

CARE OF AQUATIC AND SEMI-AQUATIC TURTLES

HOUSING: Aquarium large enough to permit swimming and easy turning, at least 20 gallon long. Outdoor lined ponds and pools preferable in warmer months. For semi-aquatics, provide a "haul out" area, either a dry portion of the tank or a floating log for the turtle to bask on. A basking light should be supplied above this area. Water should be aged in preparation for changes. Water change requirements will vary based on size, number and species of turtle.

LIGHTING: Provide a 12:12 light cycle for all reptiles. Reptiles must have total darkness at night in order to maintain a healthy feeding response. All species should have a regular source of UVB, whether from a quality lamp or natural direct sunlight (best-30 minutes per week consistently is enough).

HEATING: Varies depending on species. A gradient across the enclosure should be present. For slider turtles the gradient should be 72-86F with a hot spot for basking of 90-95F. The coolest part of the enclosure should never drop below the low end of the range-this will affect the animal's ability to digest food, metabolize nutrients and fight off illness.

FEEDING: This class of turtle is strictly or mostly carnivorous. Floating turtle sticks (we like Wardley brand best) are convenient to feed and provide good nutrition. For turtles that do eat some vegetation, chopped fresh greens or edible aquatic plants may be offered. Live fish provide enrichment and exercise-minnows and guppies are preferable to goldfish.

VETERINARY CARE: Annual exams with fecal exams done every six months. Please always call your turtle's veterinarian with questions and concerns. This is a better resource than pet stores or the internet.

For more specific detailed care instructions tailored to the species of your turtle, visit the World Chelonian Trust website at Chelonia.org.