

CARE OF PET SNAKES

HOUSING: Aquarium large enough to permit free movement and a range of activity, longer for terrestrial species, taller with horizontal branches for arboreal species. Glass enclosures are best for tropical species to retain humidity. Snakes are notorious escape artists and are extremely strong and able to break out of standard locking cage tops-heavy weight or bungee cords are often necessary to keep even a small constrictor contained. For snakes that nose-bump glass aquariums, wallpapering is recommended to prevent self-trauma and infections. Provide a hide box or other type of visual security. Burrowing species may be housed in very fine sand (we like Jurassic Playsand), otherwise, particulate substrates should not be used.

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. Most 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. Contact us for advice on your snake's optimal temperature zone. A gradient across the enclosure is very important for the snake to regulate it's body temperature. 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. Snakes should never be able to reach light bulbs-they have been known to wrap around them and burn severely. Hot rocks are unsafe and should never be used. Provide appropriate humidity for you species-ask us for ideas on this.

FEEDING: We NEVER, NEVER advise feeding live adult prey rodents. We have seen severe injuries inflicted on snakes as a result of this. Most snakes can be trained to take pre-killed, thawed frozen prey, and we can advise you on techniques to do this.

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