

SHOPPING LIST:

- ✗ information leaflet about chinchillas
- large cage with several levels
- nest box
- heavy feeding bowl
- hayrack
- water bottle
- triangular rodent toilet
- sand bath
- chinchilla brush
- floor covering (e.g. MultiFit straw pellets + straw)
- hay (rich in herbs, dry, dust-free)
- dried herbs
- prepared chinchilla food (premium food)
- chinchilla sand
- mineral stone, salt lick
- wood for gnawing on (e.g. wooden gnawing block, wicker bridge)
- nibble sticks
- snack ball
- vitamin supplements
- intestinal conditioner (for the prevention of diarrhoea)
- disinfectant/detergent for the cage
- cage cleaning materials
- book about chinchillas

KEEP ME FIT AND HEALTHY

Chinchillas take exceptionally good care of their coats and clean themselves frequently. Once tamed they can even be combed carefully with a soft brush. The coat should be examined daily for damage, peripheral swelling or encrustations so that illnesses can be identified in good time.

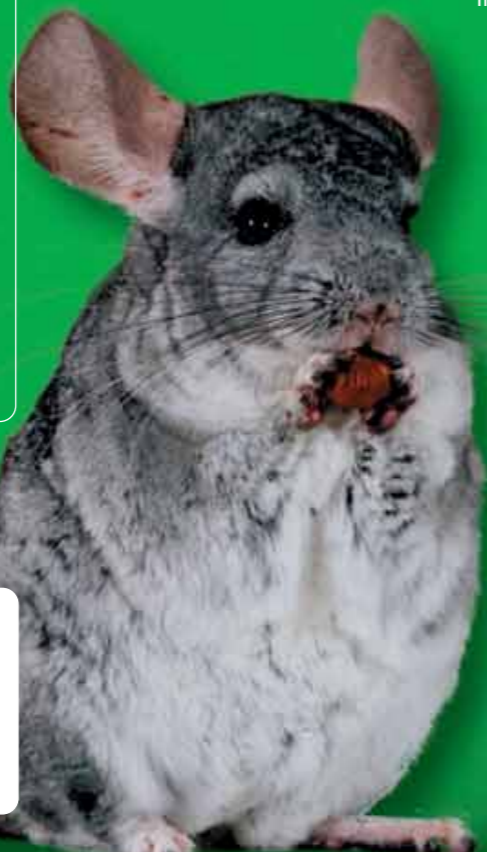
Chinchillas cannot tolerate dampness or draughts and are especially susceptible to colds in spring and autumn. Therefore they should not be kept outside at our latitude.

The rodent's front teeth must be constantly worn down by food rich in crude fibre and branches otherwise the continual growth of the teeth may lead to defective positioning and damage to the mouth's mucous membrane.

Exemplary cage hygiene is extremely important to prevent fungal disease.

Chinchillas are also very susceptible to intestinal illnesses, which are mainly caused by unsuitable food or a sudden change in diet. These can be fatal.

Chinchillas displaying any signs of illness should be taken to a vet immediately, because any delay in treatment can very quickly lead to the animal's death.



HOW I SHOULD BE HANDLED?

Approach the chinchilla slowly from the front and speak to it gently at eye level without handling it. Hold out something healthy for it to nibble and you will quickly succeed in gaining the trust of this cute little animal. Its curiosity drives the chinchilla to come up close to your hand of its own accord and it will nibble from the proffered snack. Depending on the individual animal it can take days if not weeks to progress from hand feeding to delicate stroking to taking it out of its cage and letting it run around freely. Chinchillas should never be picked up roughly, yet the way they are gripped must be firm enough for them to feel safe. This is achieved by placing one hand firmly under the chest with the other hand supporting the hindquarters from underneath. Next, position the chinchilla with its face right against your chest by using one hand to hold its back while the other hand holds its hindquarters carefully but firmly. Chinchillas must never be held by the tail. The chinchilla will slowly get used to being carried around and will become less frightened.



If the animals are very unsettled it is beneficial to put your hand into the cage beforehand so that the animals can get used to your smell first. Chinchillas do not bite. Children should only practise picking up and carrying their pet under the supervision of their parents or Maxi zoo staff when making the purchase.

REPRODUCTION

1. Chinchillas reach sexual maturity at around 5 months.
2. However they should only be bred from 8 months at the earliest.
3. The length of the female's cycle is approx. 4 weeks.
4. The gestation period is approx. 111 days.
5. A litter consists of a maximum of 2 young.
6. The babies can be separated from the mother at 7-8 weeks.

My chinchilla

Everything you need to know about chinchillas as pets.



Everything for your pet

www.maxizoo.ie

For more tips and further information on chinchillas visit our website at: www.maxizoo.ie

AM I THE RIGHT PET FOR YOU?

Chinchillas are good pets for older children and teenagers. They are very shy by nature and have to be looked after very carefully. They need regular care and if they are well kept, they live for up to 20 years. If you interact with them gently, they become trusting and inquisitive.

If you can provide them with the right kind of cage and basic fittings from the very start, they are relatively cheap and easy to look after.

Chinchillas are very social and therefore are best kept in pairs. Males should be castrated in good time to prevent unwanted breeding.

WHERE DO I ORIGINATE FROM?

Chinchillas originate from high up in the mountains of South America. They adapt well to the extreme variations in temperature and sparse availability of food common to this mountainous region. On the other hand they have absolutely no tolerance to dampness; although their coat is very thick it is not water-repellent.

They were originally bred for their very thick, soft coats.



HEALTH CHECKLIST

My chinchilla is healthy if

- its eyes are not weepy or inflamed,
- there are no visible bite anomalies (e.g. the incisors are too long) and the chinchilla is able to chew normally
- it has a dry little snout and isn't sneezing,
- its coat is smooth and shiny and smells of fresh hay or straw,
- its rear is clean and free of encrustations,
- the soles of its feet are neither crusted nor heavily stained by urine,
- its claws are not too long,
- no lumps or swellings can be felt,
- it is lively and has a healthy appetite.



WHERE'S THE BEST PLACE FOR ME TO LIVE?

Chinchillas have a very strong impulse to be on the move, so the cage should be as big as possible and of a corresponding height as well as consisting of several different levels. A nest box, drinking bottle, heavy or affixed food bowl, hay rack and dust bath (with special, chinchilla sand) are some of the essential basics. Pet sawdust or straw pellets are best for covering the floor of the cage. These animals also need to run around freely every day, but they must be watched very closely during this time, for they gnaw on everything (electric cables, poisonous plants). Branches or stones to gnaw on are essential for wearing down their teeth. The cage should be placed somewhere that is dry, free from draughts and quiet. Adequate ventilation must be provided at temperatures exceeding 20 °C. The cage and all accessories should be cleaned and disinfected regularly (at least once a week).

It was only later that they were able to enjoy growing popularity as clean and odourless pets.

Chinchillas are essentially nocturnal yet once in the care of humans they also adapt to a daily rhythm to a certain degree. However, if they are asleep during the day they should not be woken up. They are shy by nature and can lose their entire coat in one fell swoop if they are subjected to great stress or handled too firmly.

However, if you interact with them gently and win over their trust they will come and sit on the palm of your hand of their own accord and let you stroke them.



WHAT DO I LIKE TO EAT?

Chinchillas are herbivores and feed on very sparse grass in their natural habitat. Therefore, fresh, coarse hay and herbs should form the basis of their diet. Since chinchillas eat small amounts frequently every day, the hay in the cage must always be in good condition. On top of this, approx. 60 g of prepared chinchilla food can also be added every day.

Chinchillas should not be given any nuts that are high in fat (e.g. sunflower seeds or peanuts), grain or snacks.

Single (!) raisins, rose hips or herbs (nettles, fennel, mint or similar) are suitable for giving as special treats.

Since chinchillas have very delicate bowels, any change in their diet should be introduced very slowly. They can be fed intestinal conditioner as a precaution.



The food bowl must be fixed firmly in place or very heavy so that it cannot be knocked over.

The best way of supplying water is in a rodent drip feed bottle and it should always be fresh and freely available.

DO I LIKE COMPANY?

Chinchillas are social creatures that live together in colonies in their natural environment. For this reason they feel much better in themselves when kept in groups rather than on their own.

The simplest course of action is to keep chinchillas who have known each other from a very young age together in one cage.

The males must be castrated before they reach sexual maturity to avoid unplanned breeding or fights with other males. On the whole, chinchillas remain monogamous for life and it is therefore very difficult to instigate a new pairing after the death of a partner.

