

Is this the right pet for me?

Ferrets are highly intelligent and friendly animals that make excellent pets when they are properly trained and handled. These playful little characters are domesticated animals that rely on humans and cannot survive if released from captivity. Ferrets are highly social and are best kept in pairs. Ferrets need to be handled and owners should be prepared to spend at least 30 minutes a day with their pet.

Recommended for...

- People with time to spend with their ferrets
- Families with school-aged children
- People living in apartments

Lifespan

6-10 years

Medications

- heartworm prevention
- intestinal worm treatment
- flea control

Feeding

Ferrets are meat eaters and need a high protein diet. A diet of good quality dried cat food (avoid fishy flavours) together with some raw beef or lamb or cooked chicken (no bones, skin, or salt) is appropriate. Small raw bones such rabbit or lamb fed once or twice week will help keep their teeth clean and prevent gum disease. Avoid milk and milk products.

Cool, fresh water must be provided at all times.



NEW FERRET CHECKLIST

Here's a list of the essentials you'll need for your new ferret. Please ask any of the Best Friends team to help you with your selections.

Essential equipment

- Heavy food bowl (or one that clamps onto the bars of the cage)
- Ferret-proof cage and floor covering
- Litter tray and non-clumping litter
- Water bottle or bowl
- Cat nail clippers
- Small harness and leash
- Travel cage

Your ferret will also love...

A great selection of ferret-safe toys to chew, fetch, hide, chase and catch.

Like puppies and kittens, ferrets love to play with toys. It is very important to make sure that your ferret's toys can withstand their strong teeth, and don't have loose attachments like buttons. Swallowing bits of toys is very dangerous for ferrets as they can easily cause gut obstructions.

Special Offer:



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www.bestfriendspets.com.au

Caring for your Ferret



Caring for your ferret



Preparing for Ferrets

Before letting your ferrets out to play in your home, you must ferret-proof the area. Ferrets are extremely curious animals and have very little fear. Look for dangerous moveable objects, toxic materials, power cords and cover any small holes.

Kids Care

Children need to be old enough to understand the need for gentle and calm handling before being allowed to handle ferrets and they should always be supervised by an adult. Regardless of how well a ferret is trained, if handled roughly it is easily frightened and may resort to nipping.

Housing

Ferrets are best kept indoors, housed in a clean, well-ventilated cage. Gaps in the cage need to be less than 2.5cm wide. Ferrets need an area large enough for a litter box, a sleep area, play area and feeding area. They don't like their litter boxes to be too close to sleeping and eating areas, so larger cages are better. Cover wire on the floor with carpet or lino to prevent damaging their feet.

Ferrets love to snuggle down in their bedding. Hammocks, sleeping bags, cuddly blankets or hand towels should be placed throughout the cage, at least two per ferret. Make sure to wash bedding once a week.

Ferrets are very prone to heat stroke because they are unable to sweat, so you must not leave them outdoors in warm weather (temperatures above 27) or in direct sunlight.

Ferrets are notorious for escaping from their owners, as they are well designed for squeezing



through small gaps, so don't leave them outside unsupervised unless you have a fully enclosed run.

Toilet Training

Ferrets are naturally clean animals and not difficult to toilet train. Place them in their litter tray when they wake up. Keep putting them back into it until they understand what to do and then praise and reward them. Clean out litter trays daily.

Grooming

Ferrets like to groom themselves and keep themselves clean. Keeping their cage and bedding clean will control smells. Clean your ferret's ears every month, with a cotton bud dipped in a pet ear cleanser. Sharp nails need to be trimmed fortnightly with cat nail clippers. Ask the Team at the OurVet™ counter to show you how to do this at home.

Exercise

Although they sleep for long periods, once awake, ferrets are full of energy and love to play and explore, so they need to be let out at least twice a day.

Training

Begin nip training from the moment you bring your ferret home. Nipping is part of their normal rough play with each other, but this behaviour can lead to ferrets being nippy toward humans. If a ferret does nip, it should be disciplined with a loud 'no', and gently pulled along the floor by the scruff of the neck. This is how a ferret mother will discipline her babies and will not hurt them. Never hit a ferret.

Ferrets are intelligent and trainable. Use small pieces of cat treats or kibble to reward your ferret for good behaviour such coming to their name or begging, but never give your ferret sugary foods or chocolate.

Health

Ferrets need to be vaccinated against canine distemper. Ferrets are also susceptible to the common cold! Keep away from your ferret if you have a cold and wash your hands thoroughly before and after handling it.

If your ferret needs a vaccination, de-sexing operation, or any other treatment, you can go to the OurVet™ counter in store and talk to the Team. OurVet™ can also advise you about nutrition, dental health or any other issues that concern you.

Parasite control: It is important to treat your ferret regularly for intestinal worms and fleas. Fleas can cause severe itching and skin inflammation. They are not only found on the ferret but may be in the bedding or other areas where they sit, so you need to clean bedding and other materials regularly. Ferrets also need protection from heartworm infection. Monthly treatments are available for all these parasites, but not all dog and cat products are safe for ferrets. Consult the OurVet™ team for further assistance in choosing products suitable for your ferret.

Desexing: Breeding ferrets is not recommended unless you are experienced and very knowledgeable - therefore desexing of both males and females is recommended. Desexing also makes ferrets more docile and reduces their scent (produced by two glands located under the tail).

Emergency Treatment: If your ferret develops diarrhoea which persists for more than 24 hours, or becomes severe, or has any other health problems, please contact the team at OurVet™ in store, or your nearest veterinarian.

Responsible pet ownership

In most areas of Australia you are required by law to register your pets. In some cases there are restrictions on the number and types of pets you are allowed to keep. Check with your local government for further information on your rights and responsibilities both to your ferret and to your neighbours.

Best Friends Pet Guarantee: At Best Friends Pet SuperCentre we take the utmost care of all animals living under our roof to ensure they are happy and healthy whilst in our care. After purchase, if you are not satisfied with the health of your new pet or you are having second thoughts on pet ownership, you can return your pet to us with the receipt within 14 days of purchase for vet treatment*, refund or replacement pet†. We are unable to provide a refund for any equipment you purchased and have used for your pet during this time. * Vet treatment includes 1 free consultation and appropriate treatment for illnesses that are considered by OurVet™ to have been present in the pet and have further developed after the pet was sold. New illnesses and injuries that have occurred after the pet was sold are not covered. Treatments provided are at the sole discretion of Best Friends & OurVet™. †Replacement Pets are offered at the same value as original pet purchased.