Suitable substrate types: Fleece, hemp, kiln dried wood shavings (not pine or cedar), wood pulp products, paper-based products, hay, newspaper.

Polyphasic activity pattern – awake 20 hours a day, sleep for brief intervals

Natural behaviours

Running, popcorning, hiding, gnawing, foraging and tunneling

Reproduction

Gestation period: 59-72 days.

Age of sexual maturity: 5-8 weeks.

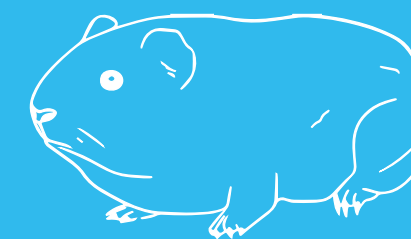
Age to split from opposite sex litter mates: 4 weeks.

Neuter: Single males if introducing to females.

Can be neutered from: 3-4 months, younger is preferable. Abdominal procedure preferred.

How long to wait post neuter before introductions: 6 weeks.

Average
life span
**5-7
years**



Cleaning

Spot clean daily: remove uneaten food, soiled substrate and sweep up poo. Change litter trays and water.

Full cleaning: Approx 1-2 x per week.

Litter trays: Can be placed under hay racks to encourage use.

Vaccinations required: No
Microchipping required: No

Companionship

Possible pairs or groupings:

- Mixed sex pair
- 1 neutered male with any number of females
- All female group
- Male pairs

Groups to avoid:

- More than two males
- Two males where females are present

Diet

Herbivore: Eats a plant-based diet.

Main feed: Hay always available, 1 tbsp guinea pig pellets + teacup sized quantity of fresh vegetables daily.

Additional food: See feeding chart.

Enrichment

Provide: Tunnels, piles of hay, hides, branches, soft beds, hammocks, hay bags, hay toys, foraging boxes.

Guinea pigs can be rehomed from 4 weeks old

Top tip

Guinea pigs don't like open spaces, provide lots of hides to encourage exploration.

Harmful food

Rhubarb, green parts of tomato plants, avocado, potato.