

DEGU CARE

Degus originate from Chile where they live on the edge of the Andes in big communal burrows. They can be friendly docile pets and may live between 6-9 years if looked after correctly. Their teeth grow continuously throughout their life, so they must wear them down by eating hay and grass.

DEGU HOUSING

- Degus should be housed in large wire cages, with a high solid base covered with a deep layer of substrate to allow natural burrowing behaviour.
- The cage should be placed out of direct sunlight to avoid extremes of temperature.
- Suitable substrates include shredded paper or wood shavings (not sawdust)
- Within the cage, nest boxes, branches, shelves and a wheel for exercise should be provided.
- A dust bath should be offered daily to keep the fur in good condition.
- The cage should be cleaned out at least once a week to help prevent disease.

COMPANIONS

- Degus are social animals, and are best kept in pairs or small groups.

FEEDING YOUR DEGU

- Hay or grass is essential to maintain gastrointestinal & dental health and should make up most of the diet.
- Fresh vegetables and small amounts of fruit (not fruit high in simple sugar) should be fed daily.
- Commercial guinea pig or chinchilla diets can make up a small part of a degu's diet. However, as degus can be highly selective feeders, complete pelleted diets are preferable to muesli mixes as they help to ensure that the animal receives a balanced diet.
- Clean water must be given daily in a water bottle.

NEUTERING

- Male degus may be castrated in order to reduce fighting, or prevent reproduction
- Female degus are not routinely spayed unless there are any concerns about reproductive disease

ANNUAL HEALTH CHECKS

We recommend annual health checks every year for pet degus as medical problems are more easily treated if detected at an early stage – **you can register for automatic reminders**

INSURANCE

We highly recommend that you take out a pet insurance policy. For a monthly fee your pet can receive the best treatment at an affordable cost. There is normally an excess to pay for each condition then after that costs are covered up to a set limit. Once you have the policy, please provide us with a copy of your insurance details. There are a lot of different companies and policies available and we suggest you contact a number of them for information- we have a leaflet advising what to look out for. Our advice is to choose a policy which provides cover for chronic illness for the life of your pet. If this policy is too much for you then the best cover you can afford will provide piece of mind in an accident or emergency.