



LWAS Animal Care Sheets

Guinea Pig

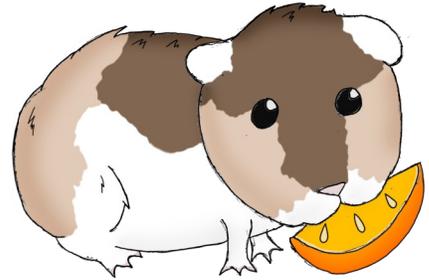
Guinea pigs are members of the rodent family. They are social, docile herbivores.

Quick Facts

Average size: 2 lbs **Diet:** Hay, greens, veggies

Average Lifespan: 5-7 years **Handling:** Beginner-intermediate

Enclosure: large pen or cage



Housing

Size: at least 7.5 sq ft of space for a single pig, with an additional 2-4 sq ft for each additional pig. More space is always better, and horizontal space is better than vertical. We love the "Midwest Guinea Habitat" for a starter cage because they can be combined as modules to make a bigger cage.

Population: Guinea pigs can live in same-sex bonded pairs, but must be properly bonded before cohabitating. male-male pairs may need more space to avoid territorial behavior. Females can live in herds, but males should only be housed singly or in pairs. Neutered males may be housed with one or many females.

Substrate: Our vet recommends paper bedding or fleece/fabric cage liners. Use caution with wood beddings as they can cause respiratory and impaction issues.

Furniture: Guinea pigs need hiding spots, at least 1 per pig. This can be as simple as some cardboard boxes with holes cut in them.

Temperature/Humidity: Guinea pigs prefer a cool, dry environment. They should never be over 75F and should be kept out of direct sunlight.

Handling

Guinea pigs are prey animals and are naturally skittish. Most guinea pigs will run away when you go to pick them up but will calm down once they are being held.

Hand-feeding snacks is the best way to start bonding with your guinea pig. Many guinea pigs will accept gentle pets on the forehead or chin once they are comfortable.

To pick up a guinea pig, confidently scoop them up with two hands, and hold them in a way that supports their feet by holding them against your chest, or on your lap. It is wise to keep a towel or snugglesack under the guinea pig in case of "accidents"